

Sagittarius: Aspiration

Mark walked slowly along the woodland path, lost in thought. His father's words of the day before still were uppermost in his thoughts and, although he admitted it reluctantly, disturbed him strangely.

"There are more important things than rock concerts, motorcycles, or even your grades and your career," Father had said. "All these are material considerations, and although school and career are certainly important, spiritual considerations outweigh even them. You know, of course, that you can't take material acquisitions with you when your life is over, but there are other, *internal*, acquisitions that you *must* have — and must obtain for yourself — if your life is to have any lasting significance at all. I know you have heard the words 'selfless service' and 'compassion' stressed over and over in Sunday school, but I wonder if you really understand their importance — or if you care. You have been taught that you are a divine spark of God, destined to become a Creative Being by virtue of your own striving and attainments, and that selfless service is 'the shortest, the safest, and the most joyful road to God.' I'm not asking, Mark, that you give up having fun, or that you stop saving for a car or do away with your record collection. What I am asking is that you put all these things in their proper place, and that you also recognize and think about that part of your life which should be devoted to spiritual matters. I hope that eventually you will set your sights higher than they seem to be now."

Irritated and disturbed, Mark spent a restless night. The next morning, because it was Saturday, he left the house early and had been walking in the woods for some time. After trying unsuccessfully to dismiss his

father's words from his mind, he finally resigned himself to facing them squarely.

Father, of course, was right to be concerned, Mark thought. His main interests *were* his motorcycle and record collection, and although he did manage to do well at school, he did so, not for the sake of learning, but in order to keep his parents from "bugging" him and so that he could go on to college and eventually land a well-paying job. Although he was familiar with the spiritual precepts and Teachings stressed in the Rosicrucian Sunday School, which he attended because his parents wanted him to, he had never taken the time to dwell upon them or relate them to himself.

There *was* more to life than his own hitherto narrow sphere of interests, he knew, and now that he was getting older, he should begin to pay more attention to things beyond immediate material pleasures. His father had said that he should raise his sights, and as Mark began to regard this thought in a more positive light, he gradually felt a sensation of lightness and anticipation. He began seriously to think over what he had learned in Sunday School, and the more he thought of the Teachings in connection with his own life and potential, the more he was intrigued and thrilled.

Of what permanent value *were* records, motorcycles, cars, and all the other things on which he and his friends set such store? What lasting result *would* come from all the time spent on leisure activities? Mark was surprised to find himself asking such questions, but he answered them honestly in his mind. He sat down — still thinking hard — to eat the sandwich he had brought, and then continued his walk.

By mid-afternoon, tired but with a surging feeling of well-being he had never before experienced, Mark was ready to go home — a different person from the boy who had entered the woods that morning. He

was not prepared to renounce his present interests, but his father had not asked, or expected, him to do that. For the first time in his life, however, he *was* prepared to regard them as secondary, and to devote only part of his time, and of himself, to them. He was ready to expand his horizons to include spiritual matters, and the prospect appealed to him as no purely material objective ever had.

Mark was suddenly grateful for having been “exposed” to the Teachings in Sunday School, even though their initial impact on him had been mild. Now that



he *was* interested, he knew, without having to search further, what “living the life” meant; he could immediately begin to *try* to live more in accordance with the precepts, and concentrate, at least sometimes, on the “higher things.”

Mark knew that he was not going to turn into a spiritual paragon overnight — nor did he want to. The motorcycle would still be ridden, the records would still be played, and he would continue with his normal occupations. But he also knew that a seed of something new and much more significant had now been planted within him, something that would mature as he matured, and help place all the events and details of his life in their proper perspective. His father’s words had opened his eyes and put him on the right track; the rest was going to be up to him. He recognized the challenge — and the opportunity — and now was eager to meet them both.