

HINDU PHILOSOPHY:

A mutant exposition of non-dualistic wisdom

Four friends sprawled across Bhāraté's living room, each a portrait of philosophical collapse. An-Yi lay inverted on the sofa, her legs draped over the backrest, studying the ceiling as if it held arcane secrets. Chariya sat cross-legged on the floor, his gaze locked on a cup of tea, searching the amber depths for the geometry of mankind's future. Daiki paced a small perimeter, his footsteps echoing like a heartbeat, as if trying to outrun his racing thoughts.

Clearing his throat, Bhāraté sensed the anticipation in the air. Knowing all his friends cherished poetry, he smoothed a weathered page from a beloved book and began to read with fervor:

Zis is Zat —
and Zat is Zis —
and All of Zis and All of Zat
is but a shimmering wave of illusion,
a grand, kaleidoscopic curtain
rippling across the face
of Infinite Cosmic Bliss.

Enjoy the carnival!
Enjoy the dream architecture!
Stagger from births to barns,
from burns to bars,
spinning on the relentless wheel,
and feasting on the cotton candy of desire —

but rememmmmmberrrrr . . .

That From Which You Came
has no-sing — nothing —
to do with zis karma-carnival,
this spinning, grinning, glittering show.

No-sing has been created.
No-sing has been destroyed.
There is no heaven stitched above you,
nor hell yawning below,
no death waiting with patient, hollow eyes —
and no birth, either:
no first cry, no final light,
no moment when you were not
already everything.

Zat is Zis.
Zis is Zat.
And Zat —
is all.



Daiki's pacing stopped; he dropped into an armchair. "What utter nonsense!" he exclaimed, in a voice dripping with disdain. "Glib, like someone raided the universe's grand library and returned with a bumper sticker."

An-Yi righted herself, head tilted, analyzing every word like a detective on the case. "And why the affectation?" she mused, her tone sharp with inquiry. "Why does the poet sound like a man three liters deep into a German beer festival, hallucinating in the middle of a sacred rite in central India?"

A slow smile spread across Bhāraté's face, the smile of someone who had been waiting, perhaps orchestrating this very moment. He set down the poetry book, leaning back, fingers laced together. "It seems," he began, settling into the weight of his thoughts, "that we are all drunk. Some on the wine of materialism—on things, on noise, on the beautiful labor of wanting. The rest..." his gaze fell on Daiki, kindly yet piercing, "are drunk on softer strands of wishful belief. Comfortable ideas, maps drawn to keep us central."

The room absorbed the weight of his words. An-Yi righted herself, Chariya lifted his gaze, bewildered. "Then... how do we sober up?" he asked, voice barely rising above a whisper.

Silence blanketed them. Outside, a car passed; a dog barked then thought better of it, while the great wheel of life turned, indifferent to their questions beneath its vastness.

Bhāraté looked down at the poetry book, then back at Chariya. When he spoke, the irony had absent and his voice was stripped of glibness, heavy with the terrifying clarity of a truth that couldn't be categorized. "That," he said, "might be the only question worth asking."

- T Newfields

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