

My visit to the dentist

When I was about 15 I went to the dentist for some reason.

I remember that he was an older man, and there was no assistant to help him with the procedure. It must have been somewhat serious because they prescribed me some meds to take before I headed for his office.

For some reason my parents were unavailable, and I was unable to drive yet, so I took a taxi to and from the appointment.

Once I was in the chair he gave me an injection in my arm to sedate me, and boy did it ever.

I found myself wandering around over rolling hills covered with short bushes that were a bit spaced out from one another. They were a pale green.

The sky was a uniform light blue gray. There were no clouds, and no sun though there was plenty of light. Oddly, there was no night.

Those rolling hills were high enough that in some of the valleys there were small streams flowing. The water was cool and clear. I found it was also very refreshing though I never noticed feeling thirsty or hungry.

I wandered around for quite awhile. There were no landmarks. Nothing on the horizon. Nothing distinct from the hills. I was not panicked, just curious, and fascinated with the place.

Then I noticed that I had been walking for a very long time. There was nothing to give the sense of time passing, just the walking, stopping here and there to examine something or to think. I do not remember sleeping or being tired. That, along with not being hungry or thirsty when it seemed that an immense amount of time had passed and I should need food and rest.

After what seemed a very long time I remembered wondering about where I had come from, who was I, where was I. And I could not remember or imagine a life before finding myself walking in this very quiet place. That did not trouble me, but seems very unusual.

At some point I came across another wanderer. He was older than myself, wore a dull colored robe like mine, and had the same laid back attitude about these circumstances. He immediately seemed not to be a threat, just, another.

We walked and talked together for another huge amount of time. We talked about ideas, expectations, questions, and other significant topics. We did not talk about our histories since neither of us had one. We did not talk about plans because neither of us imagined a significantly different future.

It was very pleasant. I was learning things, growing and maturing. The journey was truly its own destination.

We would stop at times and sit around something like a campfire. They simply seemed to be there. We did not build them, we simply came across them and took them as an opportunity to sit. These were particular times for discussion. We would consider what the other had to say and learned incredible things either from the other or through inspiration and imagination.

Then at one point I stopped to consider how very long I/we have been moving across this place and content to do so. It struck me that it had been an unimaginable amount of time. Thousands of years, millions of years, but at the same time just a long afternoon.

While I was considering how long it felt I had been there, I found myself rising into the sky at an angle, which was odd since I would have thought rising straight up would have been more likely.

It was then I realized how much I like being there, and liked talking with my nameless companion. I felt like I belonged there, or at least very much wanted to stay.

As I rose up I kept yelling to the other that "I'll be back! I don't know when or how, but I will come back here!" I felt deeply that I was meant to return and that there was something right about my being there.

I then transitioned into staring at the dentist's light above my face. The yellow glaring light that washed out most around it. It was harsh, with a finality to the rolling hills I had left moments before. The colors were different. The flow of time felt different. All I could do was take in my surroundings, not only the place but more strikingly the feel of the place. Its reality, which was somehow different. And its quality, which was also different.

I remembered the life I had forgotten while in the rolling hills. I was picking up where I left off, but with all of the awkwardness of having returned from a very long trip, and being very different than when I had left.

I spent a good amount of time that afternoon looking at everyday places and things that now seemed like memories of things from long ago. Returning to a place I had not been for a very long time.

I have thought about that visit to the dentist's office for the past 50 odd years. That place with the rolling hills still seems tangible. Nothing like a dream or hallucination. I wonder if I had some reaction to the medications I had been given. Had I experienced a near death event? And all I was sure of has been that something very unusual, tangible, and consequential occurred. I have never experienced anything like it since. And I have, I am sure, forgotten many dreams and reactions to medications and the such. But this remains a unique and very real (whatever that might mean in this context) experience. I have no idea what it was about. Just an understanding

that reaches deep into my core that I experienced, that one time, something other than this reality, and something very special.