

entered the Society of Jesus. My confessor,<sup>3</sup> and the gentleman I also mentioned who came to me, arranged that I might speak with him and give him an account of my prayer because I knew that he was advancing in the favors and gifts of God. Since he was one who had abandoned many things for Him, God repaid him even in this life.

Well, after he had heard me, he told me that my experience was from the Spirit of God and that it seemed to him it would no longer be good to resist, but that up to this time it had been all right, and that I should always begin prayer with an event from the Passion, but that if afterward the Lord should carry away the spirit I ought not resist Him but let His Majesty bear it away—and not strive to do so myself. As one who was well advanced he gave the medicine and the counsel, for experience in this matter is very important. He said it would be a mistake to resist any longer.

I was left greatly consoled. The gentleman too was very glad that Father Francis said it was from God, and this gentleman helped me and gave me advice in matters where he could, which were many.

4. At that time they transferred my confessor<sup>4</sup> to another place. I felt his transfer very keenly, for I thought I would return to my wretchedness; it didn't seem to me it would be possible to find another like him. My soul was left as though in a desert, very disconsolate and fearful. I didn't know what to do with myself. A relative of mine arranged to bring me to her house, and I tried to go immediately so as to get another confessor from among those of the Society. The Lord was pleased that I become friendly with a widow of high nobility<sup>5</sup> who practised prayer and was a very close friend of members of the Society. She made me confess to her own confessor, and I stayed at her house for many days. Her house was nearby, and I was glad to converse a great deal with them; by merely listening to the holiness of their conversation, my soul felt great benefit.

5. This father began<sup>6</sup> to lead me to greater perfection. He told me that to please God completely I must leave nothing undone; he did so also with great skill and gentleness because my soul still was not at all strong but very fragile, especially with regard to giving up some friendships I had. Although I was not offending God by them, I was very attached, and it seemed to me it would be ingratitude to abandon them. So I questioned why I should have to be ungrateful since I was not offending God. He told me to commend the matter to God for some days and to recite the hymn *Veni Creator* so that God might give me light about the better course of action. One day, having spent a long time in prayer and begging the Lord to help me please Him in all things, I began the hymn; while saying it, a rapture came upon me so suddenly that it almost carried me out of myself.<sup>7</sup>

It was something I could not doubt, because it was very obvious. It was the first time the Lord granted me this favor of rapture. I heard these words: "No longer do I want you to converse with men but with angels." This experience terrified me because the movement of the soul was powerful and these words were spoken to me deep within the spirit; so it frightened me—although on the other hand I felt great consolation when the fear that, I think, was caused by the novelty of the experience left me.

6. These words have been fulfilled, for I have never again been able to tie myself to any friendship or to find consolation in or bear particular love for any other persons than those I understand love Him and strive to serve Him; nor is it in my power to do so, nor does it matter whether they are friends or relatives. If I'm not aware that the person seeks to love and serve God or to speak about prayer, it is a painful cross for me to deal with him. To the best of my knowledge this is most certainly true.

7. From that day on I was very courageous in abandoning all for God, as one who had wanted from that moment—for it doesn't seem to me it was otherwise—to change completely. Thus it wasn't necessary that I be given any more commands. Since my confessor saw me so attached in this matter, he hadn't dared to say definitely that I should give up such attachments. He had to wait for the Lord to do the work, as He did. Nor did I think that I could succeed in this matter; I had already tried it, and the distress it caused me was so great since the attachments didn't seem to me to be improper, I abandoned the effort. Now in this rapture the Lord gave me the freedom and strength to perform the task. So I told the confessor and gave up all as he had ordered me. It greatly benefited my confessor to see this determination in me.

8. May God be blessed forever because in an instant He gave me the freedom that I with all the efforts of many years could not attain by myself, often trying so to force myself that my health had to pay dearly. Since it was accomplished by Him who is the powerful and true Lord of all, I felt no pain.

### Chapter 25

Discusses the nature of these locutions the Lord grants to the soul without the use of the sense of hearing, some of the delusions that can result from these locutions, and how one can discern when they come from God. This chapter is most helpful and gives a lot of doctrine for anyone who finds himself in this degree of prayer since the matter is explained very well.

1. It seems to me it would be good to explain how this locution the Lord grants takes place and what the soul feels, so that your

Reverence may understand it. For from the time I mentioned in which the Lord granted me this favor until now, the favor has been very common, as will be seen in what remains to be said.

The words are very explicit<sup>1</sup> but are not heard with the bodily ears, although they are understood much more clearly than they would be if heard—and to try, no matter how hard, to resist understanding them is of no avail. When, here on earth, we don't want to listen to something, we can stop our ears or so turn our attention to something else that even though we hear we do not understand. In the case of these words God addresses to the soul there is no way of avoiding them; rather, even though I may not want to, they make me listen and make the intellect so keenly capable of understanding what God desires us to understand that it is not enough either to desire or not to desire to understand. He who can do all things wants us to understand that He must do what He wants, and He shows Himself to be our true Lord. I have a lot of experience of this because with the great fear I bore I resisted for almost two years—and sometimes now I try to resist, but to do so is of little avail.

2. I should like to explain the delusions that can take place here, although it seems to me that for anyone who has a lot of experience there will be few or none at all; but there must be much experience. And I also want to explain the difference that lies between what comes from the good spirit and what comes from the bad spirit and how the locution can also be an apprehension of the intellect itself—which can happen—or the spirit itself speaking to itself. (In regard to this latter I don't know if it's possible, but even to this day it has seemed to me to be so.) As for when it is from God I have had much experience in many things that were said to me and were fulfilled after two or three years, and of which up to the present nothing has turned out to be a lie, and in other things where it is seen clearly to be from the spirit of God, as I shall say afterward.

3. It seems to me that a person could be recommending something to God with great feeling and intensity and think he understands something about whether it will be done or not, and this is very possible—although anyone who has understood words coming from God will see clearly the nature of these words coming from the intellect because the difference between the two is great. And if they are something the intellect fabricates, no matter how subtly it works, a person will know that it is the intellect that is composing something and speaking. The difference is that in the one case the words are composed and in the other they are listened to. The intellect will see that it is not then listening because it is working. And the words it fabricates are as though muffled, fancied, and

without the clarity of those that come from God. It is in our power to divert our attention from these words of the intellect, as we do when while speaking we decide to keep quiet; in the case of those words that are from God there is no way of diverting one's attention.

Another sign more noticeable than all the others is that these words composed by the intellect do not produce any effect. Those the Lord speaks are both words and works. And even though the words may not be devotional ones but words of reproof, they dispose the soul and prepare it from the very beginning, and they touch it, give it light, favor it and bring it quiet. And if the soul suffers dryness, agitation and worry, these are taken away as though by a stroke of the hand since it seems the Lord wants it to understand that He is powerful and that His words are works.<sup>2</sup>

4. It seems to me the difference between the two kinds of locution is the same as that between speaking and listening, no more nor less. For when I speak, as I said,<sup>3</sup> I compose with the intellect what I am going to say; but if others speak to me, I do no more than listen without any effort. The one kind takes place in such a way that we cannot clearly determine whether the words were really spoken, as when one is half asleep; in those from God the voice is so clear that you don't lose a syllable of what is said. And these latter happen at times when the intellect and the soul are so agitated and distracted that the soul wouldn't succeed in putting together a good sentence—yet it finds that long sentences all prepared are spoken to it, which even though it were deeply recollected it wouldn't be able to compose. And in hearing the first word, as I mentioned, the soul is changed completely. How will things be understood—especially when it is enraptured, for the faculties are suspended—that didn't even come to its mind before? How will these things come when it hardly functions at all and the imagination remains as though stultified?

5. It should be understood that, in my opinion, visions are never seen nor words understood while the soul is united in the rapture itself. For during this time—as I already explained, I believe, when discussing the second water—<sup>4</sup>all the faculties are completely lost and, in my opinion, one can neither see nor understand nor hear. The soul is completely under the power of another, and during this time, which is very short, it doesn't seem to me the Lord leaves it any freedom at all. Once this short space of time has passed, while the soul still remains in a kind of rapture, these locutions take place.<sup>5</sup> The faculties are in such a state that even though they are not lost, they do hardly anything. They are as though absorbed and incapable of putting sentences together. There are so many ways of understanding the difference between the two kinds of locutions that though a person may be misled once, he will not be misled often.

6. And I say that if the soul is experienced and on the lookout, it will see the difference very clearly. Besides the other things in which the difference I mentioned is seen, the locution coming from ~~the intellect produces no effect~~, nor does the soul receive any (for with those that come from God it receives the effect whether it wills so or not) or place any trust in the words. Rather the soul understands that the intellect is talking nonsense; it pays no attention to it, almost as it wouldn't pay any attention to a person it knows is in a frenzy.

In the words coming from God the experience is as though we were listening to a very holy person or to one who is most learned with great authority, who we know will not lie to us. And even this comparison is a poor one. For these words at times bear with them such majesty that even though one does not call to mind who it is that speaks them, they make one tremble—if they are words of reproof; and if they are words of love, they make one dissolve in love. They concern matters, as I said,<sup>6</sup> which are very far from one's mind. Such long sentences are said so quickly that much time would have been necessary to compose them, and in no way does it seem to me that we can then fail to know that they are something we do not fabricate ourselves. Thus, there's no reason for me to delay on this matter; rarely it seems can an experienced person be deceived if the person himself does not knowingly want to be deceived.

7. It has often happened to me that if I have some doubt, I do not believe what is spoken to me and think that I imagined the words (this I do afterward, for it is impossible to do so at the time), and after a long while I see them fulfilled. For the Lord causes them to remain in the memory so that they cannot be forgotten. But the locutions that come from the intellect are like the first stirrings of thought which pass and are forgotten. Those that come from God are like a work that—even though something of it is forgotten and time passes—is not so completely forgotten that the memory of what in substance was said is lost, unless a long time has passed or they are words of favor or doctrine. But in my opinion there is no forgetting the words of prophecy, at least this is so with me even though I have a poor memory.

8. And I repeat that in my opinion, providing a soul is not so impious as to want to make them up—which would be very evil—and assert that it hears them when it doesn't, it would be impossible for it to fail to realize that it composes and speaks them itself and that they haven't come from the Spirit of God. Otherwise its whole life could pass under this delusion, and it would think it understands—although I don't know how. Either this soul desires to understand or it doesn't. If it is getting rid of what it understands

and in no way desires to understand anything, on account of a thousand fears and the many other reasons there are for wanting to be quiet and without these things during its prayer, how is it that it gives so much leeway to the intellect to compose sentences? Time is needed for this. In the locutions that come from God, we are taught without losing any time; things are understood that it seems would require a month to compose, and the intellect itself and the soul are amazed at some of the things that are understood.

9. This is the way it is, and anyone who has experience will see that all that I have said is literally so. I praise God because I have been able to describe it in this way. And I finish by saying that it seems to me that we can understand words coming from the intellect whenever we want, and each time we go to prayer we could think we understand them. But in the words that are from God, this is not so; I will spend many days in which it is impossible to understand something even though I may desire to. And when at other times I don't want to, as I said,<sup>7</sup> I am made to understand. It seems to me that any person desiring to mislead others by telling them that something he understands is from God, when it is from himself, finds little difficulty in saying that he hears this with his bodily ears. And indeed this is truly so. For I never thought there could be any other way of hearing or understanding until I saw this for myself. And so, as I said,<sup>8</sup> the experience cost me much difficulty.

10. When the words are from the devil not only do they fail to have good effects but they leave bad ones. This happened to me no more than two or three times, and I was then advised by the Lord that the words were from the devil. Besides the great dryness that remains, there is a disquiet in the soul like that which the Lord permitted many other times when my soul suffered severe temptations and trials of different kinds. Although this disquiet often torments me as I shall say further on,<sup>9</sup> one is unable to understand where the disquiet comes from. It seems the soul resists; it is agitated and afflicted without knowing why because what he says is not evil but good. I wonder if one spirit doesn't feel the presence of the other spirit. The consolation and delight that he gives is, in my opinion, very markedly different. He could deceive with these consolations someone who does not have or has not had other consolations from God.

11. I am speaking of true spiritual consolations: a gentle refreshment—strong, deeply impressed, delightful, and quiet. For little devotional feelings of the soul, tears and other little sentiments which, at the first small breeze of persecution, lose their tiny flowers, I do not call devotions, even though they may denote a good beginning and are holy sentiments; but they are not sufficient for the

discernment of whether these effects are from a good or bad spirit. So it is well to be ever on one's guard. Persons who have not advanced beyond these devotional feelings can be easily deceived if they have visions or revelations. I never experienced anything of these latter until God had given me, solely out of His goodness, the prayer of union—except in the case of that first time I mentioned<sup>10</sup> when I saw Christ, which happened many years ago. Would that it had pleased His Majesty that I might have understood it to be a true vision as I did afterward, for it would have done me no small amount of good. No mildness remains in the soul when visions or revelations come from the devil; it is left as though frightened and very grieved.

12. I hold it to be most certain that the devil will not deceive—nor will God permit this—a soul that does not trust itself in anything and that is fortified in the faith and understands that it would die a thousand deaths for one item of the faith. And with this love of the faith, which God then infuses and which is a strong living faith, it always strives to proceed in conformity with what the Church holds, asking of this one and that, as one who has already made a firm assent to these truths. All the revelations it could imagine—even if it were to see the heavens open—wouldn't move it one bit from what the Church holds. If at times it should see itself wavering in its thought against this firmness in the faith—I mean that if it doesn't see in itself this great fortitude and if the devotion or vision doesn't provide help toward this fortitude—it shouldn't consider its locution safe. And this applies as well if it should see itself pause to say: "but if God tells me this, it can also be true as was what He told the saints." I don't mean that the soul believes this, but that the devil begins to tempt it through the first urgings—for just to pause over this thought is already very wrong. But in this case I believe that often not even the first urgings will come if the soul is as strong in the faith as the Lord makes the one to whom He grants these things, for it seems to the soul that the devils would harshly criticize even a very small truth that the Church holds.

13. I say that if the soul doesn't see within itself this great fortitude and that if the devotion or vision doesn't help toward this, it shouldn't consider itself safe. Although it may not immediately feel the harm, little by little this harm could become great. For from what I see and know through experience, a locution bears the credentials of being from God if it is in conformity with Sacred Scripture. And if it should deviate from Scripture just a little, I would have incomparably greater assurance that it comes from the devil than I now have that it comes from God, however, great this latter assurance may be. Then there is no need to go looking for signs or for the spirit the locution comes from. For this sign that it comes

from the devil is such a clear one that if the whole world were to assure me that the locution comes from God I would not believe it.

The fact is that when the locution comes from the devil it seems that all blessings go into hiding and flee from the soul, in that it is left displeased and agitated and without any good effect. For even though it may seem that good desires are given, they are not strong ones. The humility such a locution leaves is false, disturbed, and without gentleness. It seems to me that whoever has experience of the good spirit will understand.

14. Still, the devil can play many tricks; so there is nothing more certain in this matter than to have greater fear and always to seek counsel, to have a master who is a learned man, and to hide nothing from him. In this way no harm can come—although a lot of harm was done to me through these excessive fears that some persons have. Especially, it once happened to me that many in whom I had great trust—and there was reason for this—gathered together to discuss at length a remedy for me. Although I discussed the matter with only one of them, I spoke with the others when this person told me to do so. They were very fond of me and feared lest I be deceived. I also had the greatest fear when I was not in prayer—for when I was in prayer and the Lord was granting me some favor, He then assured me. I believe there were five or six of them,<sup>11</sup> all great servants of God; and my confessor<sup>12</sup> told me that they all came to the decision that my experience was from the devil, that I shouldn't receive Communion so often, and that I should try to distract myself in such a way that I would not be alone. I was extremely fearful, as I said,<sup>13</sup> and my heart trouble added to my fear, for I didn't very often dare remain in a room alone during the daytime. Since I saw that so many agreed that my experience was from the devil and that I myself couldn't believe it was, I felt the greatest scrupulosity, thinking my inability to believe came from my lack of humility. For they all lived a good life—incomparably better than I—and they were learned men. Why shouldn't I believe them? I forced myself insofar as I could to believe what they said, and I thought of my wretched life and that in line with this they must be speaking the truth.

15. I went out of the church with this affliction and entered an oratory. I had for many days given up receiving Communion and given up solitude, which was my whole consolation, since I had no one with whom to speak. They were all against me; some, it seemed, made fun of me when I spoke of the matter, as though I were inventing it; others advised my confessor to be careful of me; others said that my experience was clearly from the devil. My confessor alone (even though he agreed with them in order to test me, as I came to know afterward) always consoled me and told me that even

if my experience were of diabolical origin, the devil couldn't do me any harm if I didn't offend God, that the locutions would go away in due time, and that I should very earnestly beg this of God. And he, his penitents, and many others, as well as I in my own prayer, and as many as I knew to be servants of God begged His Majesty to lead me by another path. This continual beseeching of the Lord lasted I guess about two years.

16. No consolation would suffice for me when I reflected that it was possible the devil should speak to me so often. For since I did not set apart hours of solitude for prayer, the Lord made me become recollected during conversation and, without my being able to avoid it, told me what He pleased; even though I may not have wanted to I had to listen.

17. I was alone then without any person in whom I could find some support, unable to pray vocally or read, but terrified by so much tribulation and fear as to whether the devil would deceive me, completely agitated and wearied without knowing what to do with myself. I have seen myself in this affliction some, or many, times; but it doesn't seem to me ever to such an extreme. I remained in this condition for four or five hours, because there was no consolation for me either from heaven or from earth; the Lord left me to suffer and to fear a thousand dangers.

O my Lord, how You are the true friend; and how powerful! When You desire You can love, and You never stop loving those who love You! All things praise You, Lord of the world! Oh, who will cry out for You, to tell everyone how faithful You are to Your friends! All things fail; You, Lord of all, never fail! Little it is, that which You allow the one who loves You to suffer! O my Lord! How delicately and smoothly and delightfully You treat them! Would that no one ever pause to love anyone but You! It seems, Lord, You try with rigor the person who loves You so that in extreme trial he might understand the greatest extreme of Your love. O my God, who has the understanding, the learning, and the new words with which to extol Your works as my soul understands them? All fails me, my Lord; but if You do not abandon me, I will not fail You. Let all learned men rise up against me, let all created things persecute me, let the devils torment me; do not You fail me, Lord, for I already have experience of the gain that comes from the way You rescue the one who trusts in You alone.

18. While in this great affliction then (although at that time I had not begun to have any vision), these words alone were enough to take it away and bring me complete quiet: "Do not fear, daughter; for I am, and I will not abandon you; do not fear." It seems to me that from the way I felt many hours would have been necessary and

no one would have been able to persuade me to be at peace. And behold by these words alone I was given calm together with fortitude, courage, security, quietude, and light so that in one moment I saw my soul become another. It seems to me I would have disputed with the entire world that these words came from God. Oh, what a good God! Oh, how good a Lord and how powerful! He provides not only the counsel but also the remedy! His words are works! Oh, God help me; and how He strengthens faith and increases love!

19. Hence it is, indeed, that I often recalled the time the Lord commanded the winds to be quiet when the storm arose at sea,<sup>14</sup> and so I said: Who is this that all my faculties obey Him thus, who gives in a moment and in the midst of such great darkness, who softens a heart that seemed like stone, and who gives the water of gentle tears where it seemed there would be dryness for a long time? Who imparts these desires? Who bestows this courage? For it occurred to me to think: What do I fear? What is this? I desire to serve this Lord; I aim for nothing else but to please Him. I want no happiness, no rest, no other good but to do His will (for I felt deeply certain in my opinion that I could make this assertion). If this Lord is powerful, as I see that He is and I know that He is, and if the devils are His slaves (and there is no doubt about this because it's a matter of faith), what evil can they do to me since I am a servant of this Lord and King? Why shouldn't I have the fortitude to engage in combat with all of hell?

I took a cross in my hand, and it seemed to me truly that God gave me courage because in a short while I saw that I was another person and that I wouldn't fear bodily combat with them; for I thought that with that cross I would easily conquer all of them. So I said: "Come now all of you, for, being a servant of the Lord, I want to see what you can do to me."

20. There was no doubt, in my opinion, that they were afraid of me, for I remained so calm and so unafraid of them all. All the fears I usually felt left me—even to this day. For although I sometimes saw them, as I shall relate afterward,<sup>15</sup> I no longer had hardly any fear of them; rather it seemed they were afraid of me. I was left with a mastery over them truly given by the Lord of all; I pay no more attention to them than to flies. I think they're such cowards that when they observe they are esteemed but little, their strength leaves them. These enemies don't know how to attack head-on, save those whom they see surrender to them, or when God permits them to do so for the greater good of His servants whom they tempt and torment. May it please His Majesty that we fear Him whom we ought to fear and understand that more harm can come to us from one venial sin than from all hell together—for this is so.

21. How frightened these devils make us because we want to be frightened through other attachments to honors, property, and delights! It is then that they do us great harm, when they are joined with us who loving and desiring what we ought to abhor are in contradiction with ourselves. For we make them fight against us with our own very weapons, handing over to them what we need for our own defense. This is a great pity. But if we abhor all for God and we embrace the cross and try truly to serve God, the devil will flee these truths like the plague. He is a friend of lies, and is the lie itself. He will make no pact with anyone who walks in truth. When he sees the intellect darkened, he subtly helps to blind the eyes. For if he sees that a person is already blind by the fact that this person places his trust in vain things (and so vain that these worldly things become like children's games), he concludes that this person is then a child, treats him as such, and dares to fight with him not once but many times.

22. May it please the Lord that I not be one of these but that His Majesty favor me so that I may understand by repose what repose is, by honor what honor is, and by delight what delight is—not the reverse; and a fig.<sup>16</sup> for all the devils, because they shall fear me. I don't understand these fears, "The devil! The devil!", when we can say "God! God!", and make the devil tremble. Yes, for we already know that he cannot stir if the Lord doesn't permit him to. What is this? Without doubt, I fear those who have such great fear of the devil more than I do the devil himself, for he can't do anything to me. Whereas these others, especially if they are confessors, cause severe disturbance; I have undergone some years of such great trial that I am amazed now at how I was able to suffer it. Blessed be the Lord who has so truly helped me!

### Chapter 26

Continues on the same subject. Tells and explains about things that happened to her, which both caused her to lose the fear and confirmed that it was the good spirit speaking to her

1. I consider this courage the Lord gave me against the devils one of the great favors He granted me. For that a soul should be intimidated by or fearful of anything other than offending God is a serious disadvantage. Since we have an all-powerful King and so great a Lord that He can do all and that He brings all under His subjection, there is nothing to fear, if one walks, as I said,<sup>1</sup> in truth in the presence of His Majesty and with a pure conscience. Hence, as I said, I would desire all fears so as not to offend for an instant Him who in

an instant can annihilate us, because it pleases His Majesty that there be no one against us whom He will not put to flight.

One could say that this statement is true, but ask further who this soul is that is so upright it pleases God completely, and conclude that thus the soul should fear. Certainly it's not my soul, which is very wretched, unprofitable, and filled with a thousand miseries. But God doesn't carry out His work as people do; He understands our weaknesses. Through extensive conjecturing the soul feels within itself that it truly loves Him; in those who reach this state love isn't disguised as in the beginning stages, but it operates with such powerful impulses and desires to see God, as I shall say afterward or have already said,<sup>2</sup> that everything tires, everything wears, everything torments. If it is not with God or for God, there is no rest that doesn't weary it; so this love is something very clear and, as I say, doesn't pass by in disguise.

2. It happened to me at other times that I was suffering great tribulations and criticism, on account of a certain matter I shall speak of afterward, from almost the entire city where I live and from my order,<sup>3</sup> and afflicted by the many occasions there were for becoming disturbed, when the Lord said to me: "Why are you afraid? Do you not know that I am all-powerful? I will fulfill what I have promised." (And it was truly fulfilled later.) I was immediately left with such fortitude that it seemed to me I would again undertake other things, even though they would cost me greater trials, and I would once more take suffering upon myself in order to serve Him. This has happened so many times that I wouldn't be able to count them. Often His words to me were rebukes—and still are when I commit imperfections. These rebukes are enough to dissolve a soul; at least they bear amendment with them, because His Majesty, as I said,<sup>4</sup> gives both the counsel and the cure. At other times the locutions bring my past sins to mind—especially when the Lord wants to grant me some exceptional favor; it seems the soul is already before the true Judge since they represent the truth to it with such clear understanding that it doesn't know where to hide. At other times the Lord warns me of some dangers I'm in, or of other persons, and about things of the future—three or four years in advance very often—all of which have been fulfilled. Some of these can be pointed out concretely. Thus there are so many reasons for knowing that the words come from God that in my opinion one cannot be ignorant of this.

3. The safest thing, as the Lord told me, is to make known to my confessor the whole state of my soul and the favors God grants me, that he be learned, and that I obey him. The Lord has often told me this. It is what I do, and without doing so I would have no peace;