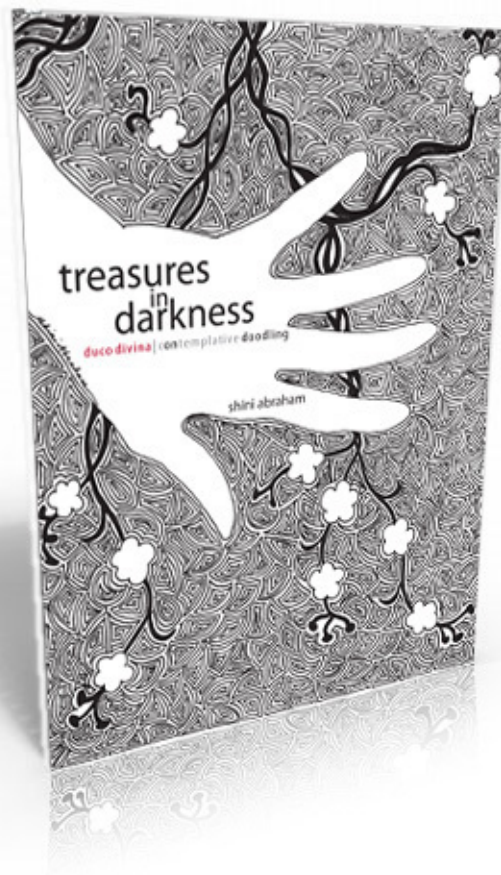


treasures in darkness

duco divina | contemplative doodling



sample pages

www.ducodivina.com

treasures in darkness

duco divina | contemplative doodling

shini abraham

du-co: /'dü-kō/ [dū-kō]

to draw, shape, construct, spend time

di-vi-na: /di-'vē-nə/ [di-**vee**-nuh]

divine

con-tem-pla-tive: /kən'templətiv/ [*kuhn-tem-pluh*-tiv, *kon-tuhm*-pley-tiv]

prolonged pondering, thoughtful, meditative, pensive

dood.ling: /düd-liŋ/ [*doo*-dliŋ, *doo*-dl-ing]

simple drawings that can have concrete representational meaning or may just be abstract shapes

hidden in secret places

I will give you treasures hidden in dark and secret places. Then you will know that I, the Lord God of Israel, have called you by name.

—Isaiah 45:3 (CEV)

Setting the Stage

Living with chronic pain is no easy thing. This 'thorn in the flesh' that I must deal with on a daily basis has greatly altered life for me. I've ignored it, fought it, and struggled with it. While I continue to hope for a miracle, I do not want life to pass me by. Nor do I want to be defined by it. So I've chosen to make peace with it instead, and embrace it as part of 'the now' of my life.

Pain is a teacher. Pain is the 'darkness' in which I've discovered treasures previously hidden. The 'raw' content in this book represents specific points in my journey in living with pain and discovering some of those treasures.

I ask you to be gracious in reading through my opinions. They sometimes swing between confidence and insecurity, strength and weakness. Nevertheless, they are part of my story as I continue along on my journey—still discovering, still learning, still growing.

~ shini abraham

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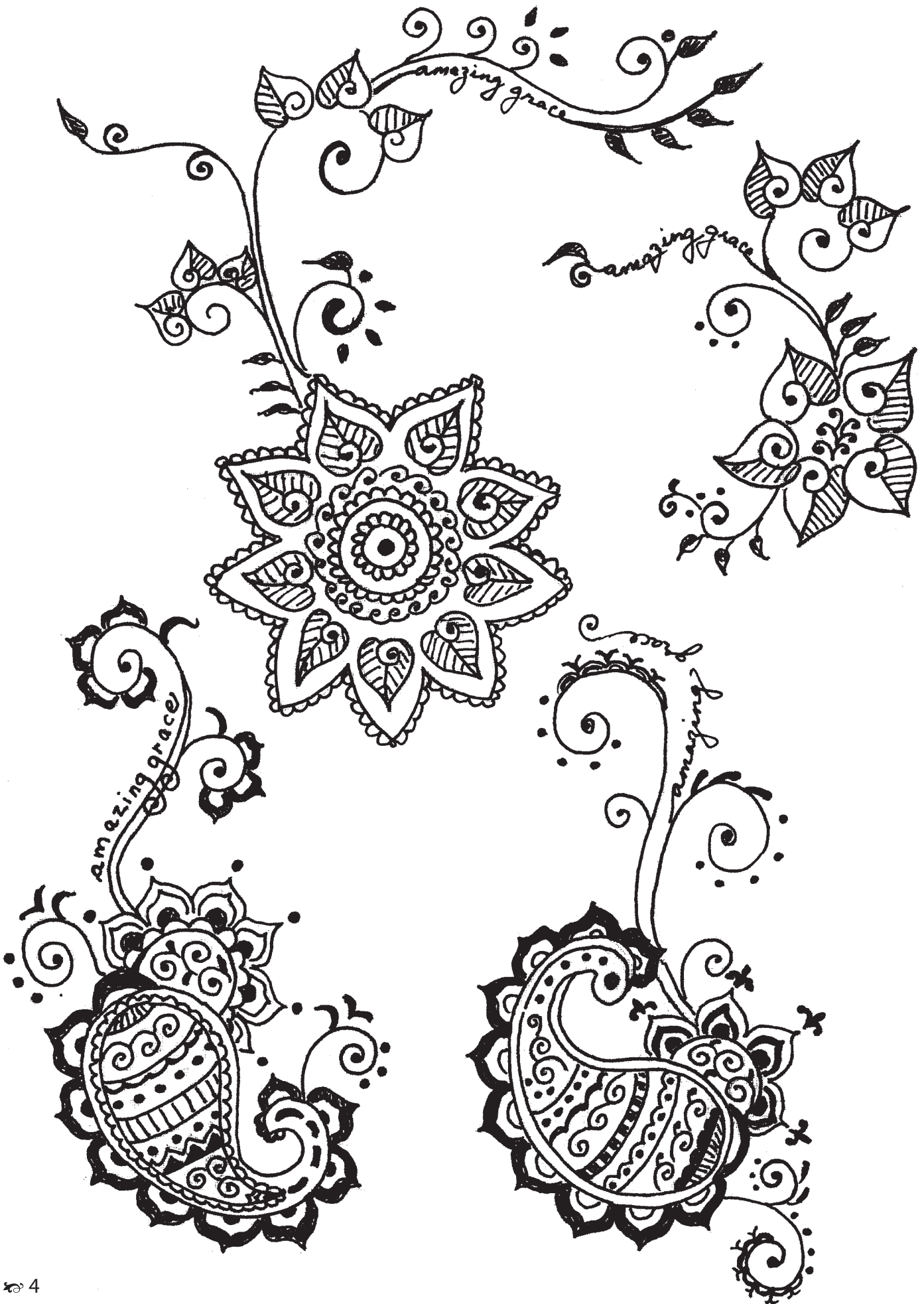
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*Prayers are detailed pictures
woven from breathing life-strands—
not just words.*

I love to doodle! I've doodled through difficult times, through long periods of illness and despair, through seasons of living in constant pain, through betrayal and other life-disappointments, I've also doodled through seasons of contentment, fulfillment and joy. My doodling has become for me a tool for meditation.

Lectio Divina (divine reading) is a traditional Benedictine practice of scripture reading that is transformational. Traditionally Lectio Divina has 4 specific steps: *reading, meditation, prayer* and *contemplation*.

I respectfully add to this list of spiritual disciplines, a fifth: doodling/drawing—*Duco Divina*.

I'm engraved in the palm of God's hand. (Isaiah 49:16)—this truth is part of my being. I picture myself and everything that is my life carved into the palm of God's hand. Not just 'held' by His hand, or stained in henna that will eventually wash away, but permanently engraved.

The doodled swirls and whirls came to symbolize the patterns on God's palm, and within it I placed my own hand along with symbols representing various aspects of life. Some basic, even laughable; and others more complex.

As I see my hand sketched into that pattern of swirly lines, what I'm left with is this—the unchanging reality that I am firmly anchored. From there, I can ask questions without coming unglued. I find my treasures in darkness—riches stored in hidden places.

◀ **contemplative doodling** = doodling + pondering + contemplating + meditation + prayer

on metamorphosis...

I see
with finite, fixed eyes.
Through my clouded filters
images are sifted
dreams are lifted
wrung dry and tossed away.

I think
and as my thoughts are hurled
they fall
against the wall
they try in vain to scale.

I speak
and my words are dry bread crumbs
sticking to the roof of my mouth
lacking in seasoning
lacking confidence and power.

I feel
and I'm sucked under
drowning in my emotions
before I can rescue the other
drowning in his.

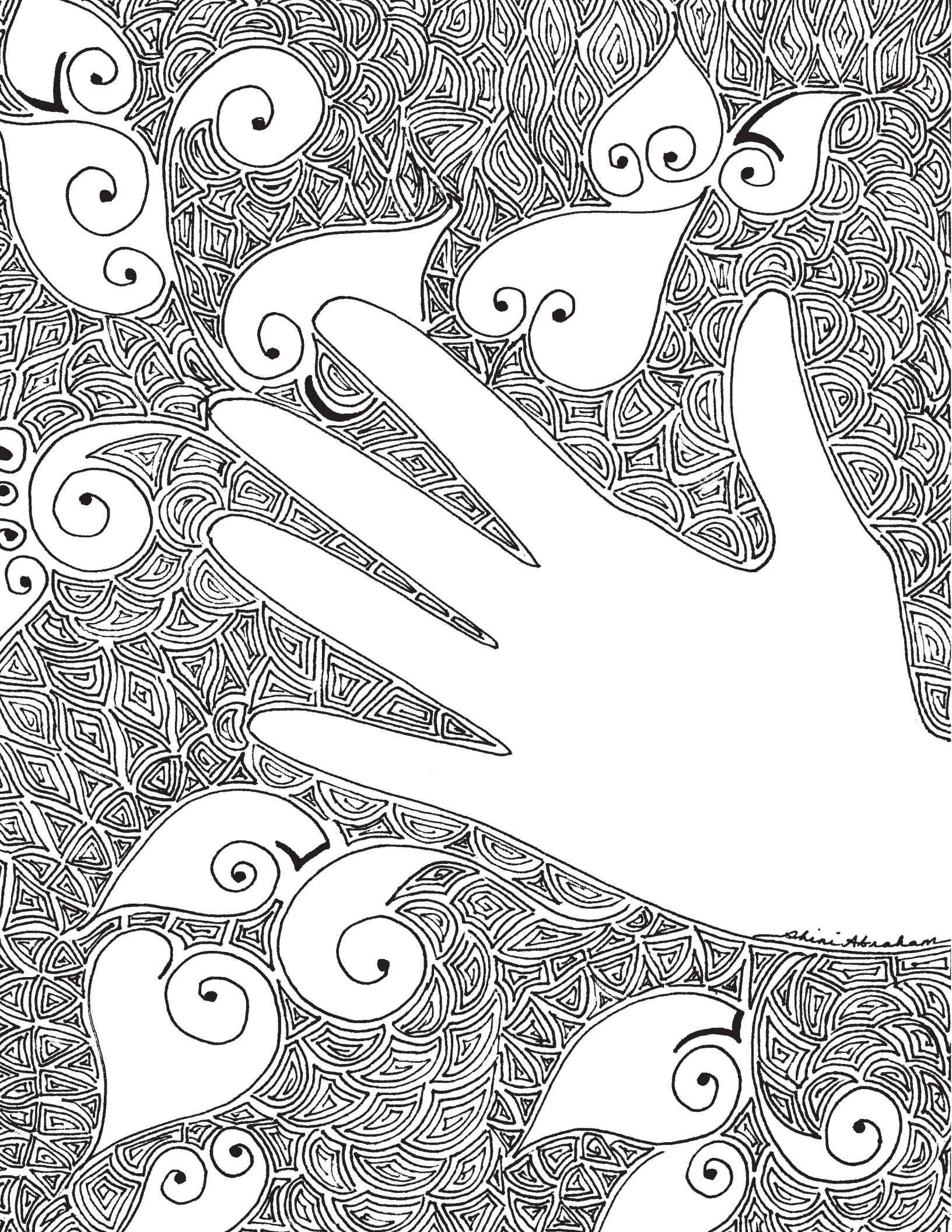
Lord, give me of Yourself—
eyes of faith
clean lips
a soft heart
and a renewed mind.

Fill me with Yourself
Wholly, completely, fully
Till my selfishness fades away
And You shine through.

Metamorphosis: the butterfly never reverts to the pupa stage, ever! Real change is permanent. ►



Amir Hamzah



alira Abraham

on love...

To be motivated by faith,
rather than passion alone;
To be purposeful and passionate,
not windblown;
To follow my heart,
without leaving my head behind;
To be gracious, forgiving,
understanding and kind;
To be real and proactive,
not false and reactive;
To ask and listen.
not just talk;
To look beyond the facts,
at the heart—
is to love
with heart, mind and soul.

To be thoughtful and caring,
not wrapped up in myself;
To put you first,
and my selfishness at the very end;
To address your need,
instead of dwelling my own;
To listen to your story,
even if mine is left untold;
And when I speak, to do so wisely,
Seasoned with grace, ever discerning;
Humble thoughts spoken with confidence,
Filled with every intent to bless;
To give, and give, and give again,
without a thought of selfish gain—
is to love
with heart, mind and soul.

◀ **Perspective!**

As a wise old friend told us a long time ago, "You're in a love commitment for life. When things get rough, remember, you have a lifetime to work things out together."

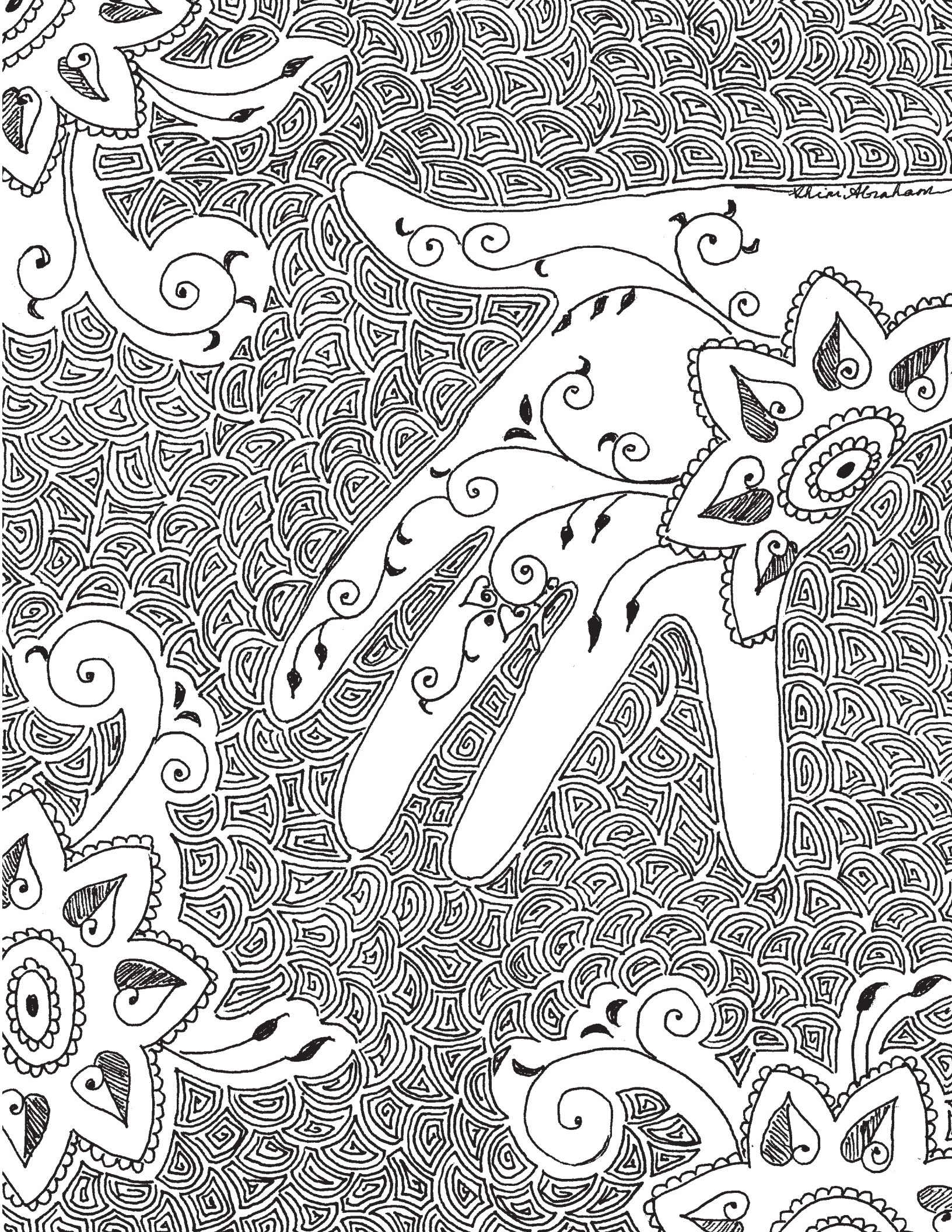
on my hiding place...

I've found a place
where I can hide
shut out the world
and all its noise,
the million voices,
the insatiable demands,
the growing pressure,
of every pressing task.

It's a place of rest—
not denial,
a true reality—
not just imagination
a place that exists—
not subliminal
a haven of regeneration—
not mere expectations.

Peace,
isn't the absence of swirling turmoil.
Peace is
knowing calm in the midst of the turmoil.
Peace is
that confidence that comes with knowing I am where I'm supposed to be.
Peace is
that unshakable trust that gives me strength to weather the storm.

In our intimate conversations,
and precious time together,
I find in my Hiding Place
the strength that helps me stand!



Shim Abraham