

Perfect Brilliant Stillness by David Carse

David Carse was not a spiritual seeker. Yet, while trekking through the jungles of Ecuador, as he was staring from a thatched longhouse into the rainforest, David experienced an intense and graphic fear that culminated in a resignation toward the certainty of death. The ensuing state of surrender and acceptance—which as David describes "landed in my lap without any accomplishment on my part"—resulted in the following "total Understanding."

* * *

Still later that night in the jungle, toward morning, lying there in Presence, there was a point when all the experiencing stopped. The thinking and the feeling and the processing that had been happening all completely ceased. I was not aware of it 'at the time,' because there was no thought and no awareness of time or indeed of anything; only in hindsight is there a looking back and realizing that there was a 'period of time,' out of time, when there was no thought, no experience, no thing, nothing.

It may have been hours, it may have been an instant; it was not of time. Only in retrospect can it be called a place or a time of stillness or emptiness, because when it was occurring there was no time and no place and no sense or awareness of anything happening. I was not asleep. It was a condition of complete stillness and completely alert awareness. But there was nothing there to be aware of, no sense even of self to be self-aware. It could be called a completely empty stillness and awareness. I have no idea how long this lasted.

Eventually, at some point, in this place of no time, no thought, no place, no self, there gradually began to creep in an awareness that there was a simple watching of something. As this awareness distilled out of the emptiness, attention focused; and the realization was that what was being watched, what there was awareness of, was a guy lying in the bamboo hut in the jungle. This continued to focus until there was awareness, a kind of recognition, of what had always been thought of myself, 'david,' lying there on a matt in the middle of the rainforest. And there was an abrupt realization: "my god, there's nobody home."

This was the moment at which nothing happened. Like a 'pop' of a bubble bursting, a shift in understanding. I am not 'david:' there has never been a 'david:' the idea of 'david' is part of a thought, something like a dream, that doesn't matter. The individual 'self,' the one I thought resided in that body, looking through those eyes, the one I thought a few hours ago had woken up enough to perceive Presence, is not there, does not exist, never has. There is nobody home.

This was not an 'out of body' experience. I have had these, in which 'me', my'self,' experienced being out of this body rather than inside it, and experienced looking at the body from outside instead of looking out through the body's eyes. This was not like that

at all. What was being watched here was not only the body, but the whole 'david' apparatus; body, mind self, soul, personality. What is watching is All that is. The watching, what I came to know as 'witnessing,' is neither *other than* the body or mind or the whole 'david' thing, nor *not other*. It does not originate from here, from the body/mind; but also It does not stand apart from it, because It is inclusive of it. The witnessing is clearly not being done by 'me,' even a disembodied 'me.' This witnessing is not being done by anyone, any entity. That's the point: there are no entities, there is nobody home. There is only the witnessing.

Abruptly, instantly. Effortlessly, out of stillness.

A moment, an instant, of radical, severe disorientation, discontinuity; then a stepping through into perfect clarity, not at all unlike the experience of waking up.

A dream, seemingly real, lasting all one's apparent life.

A stirring, and the sleep dropping effortlessly away.

A moment of disorientation as the dream is recognized as dream and there is waking to the Real.

Immediately, the dream falls away and it is known that the dream was never real, that one never was what one had been dreaming. There is no 'before and after,' no moment when I was 'no longer' david. This is the 'gateless gate:' only the seeing that david never was. As near as can be said: the perception now is that there is no 'me,' no 'david;' and 'I' is that which has never not been All That Is. Always everywhere perfect Brilliant Stillness, and no-thing which has no name continually outpouring, seen now always not as from this mind/body thing.