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aspire, and if you hope to get an answer, you will quite naturally open yourself to the Grace.

And later — you must pay great attention to this (*Mother puts her finger on her lips*) — the Grace will answer you, the Grace will pull you out of the trouble, the Grace will give you the solution to your problem or will help you to get out of your difficulty. But once you are free from trouble and have come out of your difficulty, don't forget that it is the Grace which pulled you out, and don't think it is yourself. For this, indeed, is the important point. Most people, as soon as the difficulty has gone, say, "After all, I pulled myself out of the difficulty quite well."

There you are. And then you lock and bolt the door, you see, and you cannot receive anything any more. You need once again some acute anguish, some terrible difficulty for this kind of inner stupidity to give way, and for you to realise once more that you can do nothing. Because it is only when you grow aware that you are powerless that you begin to be just a little open and plastic. But so long as you think that what you do depends on your own skill and your own capacity, truly, not only do you close one door, but, you know, you close lots of doors one upon another, and bolt them. You shut yourself up in a fortress and nothing can enter there. That is the great drawback: one forgets very quickly. Quite naturally one is satisfied with one's own capacity.

*But Mother, even when one tries to think that one is powerless, there is something which believes one is powerful.
So?*

Ah, yes, ah, yes! Ah, it is very difficult to be sincere.... That is why the blows multiply and sometimes become terrible, because that's the only thing which breaks your stupidity. This is the justification of calamities. Only when you are in an acutely painful situation and indeed before something that affects you deeply, then that makes the stupidity melt away a little. But as