

The following story is from the book

*The Central Figures*

# *The Báb*

*Volume One*



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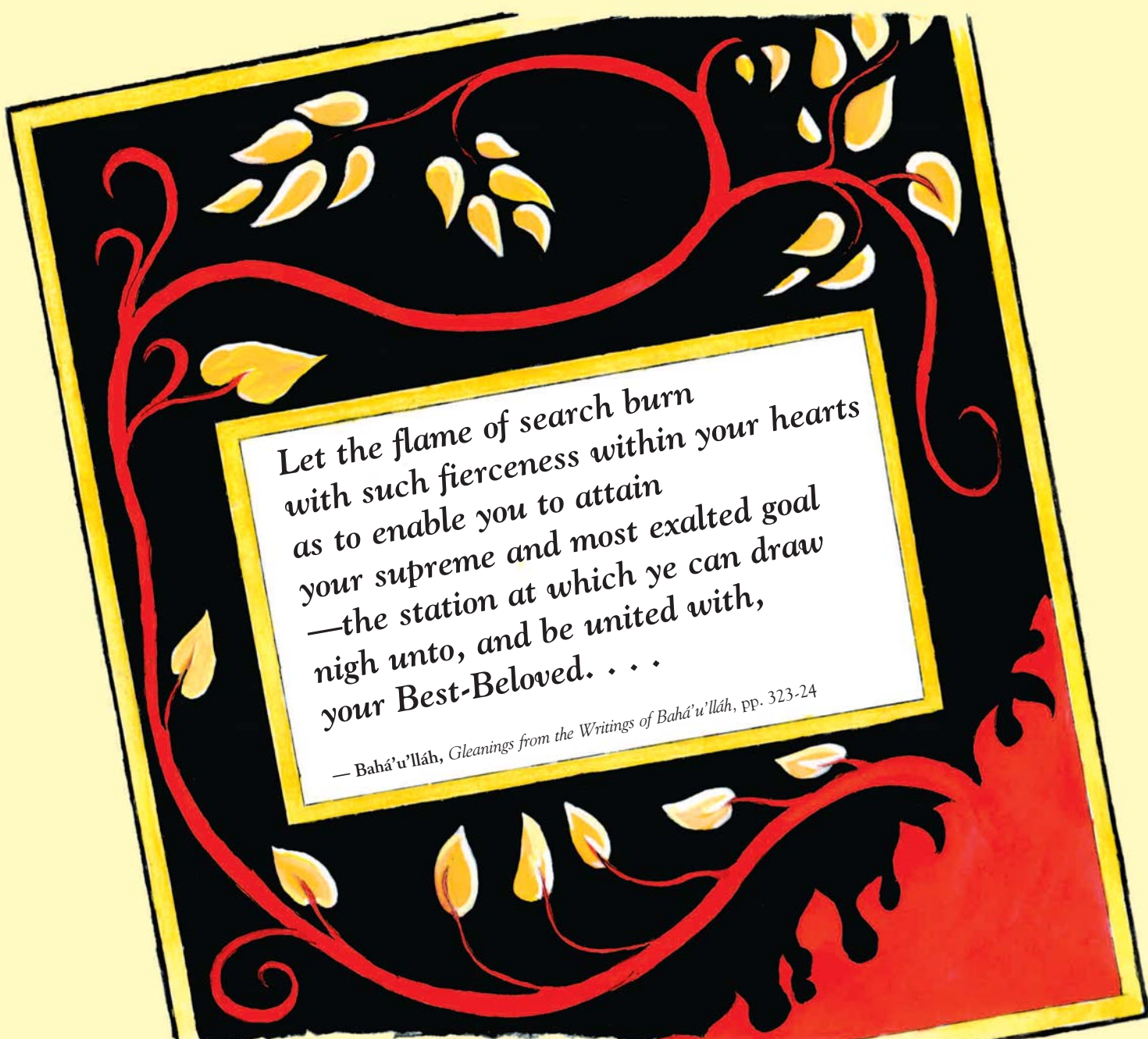
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Let the flame of search burn  
with such fierceness within your hearts  
as to enable you to attain  
your supreme and most exalted goal  
—the station at which ye can draw  
nigh unto, and be united with,  
your Best-Beloved. . . .

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 323-24



# Diary of a Search

Written by Theo Gustafson  
Illustrated by Carla Trimble

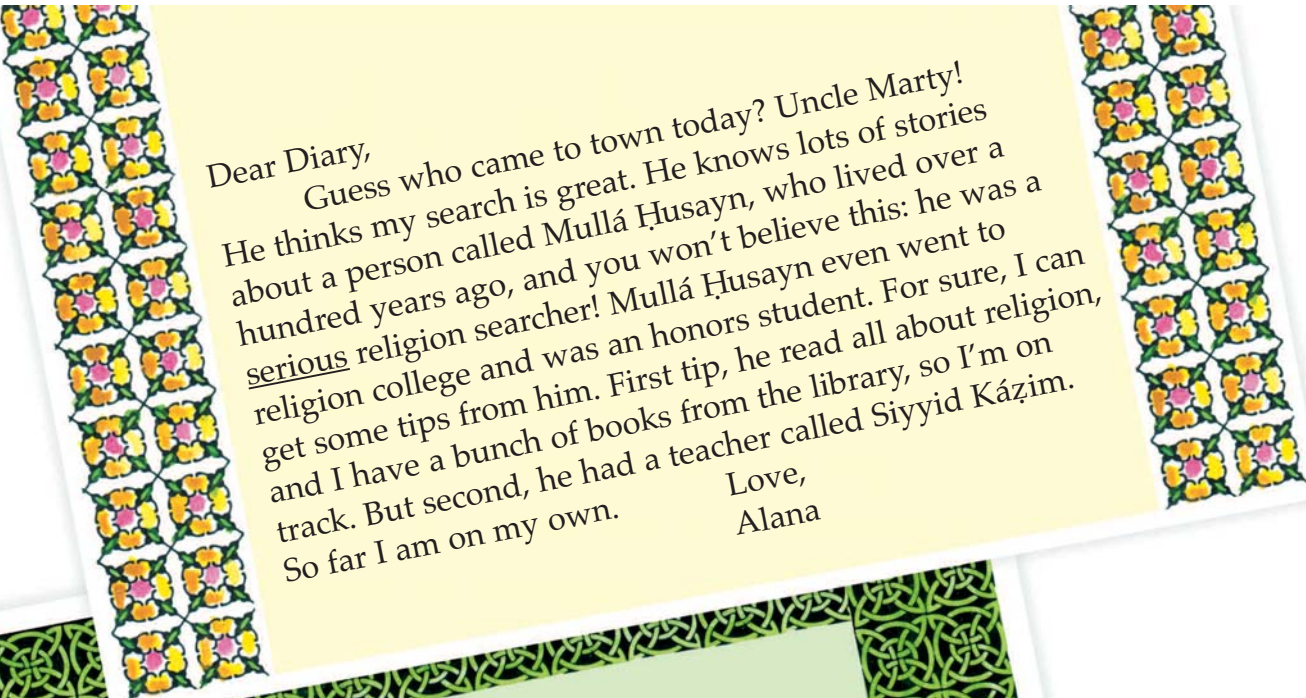


Dear Diary,

Today I visited my fourth religion in two weeks! Am I holy yet, or what?! Seriously, every religion I've visited has something awesome. Either they have great music, or a cool building, or candles and stuff that smells good. One had the best peppermint cookies afterwards!

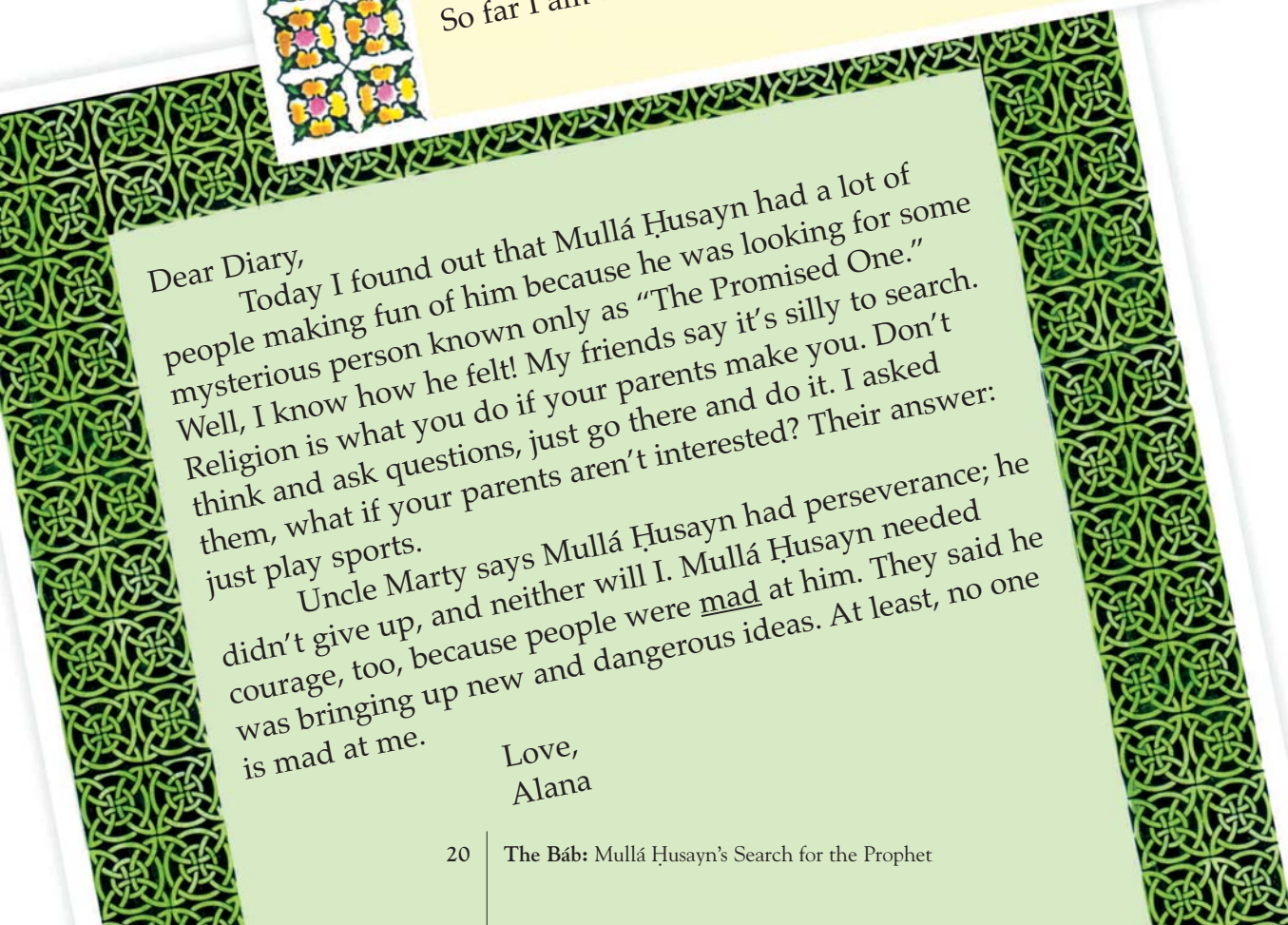
But you know I'm not in it for the cookies. I want to understand this religion thing, why I see so many people getting excited about it. It seems to make some people want to kill, and others want to be like angels, helping and saving. It's hard for me to understand what I see on TV, or even here in my town. I have to find out what God says about all this. I can't believe He would be on the side of killing and meanness!

Love,  
Alana



Dear Diary,  
Guess who came to town today? Uncle Marty!  
He thinks my search is great. He knows lots of stories  
about a person called Mullá Ḥusayn, who lived over a  
hundred years ago, and you won't believe this: he was a  
serious religion searcher! Mullá Ḥusayn even went to  
religion college and was an honors student. For sure, I can  
get some tips from him. First tip, he read all about religion,  
and I have a bunch of books from the library, so I'm on  
track. But second, he had a teacher called Siyyid Kázim.  
So far I am on my own.


Love,  
Alana



Dear Diary,  
Today I found out that Mullá Ḥusayn had a lot of  
people making fun of him because he was looking for some  
mysterious person known only as "The Promised One."  
Well, I know how he felt! My friends say it's silly to search.  
Religion is what you do if your parents make you. Don't  
think and ask questions, just go there and do it. I asked  
them, what if your parents aren't interested? Their answer:  
just play sports.

Uncle Marty says Mullá Ḥusayn had perseverance; he  
didn't give up, and neither will I. Mullá Ḥusayn needed  
courage, too, because people were mad at him. They said he  
was bringing up new and dangerous ideas. At least, no one  
is mad at me.

Love,  
Alana



Dear Diary,  
Yikes!! Did I say yesterday that no one was mad at me because of my search? Not my parents; they just say, let them know if I turn up anything good. (Although I can tell they are thinking, when water runs uphill!) This morning I asked some neighbors. Mr. Jollison said he has a religion, but he wouldn't recommend it. Says he doesn't believe half of it himself! It's just a habit. I don't get it!?!

When I left, the Bradley kids next door pounced on me! They said I would go to hell if I got into Mr. Jollison's religion. They yelled and said a lot of scary things, which I'm thankful to say I didn't understand much. One of them got really worked up and said God only approves of her religion, and all the others are doomed. If all the people in her heaven are like her, I would be scared to go there. Now I'm trying to remember to go around the block so I don't pass their house. Was Mullá Husayn more scared than this?


Love,  
Alana



Dear Diary,

Today I found out that while Mullá Ḥusayn was out of town, his teacher, Siyyid Kázim, died. He had already told all his students to go right out and look for the Promised One just as soon as he died. But when Mullá Ḥusayn got home, everyone was still there!! After all the time they had spent getting ready, when their teacher said it was time to go, they just made excuses. Mullá Ḥusayn got a couple of relatives to go with him, and started out to look. He didn't know a name or address, or even the town. Amazing! He got the directions by praying. I haven't tried that, because I didn't know how. But Uncle Marty gave me a little book of prayers today.

Love,  
Alana



Dear Diary,  
Even more amazing things have happened this week!! I found out that Mullá Ḥusayn's Promised One is also Uncle Marty's Promised One!! Yes! His name is the Báb, and there are people all over the world who follow Him. He told everyone to get ready for another special teacher from God, too, and He is called Bahá'u'lláh. Uncle Marty found out a year ago, so he can answer my questions and give me stuff to read.

Guess what! I was right that God does not want people to fight over religion. Or anything else! This is better than my dreams of finding a wonderful way to get everyone in the world together. God has already fixed it! I could hardly get to sleep last night! Is this how excited Mullá Ḥusayn was when he found the Báb?

Love,  
Alana

P.S. Uncle Marty says the followers of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh have Feasts. I think I'll go if they have peppermint cookies. . . . Just kidding!! ★

