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PROLOGUE to *THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE*, No. 4

How many readers pay attention to the dedication page of a book? Other than the spouse or immediate family of the author to whom they are often directed, dedication pages usually don't warrant much attention. But this is not the case with the major works of H. P. Blavatsky. The inscription in *Isis Unveiled* states: "The Author dedicates these volumes to the Theosophical Society which was founded at New York, AD 1875, to study the subjects on which they treat." *The Secret Doctrine* has this: "This Work I dedicate to all True Theosophists in every Country, and of every Race, for they called it forth, and for them it was recorded." *The Key to Theosophy* reads: "Dedicated by 'H.P.B.' to all her Pupils, that They may Learn and Teach in their turn." Each of these reveals something about the book and its target audience. If we understand the word "pupil" to include not only those who had the good fortune of studying directly with Mm. Blavatsky, but also those later generations of Theosophists who had yet to be born, the potential audience addressed is fairly large.

But we encounter something very different with *The Voice of the Silence*, whose inscription is as simple as it is curious: "Dedicated to the few." Obviously, HPB did not write *The Voice* for a mass audience, but why dedicate it to "the few"? Why not the Theosophical Society? Why not all genuine Theosophists? Or at the very least, why not dedicate it to her pupils?

The answer becomes apparent in the third verse of the first Fragment: "HAVING BECOME INDIFFERENT TO OBJECTS OF PERCEPTION, THE PUPIL MUST SEEK OUT THE RĀJĀ OF THE SENSES, THE THOUGHT-PRODUCER, HE WHO AWAKES ILLUSION." Think about that for a moment. Consider what is being asked. The disciple is not being presented with an option, but with a requirement that must be met. How many in Blavatsky's day—or even now—would think it possible? How many would even try? How many would attempt it once they understood the enormous difficulties and dangers involved in such an undertaking?

The answers to those questions would consist of three numbers of steadily diminishing proportion. Anyone who has studied *The Voice* has come to that realization already. But HPB believed that there are those who *believe* it can be done, who *are willing* to make the attempt, and who *have the resolve* to face the inevitable trials and difficulties. In short, it is for those brave and stalwart souls—or the few—that *The Voice of the Silence* was written.

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