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NUCLEATION OF THE DAKINI

Aristilde Kirby

There are three grades of the void: there is the sky, there is space, there is the sea. Each is dialectical. There are two skies. If one is clouded, then go outside. If the other is cloudy, make the best you can within. There are two versions of space, one is extraterrestrial, the other is internal; sightlessness. There are two seas, the one with the fish, at its deepest, the other, beings we haven't seen—then there is the submerging into sleep, where we exist in air bubbles like dreams that carry us until surfacing, where we wash ashore upon awakening. All of these voids can & will crush you: the sky will throw you back down, the sea's gravity will implode your organs, & space will enervate you. Similarly, the mind will drop your mood, it will depress you.



It is not a mirror, like the Zen parable goes—practice polishes the glass & enlightenment is achieved through persistence & the disappearance of the object—it's more complicated, it's a prism or a grism. The mind diffracts incident light of all sensed phenomena, bends it, slows it to a level we can comprehend & apprehend via memory in all its stripes. The prism is external, the grism internal. Every surface, edge, & corner of the grism is lit with a different color. Thought is like that: intersecting, bleeding emotional glares, knowledges, opinions, perceptions & more in the holographic skull as a glass casket. The color of bone holds every potential. That's the issue. How do you harness them? There are three grades of the void, & the mind holds them all. The container arranges them as a staining depth of droning wavelength. What we end up seeing is the world as it is, subjectively discrete, objectively distinct, & in a disorder we come to accept in childhood as normal. All wavelengths converge into what many of us experience so seamlessly.

Without tools or powers to apprehend the voids we undergo greater risk of being trampled by vertigo, gravity, or desiccation—all hallmarks of normality in a reality where we are unfortunately beheld to abide by a world that foments these properties in myriad aspects. The poem is a place where the shadow of phenomena pools & plays.

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In a backdrop of bubbles & light sparks, the Daicon Bunny Girl, emanating with cute ebullition, poses, ready to fight from whatever void she is placed in. She throws handily a full cast of fascist-coded mecha from Gundam. She jump kicks the kaiju monsters from TOHO LTD fame, she duels with Darth Vader & closes in on the death blow, she evades a fleet of fighter jets in the sky on a flying version of Micheal Moorcock's Stormbringer sword, she surfs on the sea, wiping out Hitler, she out-speeds The Millenium Falcon & other spaceships of repute. She is felled by a xenomorph wielding the ship from *A Space Odyssey* as a shockwave stave, then is stomped & stood on by a megazord from an obscure *Power Rangers* series...only to a few seconds later hurl it beyond the foreground. She hoverboards in an ever-unfurling mandala of characters, comic books, cartoons, anime, video games, & real life on a sword spitting seven-colored smoke.

A dakini is known as a fairy of the funerary charnel grounds. The name derives from the Tibetan word *diyate*, which means, 'to fly'. In Chinese, their names are formed from the characters 'sky-going mother'. In my mind, the Bunny Girl is a dakini. She wields the name-of-the-father in the form of Moorcock's sentient sword. Meta-soteriologically, the dakini was subsumed from earlier Hindu scripture, known then as

flesh-eating demonesses. Generally, they are known as a peak feminine archetype: fierce, cunning, tranquil, evokers of the energies of the void, dancers of the sky & sunyata, imbuing the insubstantiality of all phenomena with the pure potentiality for all possible manifestations blossomed in mind. What is spirituality if not the means to foment the will to keep living, to keep fighting another day?

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Sheena Ringo's sixth album, *Sandokushi or History of the Three Poisons*, sees her try to, from the first track (*Niwatori to Hebi to Buta or Rooster, Snake, Pig*), wrestle with delusion, greed, & aversion—macro-kleshas that, in their myriad spines, rhizome as minimal swellings that, unchecked, can pervade the mind. Like a gnarled, unruly bramble, they are natural. Yet, we have the means to cut them back & grow things that promote balance, lightness, & nourishment. Ringo shows us through her art, her music that in every poisoned drop of honey there is a pore or streak of light, & through that potential is an antidote to sieve out. That is the sweetness beyond. The body creates its own protection even amid malady. She struggles with life after death, song after song, lyrically on the wheel of her own karma, trying to solve the puzzle between herself, the other, & the world. The self is a gateway, "The world waits in my heart." A significant other is a vanishing point, a tension in the air to resolve—"Should I have a dream of dating in an eternal sleep?". She comes to embrace life & death with equal zeal—"We die finally answering in the dark." Melding is sexy. There's an equilibrium there, a skillful mean.

I believe that everyone has a poetry. In each of our own ways we have a tool or power to apprehend the void's entangled wavelengths. There is a meditation I do that is like forming & eventually popping that bubble. I invert the projection on the bubble to the inner space & create an image scape, holding it & dissolving any thoughts counter to that on the surface to maintain the scape. When time elapses, usually this is done to the duration of a really long song or generic timer, I pop it. Collect, contract, expand, blow, float, explode, become air again. Through every permutation, like the kiss of breath through a wand that forming a bubble gives, the goal is to give the immaterial spatial form (space), to turn oneself inside out, to float nearly in anti-gravity (sky) & take everything else imprinted on its surface with her (sea). Eventually, the void undoes itself & implodes.

This is the crux of Melanie Hoff's performance *Sex is the word that the body bursts*: they take a rope wand that droops taught between both hands in an inverted triangle, dip it into consumer-grade dish soap sat in a bowl like a giant's contact lens, wave it in the air as if dancing, then crawls beneath it incessantly, blowing against the spheroid's form to keep it up. Between these sessions are poetic meditations on social reproduction. The sex act is transmuted & spills out as a fractal from a massive scale to the infinitesimal into realms of caregiving & supplication. What usually happens is that the bubble pops & liquid film plits on their face. No matter, no problem. The agalma, the gift, is wrapped in a meta-Sisyphean foil. The gift is the struggle, where one must scale style to the portion of survival. The best performance art reminds me of this. For the moment, you are a voyeur. For the rest of your existence, you aren't. It is this craft that ensures an interesting life, if not a long one. Hoff's legs & feet accumulate suds in sliding in past pop. There is more spirit, breath, where that came from & more flesh, soap, to hold it. The meaning is in the doing.

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Happiness is something you must fight for every moment of your life. Versus the self, versus depression, versus anxiety, versus grief, versus dysphoria, versus ignorance, versus transphobia, versus misogyny, versus misandry, versus the perversion of subtlety, versus homophobia, versus sickness, versus war, versus fascism, versus politics as we know it, versus apathy, versus the police, versus genocide, versus propaganda, versus AI, versus Bitcoin, versus social media as malware, as commons, versus racism, versus tokenization, versus the economy as religion, versus money as medium, versus commodity as fetish, versus the patriarchy, versus spiritually-corrupt women who want to debase & exploit me as their unwitting pawn or catalyst, versus subjugation, versus opportunism, versus academia, versus god awful teachers, the static & stagnant nature of institutions, versus a dearth of resources, versus the degradation of the earth, versus cultures of repression & silence, versus abuse, versus fear, versus poverty, versus loneliness, versus bad habits, versus the depletion of love as an elemental force, versus unhealthy relationships, versus manufactured illusion, versus poisoned sex, versus fake friends, versus true enemies, shared & singular, versus The World, versus the personal Hell, versus so much more. People will tell you happiness is fleeting. What they won't tell you is that The World makes it scarce.

How do you become your own source,
as well as a spring for others?

Aristilde Kirby is the author of Daisy & Catherine² (Auric Press) the second printing of which is still available at auricpress.com, Deluxe bonus poems, "Utpalate" & "Bashfuls" are forthcoming.

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