DISPATCH from COPENHAGEN

Hello my lovely Friends,

I have had the greatest fortune to be in Copenhagen and take part in the activities and atmosphere after Hannah's death and I wanted to share with you. I arrived at the Center after Hannah's wake had already started, sometime after the White Tara meditation. I will only relay what I've been a part of myself, so I cannot speak to what happened beforehand.

When I walked in, Hannah was lying in simple pine casket in the gompa. Surrounding her were approximately 60 of our sangha friends and Ole was standing at the front, near her head. There was not one dry eye, and many people were quietly weeping. A queue of people had formed - walking past Hannah, gazing upon her beautiful face, and then went to Lama Ole for a blessing. Hannah was very lovely. I have only seen two dead bodies before, and they always appeared to be blue-ish white and traumatized. Hannah looked like a queen. Her face was composed and serene with a slight, sweet smile on her lips. No one had manipulated or changed her features, this was the expression on her face when she left this realm. Her skin looked golden, as though a varnish with a slight golden shimmer had been applied. (This, of course, wasn't the case.) To my eyes, she looked amazing. Dignified and calm. I cannot speak to what she was wearing or what else was in the casket, I couldn't tear my gaze away from her face.

Ole had wet eyes as he received everyone into his arms, one by one. Several times he had to stop to blow his nose. I think he was pretty surprised to see me, and I told him that I brought Enno in my heart and the love and gratitude of his North American students with me. That we loved he and Hannah very much. He seemed happy to hear that. After everyone had gone through the line, Ole took his closest students into his arms and sung their praises to the rest of the sangha. He then gathered Caty into his embrace and thanked her for everything on everyone's behalf. Tomek came forward with open arms and Ole laughed and blessed Tomek. Ole then asked for some time alone with Hannah, to spend a few last moments. We all left the gompa. It tore at my heart to think of our Lama saying his goodbye. After 5 minutes, the gompa doors were opened and the lid was placed on Hannah's casket. She was lifted by Ole and a few other strong students and carried outside, down

the front steps, and placed into the back of a waiting van. Everyone was lined up on either side of her journey to the van. And as the van drove away, at the pace of around 1/2 mile an hour, we all gathered on the street and quietly said goodbye. Once the van was out of our sight, we slowly walked back into the Center behind Ole.

From this moment on, the weight of the loss dissipated into a lighter feeling of blessing and gratitude.

Ole smiled and hugged people. Bottles of wine were opened, coffee and tea was served and people hugged and smiled. Ole cracked some jokes and did a few pullups on the scaffolding outside the center. It was beautiful outside as people gathered in the backyard. The sky was brilliant blue with no clouds, the sun was shining and warmed everyone's hair and skin, the trees were blooming with their first flowers, and several children scampered around, unhindered.

I hugged Ole for a long time and asked him how he was doing. He said that his eyes and his heart were "freaking out" but he was feeling cool and calm. He said he wasn't asking why Hannah had the karma to only live for 60 years. That he was grateful and happy for the time they had. He said that he missed her. He also told me there are two energy lines that run from the heart to the eyes and because his heart was feeling so much, his eyes were constantly welling up. He reiterated several times during the evening that he missed her and loved her very much. But he was happy that she was in a joyous state.

We then had an amazing, huge dinner and enjoyed wine and beer. There was a lot of laughing and teasing. Tomek and Caty were already starting the preliminaries of working out the new travel plan. More laughter and teasing. Dessert followed, some coffee, but certainly more wine. We watched "Apocalypto" and eveyone was yelling at the screen during the exciting and gruesome parts. We then sat around and the conversation followed a spontaneous, and meandering path. Ole told a bit of history around Europe. He spoke of Hannah and her elegance and activity. He stressed that she was a true Boddhisattva and we should be inspired by her example. Ole met Hannah when he was 10 years old and she was 5, and he said he learned every day from her. But especially in the past 3 months. The plan is that she will be cremated and her ashes will be kept in the Mahakahla room at the Copenhagen center. A stupa will be built at the

European Center and her ashes will be transfered there when it's ready. He said he believed she would stay in Dewa Chen for awhile, because he and Hannah wanted to be together. Otherwise he will be 20 years old with a very old girlfriend. :) He assured us that he planned to stay on for quite awhile. That there was much work to be done, motorcycles to be driven, and airplanes to jump out of.

Around 2 am, we finally closed down the party and everyone went to bed and slept. It was the best sleep I've had since I've been in Europe these past 8 days.

It is now the next day. The sun is still shining warmly, the sky is still bright blue, and Copenhagen looks like a jewel. The center is busy with activity. Being Kagyus, everyone has a big smile, and usually a sweet kiss, for each other. There is no heavy feeling of grieving or depression. Just blessing and gratitude and the motivation they bring.

I tell you all this because it is a profound moment. Our Lama radiates joy, fearlessness, and love - even in what must be one of his greatest losses. I am buoyed and inspired by his spontaneous example. And by the devoted students around me.

I deeply believe this is the way Hannah would have wanted it to be.

Much love to you all.

Karmapa Chenno,
Kristina