

# **AFTERNOON TEA AFTER THE APOCALYPSE**

**- A Journey Inward**

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**PRELUDE:**

**THE HOUSE OF PETALS**

## FINAL CHAPTER

They were dying in the pass, the sun was scorching hot. One lay silently on the ground, two were sitting on a rock. It was as only a matter of time, there was still some of it left. None of them knew how much, there were no clouds in the sky. Night was still far off, all the horses were lost. Another one lay down as well, only one was sitting on the rock.

Violet streaks at the edge of the sky like rifts opening up. In this place it doesn't matter, what is a hallucination and what is not. The third one lies down, folds a jacket under his head, this journey will take hours more until the end.

Birds are circling in the distance, eyes follow, then close, not a word is spoken. All is clear, everyone understands, the three witnesses lie in silence on the ground, boundaries crumble, the world opens up, this is the place where death has been waiting all along.

Night above, earth below, mist in the sky, the wind has begun to blow. Stars shine dimly through the mist, two of them lie so very still. The third one opens his eyes, the veil lifts, the stars shine bright. One of the stars shoots and takes flight, curves down fast. Eyes glisten, tears well up, chest rises for the last time and

## IT'S RAINING ON THE LAKE

It's raining on the lake, it's raining on the lake, the bumblebees are hiding among the reeds, the reeds... the space sways, sways beneath the feet, you thought it was life but you died long ago it's raining on the lake, there was no life here at all there was just a bardo, life was elsewhere, we continued as if nothing, barely questioned it at all.

It's raining on the lake, thick drops, the lean bumblebees by the shore, the shore... foolish swaying of the reeds back and forth, back and forth, it's raining on the lake. Now take a good look at this place where you try to find solace, here your feet have never touched solid ground, sand or rock, it doesn't matter, here every house collapses and is then rebuilt again and again just to be blown away by the wind it's raining on the lake, the bumblebees no longer care about anything, they charge straight in, the reed stems pierce the heart, weigh it, declare the judgment it's raining on the lake, endless drops in precise rows, mind sways more and more, all the emotions are here, in the raindrops, in the bumblebees, the reeds sing their judgment and it is favorable, everything continues again, everything continues again, it's raining on the lake

## PHASE TWO

The floorboards creak, crumble and fall. Souls shatter into pieces, are compressed into bales, into pyramids of bales. Clouds cling to the horizon, they spread like ink stains, roll towards, and there you are, your eyes are still breathing the house has collapsed, the clouds scream the horizon bends wickedly no one understands why. All reason has gone away, wasn't here at all.

Where did this place come from, these breathing souls, these collapsed houses, these endless screams, from where?

You will remember, you bring back the Mind, breathe everything back into its place right where it belongs. The clouds over the horizon, the floorboards beneath your feet, you imagine a house around you, no one is screaming, nothing is crumbling, reason is here because you will it so, and whatever it is your soul looks straight at it, takes its power away and lets it go, frees everything back into its source onto its roots, and soars, expands, returns home.

## THE STAR

A comet, no, but three comets with long tails on parallel orbits. And far below in the bed of reeds are two eels all cold and slimy. And these five form the points of a five-pointed star, whose origin is unknown. The star is uncharted and short-lived, yet etched into the fabric of the universe and not by chance.

The eels sing, beautifully they sing in the midst of the reeds the comets speed by mute. But only for a moment, since the star is gone already, not even dust remains behind, and all meaning has vanished with it. Now there's only a straight line between the eels, and in the sky the lonely triangle of the comets. No one knows why geometry permeates everything thoroughly, no one understands it.

Three radiant tails fade slowly in the sky. The eels' beautiful duet bears witness to their flight. The whole world shivers, a trembling in its hollow core, in its every limb,  
and then even the fading tails disappear, the eels continue singing, the star does not return.

## CONVERSION

A candelabrum, perhaps one of its candles is burning perhaps not, perhaps there is a windowsill behind some windowpane perhaps not, and exactly there the candelabrum has been placed. But tears are flowing, rivering, turning into marsh – and that is the law.

This loneliness, that resides in the shadows of these gray plains, has no name. Beneath this sharp ground lies pain, which must be constantly buried alive. And when the two-faced dance has become impossible, only war and the no-man's-land remains.

No matter how many golden birds would fly into the dark abyss, the darkness of the abyss would stay. No candelabrum placed in some sheltered nook will illuminate or warm for long, only for the time needed for the tears to glisten for a moment before they fall, like bombs they are pouring. They drill a hole in the floor, and we know what lurks in the cellar below the floor, and yet the tears continue falling. Hope is a small creature, who flies on the back of a blind bird, and the name of that bird is Hopelessness.

Finally the mind turns away, and at the moment of turning the whole place is vanished. The candles burn steadily, a gentle wind outside, a few streaks of rainwater flow down the window glass. There is a warmth in the house, so much warmth, something takes the heart onto its arms and cradles it from the inside. Eyes close, an inhalation, an exhalation, a silent smile and a sigh. It is so bright. It is so warm.



## THE HOUSE OF PETALS

On the edge of the valley stands The House of the Flying Petals. It is raining stinging pine needles, it has been raining for weeks now. Green flowing needle streams in the place of the forest paths, along them shadowy figures with bowed heads travel towards the House of Petals. The house is aglow with light, it is a bright golden vortex, radiating particles of joy, nothing else inside the house.

The front door opens, the light bursts out, it disperses the hunched shadows into the ways of the wind and beyond. The petals soar into the air in a gushing shower, the house is gone, the petals drift through the sky in the pine needle rain,

until they arrange themselves into sharp letters, into fragments of meaning, into words of a hidden language.

The message is clear, one must depart from the valley. Above the hills an eight-pointed star is guiding, it takes the departee by the hand. The departee looks back one last time, sees you, smiles, leaves forever.

**MEMORIES FROM THE ROAD**

## NOVEMBER

1.

Something twists the place in me that feels, like a rag. It is just above my navel and about a thumb's length inward, a palm-sized area, and what is felt there is no more mine than that grey light-dimmer placed across the sky, that gauze-drape that creeps silently above us like a curse sent from the land of lizards.

It is dark, only a prickling cluster of electric lights has been built against it. The darkness has gathered above the vastness of the lake, its core lies in the heart of the lake's desolateness, and if I could see nothing but only feel, that darkness would be warmth and light – as it is – and the city behind me a maddening lightless hollow I would never enter – as it is. But since I am not only an immaterial feeling mind, I cannot dive into the arms of the darkness that calls me except in spirit, those rocky shores and icy waters would destroy my body instantly. I live now a mad life among the electric people, this is how it is arranged in this time, nothing to be done. But at least I now know what is warmth, what is cold, and what is worse, I know my eyes tend to turn things upside down, and I know that one day I will fly into the bottomless world of warmth that opens before me, where loneliness does not exist, that is where I will fly free before I leave this place for good to rejoin my own kind, who are not of this world,

Yes, I know, and in the moment of knowing something comes out of the darkness and touches me gently and lights a glow inside me, a glow that has always been there. And even if I turn back and leave as I must, it still glows and does not fade, we are all cradled in the lap of our grandmother born of darkness, here we have always been her glowing foster grandchildren, runaways from Home, badly lost.

2.

My task was the way I walked, I am walking it still. I look back and do not understand, yet I understand well. I have not been able to stop and stay for company, nor build a home. And the two of you whom I waited for, I could not call you to me, now you walk somewhere else. I have tried carefully to listen to the voice of my task, and always I have had to walk forward, no matter the cost. I have left behind more than I wish to bear, and I still do not understand, yet I understand well.

Sometimes I have given in a little and stayed for a moment, pretended a home in the middle of unknown regions, raved and smiled among strangers as if I too were someone who had a life, then shaken myself free and departed again on my way, which has carried me far, so far,

and now I stand at the edge of the world and no longer know how to scream, or cry, or laugh,

so I write with my pen, tears in my eyes, maybe smiling a little.

## ANOTHER LANDSCAPE

1.

A glowing orb above the green meadow. Only for a fleeting moment. Then again, above the green meadow. Then farther off, against the darkness, against the shadows, and I hear a strange rumble whose source I do not recognize. It is late evening and I do not know what to think. Then the light is gone and does not return.

It was not of this world. I saw it as I see everything else, but my eyes could not reach it. It had come closer on purpose, for a visit, it was a message I saw when it touched my mind – so I believe – that glowing orb above the green meadow, a flashing message on the unmoving surface of awareness.

Farther off the darkness deepens, thickens. Soon the meadow is no longer green. And I am not of this world either, only a flashing message like everything else, for a moment on the green meadow, then gone, then again against the darkness, against the shadows, then gone.

2.

In the morning, the wind blew a group of dark blue leaves to my door. They were a strange dark blue, the size of a palm, still alive. I did not open the door to the leaves, I did not want them in my house. I watched through the window as they swirled outside, performed their spinning ritual and waited. I watched for a long time and did not give in.

Then I suddenly changed my mind. Not about the dark blue leaves, but about the whole world. I flung the door wide open and let the swirling blueness blow in however it wanted. It was not my house, those leaves and their empty ritual meant nothing at all, and I was not even there. No one was there. I left the door open and was gone.

## ORIGINS

## THE FALSE KING

Night, a desert and three camels. Upon the camels a false king and two servants – one black, one white. The stars decide the way, the false king walks his fated line, the servants whisper to his ears – one to the left, one to the right.

Desert ships sail, black and white prophecies fulfill themselves. Every destination a city of mirages – some within, some without.

The sun rises and begins to scorch the false kingdom, the false king goes on,

no one knows how to laugh.



## THE LADDER

The ladder to Heaven descends into the cellar, through the cellar floor into the dark. In the dark is an eye that never closes, it dreams continuously. In the dreams, the dream's hero builds a ladder and believes in himself, in the guidance, and the way,

and Heaven waits at the top of the ladder, it waits at the top of the ladder, rung by rung the ladder rises, Heaven waits, it waits at the top of the ladder.

There is another direction for the eye to look. It opens behind the secret of the cellar.

## THE KNIFE

You do see the knife, don't you? Pale it flickers above the red river, that single-pointed moon, countless cuts it has carved. Hidden, denied, yet cherished by its bearer, the blade forged from the primeval ether, the handle nothing but fear. The red has flowed for eons already, no one has ever measured the number of screams, no scale has ever weighed justice for anyone, the knife is the law that strikes unrelentingly in the shadows of the night,  
the glory lies unseen.

## THE RAIN

Drops in the dark, falling like stones. Each one hits its mark, no shelter helps.

The blows of the drops, the pain of the blows, the terror of the pain: they all come and find their way out from every hiding place behind every imaginable veil. They find their way and begin to strike hard – black rain hammering inside the heart, summoned there by ourselves.

A chamber of emptiness was carved at the edge of the Kingdom. In the chamber, a lonely eye turned inside out and began to see tales. The tales did not stay happy for long – no, soon they became terrible, terrible. The stones found their way and bombarded, striking hard.

## THE FALSE COMMUNION

Bone splinters were crunched then swallowed, life devoured life. Red screams rolled across the sky, the wind blew knives – it rained severed veins, it had rained from the start.

But it was no life at all, it was a series of mockeries rushing through the dark, the bearer of the glowing crown once flicked his finger and gone,  
the world-seer, the world.

## TURNING POINTS

## POSTCARD HOME

1.

Moonlit path, trees droop with shadowy castles in the air. Birds flicker as black rustlings through the foliage. The traveler's step is long and swift, the ground is panting, a mad shepherd sets the lost sheep dancing,

no... no...

The jewel of the heart was lost with the setting of the light. Now, before the light hangs an impenetrable veil, thick and heavy. Only unlucky mirrors remain in place of the glory, a mere pump in the center of the chest, hands beat the pace ever harder and harder, words and formulas pour down from the sky,

this storm has churned for thousands of years...

Luckily, a hole in the heavens was opened, now cracks everywhere, and through them the new light shines in. The moon can no longer stay in its place, it shatters away. The traveler detaches from all directions, a white bird descends right here and settles at the center of the heart,

sings a sweet song, does not stop.

2.

Cold caravans, clunk clunk clunk, the wheels plow heavily. Dry desert crumpled into dust, thorns in the travelers' flesh right from the start. A whole world stuffed into a dark grey box, in the center of the box a peephole for the Eye. From it, the Eye does not know how to detach and turn away. It is immersed in the view and waits for the light to rise, for greener grass, for the embrace of companions, for dance, and song,

it waits and waits, sometimes glimpsing something better, so it could bear it all and keep on watching,

and when one box is played through the next one awaits in turn, an endless row of boxes arches into the distance in the midst of an endless void.

A hand lands on the Seer's shoulder, pulls warmly back. Vastness touches, detachment begins, the Eye remembers itself, the dreamer is revealed and disappears –

Home.

## THE ELEVATOR

It was a kind of beam moving swiftly through the layers of the cosmos — our mechanical, hand-cranked elevator was usually completely jammed or moved only a little — but now the views galloped like wild horses and I no longer knew what was black, what was red, anything could come at any moment and it did, in every layer a different world opened up to be experienced, and there were thousands of those worlds and within each thousands of different beings.

The elevator's original designers were clearly out of their minds, the cranks were turned any which way,

but the beam was violet gold, it wanted to yank us free and it did, straight through the ceiling.



## THE CAVALRY

The cavalry trotted in through my left ear, armed with songs, instruments, wine and cigars. I had spent three years as a prisoner on the lowest floor of an apartment building, the orders of my guards were harsh and confining, the psychological chains were strong. I had already planned my escape, but now I didn't need to, the cavalry danced on the tables and I laughed.

## THE RIDDLE

Within your mind is a table, I built it for you, I placed a vase in the middle, inside the vase is you. I walk in silence on the side, I paint a wave in the air, the vase flourishes, you are no longer there.

Do what you will with the table, there is no table. The vase unfolds into a transparent square, the flourishing wave billows in every direction and dissolves into blooming air.

Vastness descends, it transforms into a bridge,  
there is no one to cross, the seer returns.

## INTERLUDE

## IN THE NO-MANS-LAND

Let's say it was a house. Or maybe not a house, but some kind of dwelling, possibly even a house. And there I was. Not in a room, but in a space resembling a room. The space opened into other room-like spaces, and eventually to somewhere outside the house. At least that boundary was clear. Or almost clear.

I don't know how long I had been there. The passage of time was confusing. Sometimes I doubted if there was time at all. Maybe there was something else in the place of time. And it was dark. Not a lightless black, but dark in the way that emptiness is dark.

But how did I know I was in a house or a dwelling or in some such thing? I didn't. Those were conclusions I had drawn from the situation, and I admit my reasoning was shaky. My memory didn't work properly either. I didn't understand how I had ended up in that place. I just was there.

I rarely went outside. The outside scared me. There wasn't much solid there. I mean really solid. The house was possibly on a small island, and beyond the island everything was swelling, surging, flowing. It was possibly the sea. I wasn't sure, but it was powerful, endlessly rolling.

Did I mention I was alone? I was alone indeed. There was nothing else there but the sea and the island. And me inside my dwelling that was possibly imaginary. Nevertheless, it was my refuge.

I also had feelings. Or possibly memories. Or premonitions. I don't know what they were, but they told about a different place, that just a few moments ago things had been different, that I had been someone else. And where I had been, there had been others. Many others. I had had a real house and it had been some kind of life I had lived. There had been a whole wide world there, a world full of events and beings, full of everything. Yes, maybe it had been life.

And I remembered more. There had been other someones, many others, and I had been each one of them. I had lived in numerous different houses, known others like me, and so much had happened. And now each of those houses was a memory or a feeling or a premonition, gone in any case. And I was here. Or what was left of me was here. I couldn't quite say what that was.

The place I was in felt unstable. Impermanent. At risk. The whole place could be wiped away at any moment. I felt this clearly. Maybe it was knowledge. But knowing it didn't feel pleasant. I would have preferred not to know.

Moreover, the sea held something that worried me. It pressed me continuously. I knew it had to be resisted and kept away, even if I didn't know what it was. Or maybe I knew but didn't want to know. Or maybe I had known at some point and decided to forget.

However it was, I couldn't trust my dwelling. Perhaps I could have stayed there without the looming threat from the sea. Without it everything could have been different. The threat constantly messed with my mind, squeezed from within, squeezed hard. Without the threat,

maybe I could have remembered why I was there. Without it I might have even been happy. Or almost happy. Or something like happy.

I knew it hadn't always been like this. This whole situation, and the houses where one could be someone else. No, there had once been something entirely different. Yes, there had been some kind of mistake, and I had made that mistake myself. And now I was here. Maybe on the run and hiding, maybe banished. I don't know, but here nonetheless, as a result of my mistake.

The world before my mistake was completely gone. I didn't know how to restore it. I didn't even remember what that previous world had been like. Not properly. Or not at all, I wasn't sure. The connection had been severed. I now lived alone in an empty dwelling that I maybe imagined. And there was a threat in the sea, I was sure of that. Yes, there was no ambiguity at all about that.

The memories of lives where I had been someone else were places where the threat in the sea would not find me. That is how it seemed. Those memories were sometimes almost within reach, behind a thin membrane or veil or some such thing. If whatever lived in the sea would come and attack, I might be able to escape behind the veil and be one of those others again, and live in a real house again, at least for a while. And at least I would be away from here.

The world before my mistake also scared me. In fact, it scared me even more than what lived in the sea. If I had tried to go back there, I was sure I would have been wiped out of existence completely. But that was futile thinking. I didn't know how I could go back. Maybe the previous world didn't even exist anymore. But I sensed that it did. I longed for it, desperately, and at the same time I feared it. But I knew I couldn't go back there. It wasn't possible. It just wasn't. I knew that much. Absolutely. No way.

However, remembering this doesn't bring relief, quite the opposite. The sea around me has awakened, it roars and surges powerfully, waves are hitting the island, now they are crashing against the door. They don't bring anything good that's for sure, anxiety, immense anxiety, something inside me convulses, guilt, fear and pain, I want to escape, to shut out the sea, it is too much, I can't endure it, I don't know what to do, anything that would take this away would do, anything, anything, anything,

I turn around forcibly and there is a veil, behind the veil is emptiness, bubbles are floating in the emptiness, one of the bubbles slides toward me, me toward the bubble. I see a figure inside it, a landscape, a road, a house. I know I could become all that and escape, that all of it could be mine, it's already mine, there is no other choice. Something in me argues against this, the voice is quiet, I can't hear it properly even if I want to, the sea roars behind me, threatens to surge and swallow, I must go and quickly.

## A REPORT FROM THE GARDEN

No, there has been no one here in the first place, that is clear as day, but no one here believes it, I don't really believe it myself either, so the situation is quite tricky. It looks like one thing but is actually something else entirely, a sun-revolves-around-the-earth kind of thing, except worse, something of a completely different order.

This is a garden. It's late summer evening, windless, warm, and nearly pitch dark. No stars or moon can be seen in the sky, so it's probably cloudy. The garden is behind a wooden house, both are surrounded by a fence even though there are no neighbors, and beyond the fence is a field of grass and then forest. In the garden grow apple trees and berry bushes, there are all kinds of planting beds, terraces and paths, the chirr of insects fills the air, and then there is me.

I sit in a covered garden swing, alone this time, but I'm not always alone, far from it. All kinds of visitors and acquaintances show up here, and animals too — and sometimes figures who have come from distant lands — but in truth, no one has ever really been here, not truly, I believe so, because I've seen it with my own eyes many times and felt it deep inside. But of course, I don't know it now, because I don't see or feel it now. No, now I'm here in the garden, and that is what makes the situation confusing, only beliefs and guesses are left, and none of my guests or acquaintances have, at least so far, offered any precise or straightforward help in resolving this matter.

I may have lost my mind. That's very possible, even highly likely, probable indeed. But that doesn't mean that everything I experience or think is fundamentally and thoroughly irrational, not at all, that's not the case. Even blind hens peck up surprising amounts of grain, I've witnessed that too personally many times.

The loss of my reason must have happened in the distant past, I think so, even though I can't recall the exact time. Or actually, the whole claim that I've lost my mind is just a conclusion I've written down in this diary — or rather, this noctuary, since it has been night here for as long as I can remember. But I've no certainty about this matter, only my conclusion, since my memory isn't all that reliable either, but I've checked my conclusion many times thoroughly and carefully, and it's unlikely that I've made a mistake. Something has indeed happened to my reason, in the past most probably and definitely not in the future, this is quite sound reasoning, and because it's sound it contradicts the very conclusion I've made.

Maybe it would be best to start all over and go through everything again, thoroughly, but I don't know where the beginning is. My earliest memories are vague fragments — my fingers caught in a closing door, being startled by someone who wakes up suddenly, laughing uncontrollably on the lawn because someone spun me around too many times, and so on — but from the time prior to that I remember nothing, and the fragmented memories I do have don't make for a proper beginning. And you can't possibly begin from dark and empty nothingness, I really don't believe such a thing could be a real beginning, those who claim so have surely gone

astray somewhere, and yet they still draw their conclusions with a strange air of confidence and upright posture, what exactly are they trying? No, the decisive piece has most apparently been forgotten, or lost in some other way, and as a result reason was probably lost too, and what's left is only this, which in the end isn't much, and this at least can be said with fairly high certainty.

It feels like I've been sitting in this dark garden for thousands of years, meeting only madmen and schemers and encountering all kinds of beastliness and hearing strange and threatening sounds from beyond the fence. The memories I still have flicker and wobble severely, no point in denying it. Nothing has ever been certain and all my conclusions zigzag wildly, so I'm not about to put everything on one ragged card whatever that card may be, but something has to be done.

I suspect this whole garden and this dark night are just a facade, some kind of clever finish, but I can't get below it. I'm stuck here where I am, and honestly, I wouldn't dare to look beneath the facade even if I could. I've of course done some traveling, been in the house and beyond the fence, and now and then I've been on a walk with my guests. I believe I'm quite old by now, but I'm not sure, because my sense of time is broken in a way I can't even begin to define. I don't need to eat or drink, defecate or work, though I probably still breathe and have some sort of heart that beats. I can move my limbs, jump, speak and shout. And I can think and feel, if this qualifies as thinking and feeling, I can't say.

Sometimes I think this must be a magic garden, but for some reason the magic just hasn't worked that well. But if it is so, then who is the magician and where is he, where is the audience, at least I feel no urge to clap, I'm not astonished in the slightest, I'm rarely entertained, and to be honest, I'm rather bored and a little irritated too.

These days I don't often think this is a magic garden. I don't know what this is. But even as I consider my own ignorance, I feel in my gut that it's not true, that I'm fooling myself, that I do know. But when I try to grasp what it is I know, I can never reach anything — my understanding scrapes up only emptiness, my memory is riddled with black voids, my intuition shrugs helplessly, my instincts just stomp in place — and I feel even more foolish than before. Strange situation, I can't get anywhere, but I can't let it go either.

On the other hand, I could just as well say this isn't a garden, so why not, let's say that. I do sit beneath some kind of canopy, on a bench or something like a bench, swaying gently back and forth. Around me is a space, fairly symmetrically bounded, and there are various shadowy figures everywhere, from which you could easily imagine all sorts of things — not anything you like, but many things nonetheless. Guests never come here, and I never go anywhere, I just talk to myself constantly or write my thoughts into this notebook. This is indeed a book, and yes, I do have a pen in my hand, and it's a small miracle I can still see to write because it's so dark — the little lantern hanging from a stick off to the side gives hardly any light at all. I think I'm writing mostly by sheer willpower, yes, I could write completely legible text into the air with just my finger if I had to. Well, that's just boasting, but there's some truth in it too, since writing is perhaps the most important thread I've still got left in this place, I don't know what would happen if I stopped all of a sudden, and I'm not ready to find out. So I sit here in this silent

darkness and write and I don't dare to stop, and beneath the surface is something I know nothing about and don't want to know either, and somewhere out there is the true beginning I don't remember at all, or at least that's what I tell myself,

and heavens, look, the lantern burns brighter, shadows gather behind the fence, something is about to happen. My hands are shaking, the garden shakes, the swing rocks, the shadows sway, soon my pen will fall for sure. No, not yet, I'm not ready. Over my grey corpse through my dead stone, bring me a windmill and I'll shove it into the abyss with my own bare hands! My time has not yet come, I'll ramble here to myself until the end of the world, no use trying anything, there's no one here, there's nothing here, nothing to see, nothing at all.



**GREY-EYE**

1.

Grey-Eye on the ash-mountain path, climbing toward the summit, a black stone on his back. At the peak is a tree – it is uprooted and thrown away. Another one grows in its place – it is uprooted and thrown away. The stone falls into the valley, Grey-Eye must retrieve it. The mountain waits, the ash blows, Grey-Eye walks on,  
the cycle repeats.

2.

Grey-Eye found the path to the edge, to the border of the grey land. A hole was pierced into it as with a pin, the beyond flooded through and filled the grey land,  
no Grey-Eye at all.

3.

I recall Grey-Eye, but I cannot remember the beginning, the middle, or the end. Only a faint,  
misty darkness brushes the edge of my mind,  
or perhaps even that is imagined, I do not know.

4.

The mouth that told the story of Grey-Eye has fallen silent. A eulogy was written on a wind that blew a decade ago. If a grave had been dug, it would be empty. The Seer has gone on.

Grey-Eye, Grey-Eye, you vanished into the ode of light.

## **THE SECRET DREAM**

1.

Guilemind, the son of fear.  
Strides through the plain of spikes.

Sentience broken, a hundred-faced.  
Hooks at his belt.

Shadows rise, backs turn.  
A rain of knives.

2.

Dark currents of the Knife Night,  
black-out lamps, suffocated cries.

Strikes, irreversible.

Nothing can be undone.

Beneath the surface, behind the eyes:  
the strikes of the Knife Night, the dark cries.

The light does not burn.

Nothing returns.



3.

Vastness shattered, the plains mere dust,  
black smoke in place of the sky.

The ground gasps pain.

You flail with your weapons, you strike.  
You wail and bleed, alone.

The years pass by.

You handed yourself the Cup of Blades and began to drink.  
You drew the borders of the realm of the False King.

Rivers run red.  
Bellows blow into cold ash.  
Black smoke in place of the sky.

The years pass by.

4.

The land of ruin,  
the brink of tears,  
alone is the king.

Cuts,  
a red rain,  
drops on the ground.

*The secret of the deep appeared before the eyes.  
A thought hunted down its maker, the blind denier.*

Forms are born within.  
Shadows come without.

And strike.

5.

Wall against the secret.

A land for the stranger to flee.

The straw gods are silent.

The knife is the law.

A breach opens in the asker's wall.

The call is answered.

The secret is revealed.

The King returns.

## THE WAY

## THE CALL

Come.

The grey shadows do not sing, do not touch.  
Tormenting visions, tormenting stories,  
sharp imaginings like barbed spikes  
gnawing gnawing gnawing  
screaming.

You detach and turn if you will, if you must.

Come, come.

It is time for the borders of time, for the battle to fade.  
Wind moves, the vastness breathes and expands,  
the glory is everywhere.

No more suffocating nights, no more loneliness,  
never again.

It is time.

The primal  
awakens  
vibrates

*silence*

## THE MAP

Vastness, all of wholeness open wide.  
A gunshot thunders, the bullet is the dark.

A tear inhabits the night.

*a flash*  
*a blade*  
*an eye*

Red rain falls.

*Listen*

Hand in hand, wideness breathes,  
all of wholeness open wide.

*no bullet*  
*no dark*  
*no thing*

## THE WAY

A thread comes loose, the ribbon breaks.

Mouths, minds, hearts grind the black fog,  
painting the mirror with that same old terrible howling image.

One breaks free and moves on,  
a spark flares in the air and is gone.

The afterimage scatters into wind, a verse is written:

get loose,  
get loose,  
get loose,

*silence*

## THE RIDDLE

Behold, begin.

The trees, winds, waves are all calling.  
The eye of the needle is silence,  
and those who step through will vanish.

*Vibrating bubbles glow for a moment and burst.  
A wave spreads into vastness and laughs.*

Without bounds there is all.  
There is no such thing as the beyond.

Vastness is a voice in the air.  
The beginning is there.



## **THREE STORIES**

**a gnostic tale -of a kind**

The first tale begins in the middle, in the middle of the forest, on a clearing. Damp, sinking grass, and toward the center, some denser hummocks. Among them grow stunted birches, a dog lies skull broken beside a large rock.

The rock is man-high, half-covered in moss. The dog might be a hound, it is hard to say in the twilight. At the edge of the clearing is a cluster of large boulders, beside the dog's head is a smaller stone, sharp-edged, a smear of pulp and red along its side.

The dog no longer moves, it has already been dead for a while. It has not yet been eaten, only the insects have arrived. Crimson and brownish splashes along the rough surface of the large rock like fake cave paintings, real signs of yet another life undone.

The dog is gone and will not return.

The blow came from the left, slightly from above, and hard. There was no second strike. The dog had been barking furiously on the side, trying to break free from its chain. It succeeded but only later, helplessly late to be of any use. Still it did what it could, licked its master's face clean and then dashed into the woods chasing the attacker's scent. And there in the dimness of the clearing, by the mossy stone, it met its own end, letting out one last howl.

Death is a thread that flows. It strikes continuously, with pressure. Eventually it pounds all things into crumbs, into shards that will never come back together again.

Life is a swell. It rolls into the electric void of vibrations and draws together the parts it needs. A breath begins, pulse condenses and rises, the urge comes to birth an eye into the dark and see, to scream and to run.

These two gods are blind. Blind, and the only ones this world knows, no others will come.

The god of love does not look this way, he knows nothing of this. For him, this does not exist, and that is his answer.

That answer must be heard here.

Two split skulls – one in a yard, one on a forest clearing – consciousness dispersed from both into the winds as unaware as before. Only a few fragments of memory still drift before the mind's eye, then the dissolution ends and the blind gods spin the seer forward along the path of no purpose.

The seer does it all to himself, over and over, and does not know it itself. Taking shape again somewhere into someone, remembering nothing, and it will not take long before two more skulls are shattered and another vessel is in pieces.

We cannot get out of the situation on our own, but still we know there is an opening out of here. Somewhere in the borderlands there is an opening, and behind that opening the answer of the god of love is patiently waiting.

The second tale is a tale of forgetting.

It tells of a beach and a sea, white sand stretching nearly beyond sight, the sun glows behind a fine veil of clouds, a soft wind blows, the sea laps like velvet. Or maybe it is a warm, windless night, and moonlight. Dark silence moves gently, bare feet press into the sand, toes curling into warmth. Inside is a deep stillness, thoughts flow like the voice of destiny, the sand breathes heat, the sea sighs peace, and so on, until the tale is over.

One must die like a leap into the abyss.

Before the leap, one must live, live completely, die completely, a thousand times and more. One must offer the rightful share to both blind gods again and again, until the hourglass is full and despair catches fire and those flames burn so hot that no other choice but the leap remains.

In the death at the bottom of the abyss, a gap opens, a hand reaches out, but there is no one left to grasp, the hand scoops emptiness, then carries it away.

Walk away from this knowledge, do not listen to the tale of the abyss. Search for the beach you have always longed for, where you truly belong. Seek until you find it, and if you do, hold on. And if you're dissatisfied (as you will be), move on and find another one, and another still. Do not listen to the sounds of cracking skulls on the side, do not look upon the sacraments of terror performed in the church of the blind gods, do not see them. Just keep walking, I mean this sincerely.

Look instead at how moonlight glows a silvery path in the sand beneath your feet, feel how the sea breeze brushes under your robes. Realize how in the arms of the beach you can sway forever toward stillness and peace, toward a lucid fate, in union with all that is.

And even if you never arrive there, walk toward it still. Even if trenches and barricades block your path, even if hunger and sickness rise against you, walk toward that beach and do not stare into that abyss like a maw. Even if all the skulls you knew have shattered except your own, even if the fire of despair begins to sear and the world's howling becomes a roaring storm in your ears, hold the truth of the beach, it is the only way. Away from the abyss, away from the abyss, away from the abyss, it is worse than death, why even mention it at all.

Because the third tale must be told.

The abyss is a point where the previous life ends. The leap is the beginning, the first step. There everything is wagered on the abyss and against oneself, everything is given away, no matter what comes.

Faith in life after the abyss means nothing. Every leaper believes in it, but none of it is true, nothing goes the way one thinks, all belief is delirium. The abyss is the abyss, and it puts an end to the self. At the bottom of the abyss opens a gap and a beginning, but no one arrives there. Something else goes on.

The answer was given already at the beginning, no other call will come.

There is only one way out of the land of the shattering skulls, the beach of dreams is merely a dream.

The abyss is within, a leap without conditions.

A gap opens, behind the gap is the Home.

The answer sounds.

## AFTER THE TALES

On the other side of the abyss stands the one who crossed, a lantern has been lit. Longing gazes back over its shoulder, a message is sent that cannot be heard, the wind catches it and throws it into the abyss. The wind takes the longing too, even the lantern an illusion, the one who has crossed goes on. Not even an empty canvas remains, no abyss, no wind, no one.

A flower opens.

## THE VERSES OF THE END OF ALL

## THE VERSES OF THE END OF ALL

I sit and write the verses of detachment, the verses of the end of all, the song of falling away. The evening darkened into night long ago, the night vanished and took no one with it. It is useless to shout, useless to utter a word. What is over, is over.

The path of moments ends in an opening that is black, I know what lies beyond it. The steps are still unfolding, they cannot be hurried. No one truly arrives.

The heat of the evening and the rhythm of moments, here and now, memories and future merely an ode to the empty. Stories scatter into the wind, no one ever heard them, illusion wades into fading verses, the song is finished.

## THE LOON

The loon, the loon, the call and the echo, the night has ended. The cry has pierced the hut of my twilight, the hut is gone, the loon is gone, a step –

The spiral path only a memory, that memory existed yesterday. The path ended fifteen years ago, and that path was the whole life. The wanderer is no more, only the rememberer sways in the mist, memories are mist, life is mist,

come back, loon!

No return. The reeds tremble, the mist circles round, no return.

Behind the eyes an eye, no sound at all. Above an opening and it shines, the night has ended. The echo circles back, behind the echo the loon, the loon, the mist and the circle –

Enough. The night has ended. A step



## THE ARRIVAL

All the frogs have gone, no more spawning, no more croaking. Nights have turned cold, days a pale haze pressing heavily on the shoulders. Dim trails crawl into puddles across this old land, structures rise and fall within the electric stream. The stream can barely breathe anymore, it is already old and tired, it wants to be gone from here.

Worn-out electric channels, fields bent to ruin. Masked animals wrapped in cages of thought, a terrifying pace. The mist is thick, the puddles reek, the cranes no longer fly.

The magic frogs arrived and departed, this could not be a home for them. The cranes left soon after, carried away the groves and the mires, the spirits of the copper-golden pines. They went to seek a land more fit for their spells, where a fair green maiden had built a new house for them from the clear currents.

Above the house an opening, a path and the light. The stream of possibility sparkles, the spawning begins, the cranes descend –

Come.

## LABORS

Ploughing has ended, the ploughs have been forged into flying saucers, the saucers rise in smooth lines above the fields, soaring freely wherever they want.

The Earth has changed. The dark and cramped box of mist, where all kinds of monsters dwelled, has at last decayed from over the mind. It is now mere dust, knowingness flowed from the opened gap and shattered it away. One hundred and fifty angelic senses unfolded into bright blossoms, from the blossoms rose a thousand new hues that painted the wall of perception anew.

The Earth has changed, the saucers are flying, the time of the ploughs will return.

## THE SURGE

Currents of dark winds, translucent, detached from the center. The vibrating threads continued their journey, carrying new bubbles along. Now only emptiness at the center, behind the emptiness a golden surge, no beginning, no end.

The surge rolls here, now, so gently – love

In the flow of threads a fleet of boats. In each boat is someone and a tangle of stories. The flow widens, the flow is the sea. In the sea the journey of the threads, the whirling spirals.

Islands rise for sailors to inhabit, endless number of islands, not a one of them is home. The inward path is the only passage, it is not found in the sea of threads.

The golden surge shines tenderly on a lone boat, the archipelago fades behind, the sea-fall ahead, the horizon opens, the boat is gone.

## **AFTERNOON TEA AFTER THE APOCALYPSE**

1.

The journey is over, the work is done, the task completed. I sit on a rocky ledge beneath the old pines, resting and reflecting. Below, by the shore, lies the boat I rowed here, a small lighthouse beside me, the lake's surface flat as glass, a gull crying in the summer sky.

I wonder if I had lost something important along the way, or if I was simply still tired. Or perhaps I had changed into this permanently, become some other being?

I am not sure, but there is no return anymore. No new journey will come, no new task. With what remains, I must go on, not knowing what to undertake, not knowing where to go. I have changed in a way for which I have no name, all that remains is the next step, and the next – the stream of unknown moments to be received.

*After these lines a warm  
current within my chest,  
like a reminder, or a promise.*

2.

I sit at home in my chair, watching the landscape spread beyond the trees. It is the twilight of a summer night, the sky nearly cloudless, the city's pulse a distant murmur, reaching me as if from another world.

I try to reflect on my life, but my thoughts have fallen silent, refusing to move. Had I been somewhere before, and was I on my way somewhere else tomorrow? So say the stories in my mind, the voices of memories and thoughts: that my life is a continuum of experience, whose beginning I do not recall, whose future or end I do not know.

But it is only this moment that exists – a moment no one arrived at, from which no one can be found. A dark blue vastness stretches above me like an immense dome, currents of light scattered here and there below, sounds murmur in the distance, eyelids begin to fall. I put down my thoughts and my pen, and step away.

*Thoughts in the sky of the mind like noctilucent clouds:  
they shine just enough to make you believe you see.*

*Only after sunrise  
you understand the dark.*

3.

Christian monks kept watch over the beer as it fermented in vats, gave instructions and performed blessings. The beer was bottled and sent a thousand kilometers away, to this place where I live, and now I am sipping it on the balcony, with a view that opens far across lakes and forests.

I do not know what to think, I cannot come up with anything to worry about. I smile and send the monks my thanks, wish them health and long life, success in their inner work.

*A noble drink, made well and with love,  
brings Heaven a step closer, sends its blessings  
to the wanderer in a distant land.*

4.

I am sitting on the sofa in an upstairs room of a guesthouse, hundreds of kilometers behind me. The view from the window opens across the fields to a lake, everything is quiet, the clouds crawl slowly by, the light is beginning to fade.

I do not know why I am here, in this room, on this journey. But I do not need a reason. I write to pass the time, relax and wait for the bathroom to free up and for my companion to return. If tomorrow comes, the journey continues.

*Wherever I am, I am both traveling and at home,  
I write lines of not-knowing,*

*I cannot say why.*



5.

Amid the grey of winter, the lights are burning – yellow, white, and orange. I watch them spellbound, all my thoughts vanished. It is not quiet, and yet it is quieter than silence.

*Silence opens into infinity,  
the waves of the world are glowing,  
everywhere the lights are burning.*

## **POST SCRIPT**

1.

A cry broke into the wind,  
the pain vanished into brightness.

There is no one who finds.  
There never was.

The world of reflections breathes as before.  
The ten thousand things in their own places.

I sit on a stone by the shore.  
I do not know how to tell.

2.

The senses are immeasurably happy.  
Primal forces sway the threads of atoms,  
mouth agape, I watch the swells of being at the edge of the world,  
  
no words come.

3.

A moment still.

For a moment still the journey happens.

I open my arms to the world and let it come to me  
whatever is meant to come.

I am here and I am elsewhere,  
here and here –

a single pillar of light.