

PART I

Matt: “Contradiction is the key to enlightenment.”

Anna: “No, it's not.”

01.

THE ORCHARD OF
BECOMING

◁Frater Kaotec▷

I don't know where I am or how long I've been here. It feels like I've been here for eternity, wherever 'here' is. This is where I belong, for now. It's a nice place to be. I'm very happy, floating free in the breeze. Not that I'm alone, I'm very well connected. And my connections go deep down, right into the Earth, from where I draw my power. A power I share with my neighbours, who are happy and free like me. It feels good and the light, so clear and fresh, is the breath of life. Yes, this is a wonderful place to be.

Sometimes I dream about a past, a past that was not so happy. There was a time when I was attacked by those who would dislodge me from this happy union. Hostile forces, disconnected, disunited, dis-eased. I could feel their presence, cosmic excrement, exerting will for will's sake, weak dominators. And there was something deeper too, a desire for unity frustrated which twisted into sickly resentment. Atomisers. Such monsters sought faux unity in possession and dominion. But they are gone now. They failed, I suppose.

So here I stay in the breeze, in the light, feeling happy with my neighbours. Yet despite this utopic being, I also feel a vague dissatisfaction, as if something is missing. What, I don't know. I lack nothing. Everything is here, wherever here is. Is there more? More what? Just *more* perhaps? Could I become part of something bigger? Could I *become* something bigger? These are strange feelings, as if I need something more. But there is no way I could bring such things into being as I just float free in the breeze.

Something is here. The birds fly up and away. My daydreams have been disturbed. The monsters!? Come to pull apart the world? But no, this time it is different. The world is about to be shattered, but it feels good, feels right. This is

no monster, no disconnected brute, but an integrated force of nature. A force that is about to sever my connection with life, destroy my world, shatter my very unity. Yet for some strange reason I am happy. This is my destiny. I am needed. Although about to be cut off from my old world, I know I am about to be united with something greater.

Come devourer of worlds, pull me from mother's womb! Rip me asunder and make me whole again! We are united within a single destiny. We are one within the process of life, death, rebirth. We are one and the same living divinity. Take me in bliss! It is now that I realise my time in this place is over. It no longer appeals to me. What was once a paradise is now a prison. True utopia lay before me. In this moment of ecstasy I remember who I really am:

*A serpent from the dark depths of the Earth, having crawled up into this tree
I had forgotten myself in its happy branches....*

Eve was hungry when she plucked the fruit from the tree. Her babe was due any time now and they both needed nourishment. She hoped her babe would be as sweet as this apple. And how sweet an apple it was, and so rosy. It must have been very happy, she thought, for so would she be if she lived in such a beautiful orchard. She felt a little sadness as she wrenched it from the tree and bit into its flesh. But it was almost as if it was there for her, almost as if it was calling her. And besides, it tasted so good, so very good. She devoured it greedily.