

There are many paths to discovery of wisdom
There is only One Way
Being One

The Cave

(Originally crafted by Plato and modified here)

The traveler closed the consulting business and made his way through the farm plains and into the mountains. He had to get reconnected to the source of this deep healing peace he had experienced by the lake. Perhaps such a connection could happen in the mountains. As he climbed the first mountain it began to rain and then thunder. He sought shelter in a cave. As he rested just inside the cave he heard voices from deep inside. He looked back into the darkness of the cave but could see nothing. He moved a little further into the darkness to see if he really did hear the voices. He stopped, listened, and was convinced that these were human voices coming from the depths of the cave.

The traveler walked into the darkness to experience the nature of these voices. As he walked closer there was an artificial light, not like the sun, around which people were gathered. The artificial light produced an energy that attracted the people and they all shared knowing what they called “the glow”. The traveler heard them talk of the glow as if it were the only source of light. Stepping away from the glow meant trying to walk in the darkness. Some people had tried and disappeared without a word. Others tried and their screams were the last thing people heard. The traveler sat against the rock wall and listened.

They continued their talk about the glow. The light that it cast into their world was described as the path of knowing, because no one could see or know anything in the darkness except certain death. The glow provided safety, a way of seeing others, and a way of seeing the world. They described the objects in their world as having the side that faced the glowing and the side that faced the darkness. It was said that the correct way to live was to always be on the right side of the glow. There was a fervent certainty that this was the way to live the good life. The people in the group each supported each other in these views as they each described things and experiences in their world through the glow. The traveler sat and listened.

Some of the people talked about how they felt stirrings in their bodies as if they possessed some deep need yet to be fulfilled. These people were the seekers among the group. The traveler could see that sometimes these people would sit outside the group, often alone. He would watch them as they would venture slightly away from the glow and into the darkness, but only into the dim gray. He would notice how at times these persons would cry in their solitude from the group, then return to the group to engage in story telling, and physical pleasures. At times these acts seemed to help and some of the people would talk about how good they felt after. But within a short time these seekers would return to complaining about the inner stirrings, leave the group and start the process again. The traveler just sat in the darkness and listened.

The complaints about the inner stirrings seemed to cause great pain in the seekers. The seekers would go to great lengths to rid themselves of this pain. They

tried to huddle in the gray areas, they would pace back and forth for hours as if trying to go or to run, some would hit themselves repeatedly with a rock trying to beat it away, and, yet no matter what they did they always returned to the same pattern of seeking. There was so much suffering in this struggle. This was very hard for the traveler to experience without saying something.

The traveler then spoke, “ Why are you here?”

The traveler’s words startled the people. They had not been aware of his presence and once being aware they were frightened. With a trembling voice they spoke, “Who are you? What are you doing here?”

The traveler simply responded by saying, “I am here to help you. Can someone tell me why you are all here?”

From the crowd the traveler heard several voices cry out the same answer, “This is our home. We have lived here for our entire life. It is what we know.”

The traveler then began to tell them whom he was and that he had come from outside the darkness. He described a place full of light much brighter than the glow and with color much richer than what was in their cave world. But there was no one in the group who believed him. They spoke of the screams from the darkness and of the lost people who never returned. There could not be anything else because no one has brought them evidence. At this point the traveler stopped speaking and sat.

The traveler looked at each person in the group, studying their faces. They were blank, angry, confused – all except one. He had noticed this young man as one of the seekers he had been observing earlier. When their eyes met he observed great pain, but also an intense hunger for some answer to his internal stirrings, and a pressing curiosity that led him to investigate all lit corners of the cave world. He spoke, “I am the map maker. I have mapped out every section of our home for as far as the eye can see. I have seen no other place of light.”

The group all nodded their heads in confirmation. Although the mapmaker was young he appeared to demand great respect from the group. He also seemed to understand the trust the group had in his map-making abilities. The traveler knew he had to talk separately to this young man. Early the next day the traveler went to this young wanderer and said, “I can help you with your map making. Perhaps I can show you new places to add to your map?”

The mapmaker agreed and the two walked away from the glow, and the group, into a dim, almost darkened, area of the cave. The mapmaker then said, “This is as far as I have mapped in this direction.” The traveler then took from his pocket a small bright light and for a few seconds let it shine into the cave around the wanderer. The mapmaker was amazed but also quite frightened and so ran away. It saddened the traveler to experience this because the traveler knew the young man’s pain and fear. The traveler sat in the dim darkness and waited.

After a short time the mapmaker returned to ask about the light, saying he thought it would greatly help him improve his map. The traveler then told the

wanderer about the light and that it came from a much bigger source of light outside the cave. Over some period of time the traveler gradually led the mapmaker from the cave and into the light of the world. There were many times during the journey that the mapmaker was frightened of the brightness. It was painful but also soothing to his inner stirrings. It was difficult for the mapmaker to adjust vision to the new light. But with the traveler's guidance this adjustment was made.

The mapmaker sat outside his cave in tears of awe and joy. The traveler sat and shared these same feelings. Then the two parted. For the traveler this was the first of many caves.

When a man is forced to look directly at the sun he is blinded
Fearing to see the sun he is blinded again
The light starts within

Being Lost

A comfortable room which leads into a dark hall
Obscure, stumbling, crouched in pain
Escape pulls us into danger

The searing, striving, struggle for identity
Doubt weaving a quilt of distortion
Unbalanced darkness

Deep, almost hidden, our beginnings strain
The strings of our sanity
Lost puppeteer

Unconscious, automatic, living as dead
Following and yet not knowing
Distortion freely chosen

Driven by passion is not knowing fulfillment
Trapped in its rigid harness following
The whip's commands

Aimlessly floating in our created fog
Man struggles to escape pain
Missing tranquil breezes

Buttons pushed and the door is shut tight
The stream stops, the sunsets
Harmony's gone to bed

Getting Lost

A dandelion returns when cut at the flower
Below hides the source of its birth
Weeds die in the cradle

Empty we find the meaning of nothingness
Quietly we hear the rain in the sky
Seeking not looking

The lemmings crowd the cliff awaiting whims
As one they all respond to the death call
No one can hear

Positive actions flow in a positive direction
Negative actions contradict
Collision course

Pulling hard on the strings of our euphoric kite

The winds resistant to our calling
Leading to delusion

Tomorrow's solutions are within today's problems
The placid mind will shrivel and die
Blind leading the blind

Each of us uses our lives to paint our self-portrait
When the medium is perfection
The portrait is failure

Frantic, furious, paddle strokes yield tired arms
The rapids then are very difficult
Better to be rested

The Castle

All the town's people were excited upon hearing that a wise man was coming to visit their town. It was the central topic of conversation at nearly every social gathering. "Isn't it great that the traveler is coming down from the mountain caves just to visit us", they all said. People were hurrying about and making preparation to receive this wise one.

On one hill in this town there lived a humble farmer. On another hill there lived a rich merchant. The rich merchant had a big castle with solid stonewalls. The farmer had a small straw hut. Both men were keenly interested in receiving the wise one.

The man behind the castle walls told all his servants to stand guard by the windows. He ran around within his stone-protected domain checking on the servants to be sure they were vigilant in their duties. This way he had all possible views of the town covered. How could the wise one get by unnoticed? The humble farmer stepped outside his hut, sat on a large stone, and waited.

As the two men waited a large storm arrived. The sky became black. There was a fierce wind with hail and lightning. The servants became frightened and they would not keep their vigil by the windows. They all fled despite the man's warnings of punishment. The man was not as frightened of the storm as he was of missing his rendezvous with the wise one. The man now ran from window to window trying to maintain the 360-degree view of the town. The humble farmer continued to sit on his stone.

The traveler came and met with the man sitting on the stone and then left. The man became a teacher in his country, helping others to seek and find wisdom.

Open, feel, be one with infinity, then teach through being
Cast away the darkness of your shelter and
Let your essence be known

The Between

When the light within grows bright the shadows become clear
Too much focus of them dims the light
Find that inner balance

One painter's stroke, the dot on a TV screen
The point of one's perception
Each alone empty

The world is both within us and outside of us
A tree blowing in the rain is both
Touch and be touched

The narrow path, razors edge, yet soft, peaceful
Walk with two-fisted harmony
Balance in opposites

The sparrow cannot be cradled in our grasp
A boiling pot not barehanded
Walk one step in front

If we face the sun and burn we must seek the shade
A wolf seeks the fertile hunt
Dynamic not static

A hammer is not a house; a house is not a home
Man is the vessel for creation
The self is not eternity

We protect our way of life as absolute truth.
Think light and dark as separate
Forgetting oneness

Awaken to see clearly while knowing nothing
Feel strength while being humility
Empty but filled