

The Three Books of the Absolute

by Richard Rose

Book I

Out of the valley of the river came a wanderer. Peace was in his eye and his soul was wrapped in Nirvana. Peace to the wanderer.

O Eternal Essence, I was that Wanderer. I it was who left the gardens of tranquility that I might labor for Truth.

I sought Thee, O Eternal Essence, in the grottoes and in the tabernacles. I called out thy name to the stone ears of statues. And thou answered not.

I sought Thee in the voice of nature. I looked for Thee in the footprints of animals, in the habits of birds. I listened for a revelation in the murmuring of waters and in the soft moaning of the forests. I laid my ear against the roaring cataracts and bared my head to the tempests. But Thou answered not.

I have sought Thee, O Eternal Essence, within my self. I have sought Thee in my mind until I was cursed with confusion. And I saw Thee not.

Then, O Eternal Essence, I sought Thee whence I came. I sought Thee in my womb. As the wild beast flees from the elements into his cavern where his wild dam littered him, so I fled the darkness of my clay. And naught did I find but the turbulence of my imagination. There in chaotic pattern did I find the seeds of all confusion that pretended to be wisdom. Where man was born was also born his gods. Where man was born was also born his demons. And where in glorious pain, man first raised his foetal head, there too in ignominious joy was he devoured.

My eyes are extinguished although I see the earth beneath me. And my ears are destroyed and my mouth speaks no words for my feet carry me through a realm that needs no language. And my mind is silent and humble in its dismay, and all within that House there is not one thought. And within that House is heard the painful tolling of a tiny silver bell, and within that dome is felt the surge of mighty roaring tides that will not be stopped.

For the keeper of the House is gone, and all that remains testifies that he never was. Exploding thunder shakes its walls, and heaven and hell are within its region. For All is within that House, swelling it to burst its comprehension. All joy is here, and all joy is pain, torturing the House that cannot contain it.

All of joy is tears, and the world will not contain the reaving sorrow of this House. All this House is fire, straining to burst forth until these walls stand no longer.

O lamentations of lamentations, has thy agony no tongue? O sorrower in the spaces of desolation, who shall hear thy anguish, and unless it be heard, how shall the pain be stopped?

I, O Eternal Essence, beseech Thee,--where within Thee have I dissolved myself?

Where are prisoned those who follow love? Where have I left my I-ness, and now having left it, who is it that cries out to Thee? Where is the dirge of sorrow that is all that remains of me? Who feels this pain that burns and consumes, yet is felt not by I-who-am-no-more? Who is it that looks from the windows of my mansion like a strange prowler? Who is it that hears and hears not, that yearns for life and lives not, that seeks out death and dies not....?

O Ever-Allness, what is Thy pleasure in my sorrow? Thou hast damned me to thoughtlessness, and yet I cannot leave off thinking, and still my thoughts are not words. Thou hast robbed me of my soul and mind, and my body laments for all ages, for my body dies not nor yet walks among men. Thou hast delivered me from my Ego, and what is there that remains? O Ever-Allness, forever insensate, pitiless to entreaty, speechless to my prayers,--weep Thou with me for I am of Thee....and all that remains of me is Thee.

What is the magnitude of Thy nothingness! O what are the limits of Thy plentitude!....What is the thunder of Thy silence!....How quiet are Thy cataclysms! Thus shall I sing the praises of myself.

Peace to the wanderer!

Book II

Who shall hear of Moses, Gotama, or Amenhotep, if hearing is not? Although Jesus weep and Socrates drown, who shall hear their anguish if there is not hearing?

Who shall know of love and godliness, of peace and serenity, if knowledge is not?

Who shall not perish in the heavy seas of forgetfulness if knowledge is not....Though his convulsions and agony for life be mountainous,--shall he not perish....?

Though the worlds scream from their vertiginous orbits, how can they cast themselves down while knowing is not....Though the stars roar in anguish at their distances, who shall know of their roaring?

How can the atom know of the sea....How shall the atom know of the universe....?

How shall the spaces know of their nothingness....How shall nothingness hear the agony of nature that cries out against it....?

Where, where is where....? Why, why is why? Where O wise among wise, is when....? In what drifting sandheaps are its footprints....in what continuum is etched its lightning rate like music etched on ice?

Who, who is who....? Can the sage, more the fool, say that which is being....and among beings, who are what? Is the spark an entity, or is it merely part of the flame, and is the flame only illusory heat, or does it live?

Is not man a question asking questions, frustrated by the unanswered, laboring to answer himself....and creating a mountain of questions in the answer....yet who shall know?

Who shall know the circle that has no radius, and who shall know the point that is a line of infinity....?

Where is maya....If all is maya, who, knowing, sees this illusion? Is not his knowing also maya....?

In what pitiful hells are the wise....In what blackest abysses are the oblivious ignorant....?

How shrill is the hunger of inertia,--how maddening the stupor of extinction that comes from action?

O wise and foolish, look about you in your joys. Where are the joys of yesterday....and being gone, did they ever live? Did you enjoy, or was it another's lips that drained thy cup?

Hear the voice of shadows....Look about you into the invisible memories of the ether. Where are they?

What matters it if the infant staves,--if the angel is raped,--or if the saint burns upon the spit? Are they not gone....is not the sorrow gone? And who shall remember....since knowing is not....who can hear their anguish?

Where are the beautiful....Where is their beauty washed by the years....where are the years drowned in the ocean of the Unknowing?

Think ye on the folly of light. Does it not perish when the eyes are closed? But the power over us by light is feared by man. He sleeps and dreams of darkness, and wakens, screaming into it....

Relax ye and die and live the darkness, and enter the impassive pool of the Unknowing....

Who shall extol the memory of man that leaves him often before his life....Who remembers after life? If man forgets his infancy before his manhood is upon him,--what shall he remember hence....shall he remember nothingness? Desist and enter the pool of the Unknowing....

What is time, O mind....? Is it the number of steps in a day,--the number of thoughts in a step....? Then of the thoughts in a day, how many years of days would it take to know all that is know, and then how long,--to know the magnitude of the Unknowing....and how many steps will take thee from here to there? Who shall anoint thy limbs?

Though he who forgets more seems greater than he who strived not and died in ignorance....who shall know....who shall know? Mourn ye for the hour

when the cloud of the Unknowing passes and the falseness of light dazzles the eye. For the light is a liar unto the Light, and the light is the darkness of the mind. Yet who shall know....?

I is dead. Death is dead and life has no living....All that remains is All.
I of the cloudier corpus is slain. It is slain that the "I" of the mind might live.

"I" of the mind is slain, for the "I" of the spirit to live.

"I" of the spirit is slain that the spirit may come into its glory.

"I" of the spirit shrinks from the vanity of life. Space is upon it. Space towers above it, silently mocking its absence, and the spirit takes its leave like a thought....like the vapors and like the solitary sound that is heard not....

Eternity wanders through infinity like a blind minnow in an empty ocean whose bounds are limitless....Yet who can see its boundlessness?

Eternity probes itself like a blind idiot for it know not its immensity, and it roars and rages in its madness because it cannot find its edges. Yet who can hear its roaring....?

And the candles of time are lit, and their wax congeals in cold spheres....but they burn so long and dir so quickly that no man knows if they burn.

Eternity convulses in its pralaya, seeking for definition.

Death agonizes silently for motion....And all that remains is All.

O who shall hear of this anguish, for all that remains is All.

Book III

O Dream of Dreams, tell me, where is the dreamer?

O Dream of Dreams of Dreams, tell me, where is the dreamer?

O Dreamer, speak unto me,--in which of these dreams wilt thou be found?

O Dreamer, speak unto me, art thou the dreamer in the Dream, or the dreamer of the Dream?

O Dreamer, answer me,--if thou speakest unto thyself, and hear the sound of thy voice and reply unto it,--are there then two people speaking, or is it but one?

O Dreamer answer me,--how many people are dreaming thy dream?

O eternal spaces, art thou black or white....Is thy form clothed in light or darkness?

Reply unto me

Who walketh in wakefulness,

Knowing not if wakefulness be but an illusion of wakefulness,

Or if sleep be the door of the Absolute....

Or if sleep be the dreamer awake....

Speak unto me
Not in the ringing of my ears
That know not if such stridency be the dawning of new perception,--
Or the damnation of all that was real.

O world, where are thou, that but a second past, clung to my feet?
Where in space am I caught?
O love, where are thy children,--the friends of my youth?
Who has frozen them in eternal ice until they stand in transient memory,
seeming as statues....?
Who has placed the halter of time upon their necks, to swing them in the
listless abysses of silence....?
O never-never-forever....why art Thou?

O tender I-ness forgive me....O lovable I-ness forgive me....for my hand
has shattered the mirror, and I can see thee not.
O hunger that begets creation, O wistful memory of myself, O transient I-
ness, forgive me....for the probing finger has shattered the veil of illusion.
I have shattered the chimera of all Knowing....and all that I know is
naught.

Time did I seize in the fingers of my mind, and that which seemed to
move as a phantom did I hold in my fingers....
The peoples of the earth did I see, all that had lived or will live, and their
thoughts were upon their faces.
Beneath my feet did I seize space, and that which seemed afar was near,
and beneath my feet I suppressed the mountains....and yet did the cool oceans
rise harmlessly to my nostrils.
And in all this land there was not one sound, for my fingers held all time,
and in time are the fields of motion. So that no atom stirred, nor did one audible
wave afflict the ether.

For the blood of the serpent is coagulated, and in its mind all thoughts are
one.

And I saw the voices of men....and I saw the beautiful patterns of
motion....but the world was as still as death.
And I saw the beauty as it liveth....yet no color was upon the eye.
The rose upon the bush was only a pale weed, yet Red and Pink shook
the shimmering twilight with their loveliness....and the soft perfume of memory
tinted the Void with its essence.
I saw the flight of the swallow, rolling across dimension like a silent surf.

And as I looked, I saw the emerald dye of the deep, drawn from the ocean's waves....and even the whiteness melted before the snow on the mountaintop.

Plain was the picture. Plain was the picture for I had concentrated upon color and motion....and now they were no more.

Strange was the land for I concentrated upon dimension until it waxed and waned, and that which seemed small was as great as that which seemed great.

The nightingale sang in the gloaming....but his beak is now silent....and yet his song liveth forever.

O friend of my childhood, O lovable I-ness, what have I done to my world? For I have turned my eye upon it and delivered it unto chaos!

And now I look upon the looker....Twice I see myself and then I see myself no more.

I see myself as a suppressor of mountainous space and a conqueror of time. Mighty are my sinews, as I stand upon the mountain.

Then I see myself as an infinitesimal man in the infinitude of humanity....caught in the congealed blood of life.

I see this tiny man, happy, living, responding to illusions of color and motion and dimension, and happy in his response, knowing not the illusion of his indulgence in non-existent happiness.

And looking upon the tiny man, I see his joys leave him, for joy is a thing apart.

And looking upon him I see his response leave him because motion is a thing apart.

And seeing these things my heart burns with love for existence.

Yes, I on the mountain, conqueror of illusion, now weep for the beauty of illusion.

And looking back into the panorama below, I, the mountained man,--I the consciousness absolute, see that the tiny man now no longer liveth....for life is a thing apart.

And since he no longer liveth, he cannot see me as I see him, nor can he see himself as I see him, nor can he ever know of his joys that are things apart....or know of his love which is now a thing apart.

And knowing his love and his longing for the pattern, I on the mountain bewail and sorrow in his loss.

Great is my anguish in his silence, great is my agony in his loss.

And feeling my agony, I on the mountain, know that I am the tiny man in the endless cavalcade.

And soon I see, looking ahead, that all my joys are not, that all my love is not, that all my being is not.

And I see that all Knowing is not. And the eminent I-ness melts into the embraces of oblivion.

It melts into the embraces of oblivion like a charmed lover, fighting the spell and languishing into it.

And now I breathe Space and walk in Emptiness. My soul freezes in the void and my thoughts melt into an indestructible blackness.

My consciousness struggles voiceless to articulate and it screams into the abysses of itself. Yet there is no echo.

All that remains is All.

My spark of life falls through the canyons of the universe, and my soul cannot weep for its loss....for lamentation and sorrow are things apart.

All that remains is All.

The universe passes like a fitful vision.

The darkness and the void are part of the Unknowing....

Death shall exist forever....

Nothingness is Everywhere....

Silence is forgotten....

All that remains is ALL.