

Pathways into the Cosmos

As the renowned ecologist Rachel Carson observes, "Always the edge of the sea remains an elusive and indefinable boundary. The shore has a dual nature, changing with the swing of the tides, belonging now to the land, now to the sea." This explores the blurred boundary between land and water, which can be seen as a parallel to the blurred boundaries between humans and the universe, leaving a question of belonging for the self. Where do I belong amid this physical and metaphysical world? Is my body my boundary? There are entryways, doors, corridors, lanes, and tracks that run in and out of my body and straight into the cosmos. So, one day, I started looking through the microscope inside my body.

As I look into the microscope, I zoom into my pupil. A network of veins and arteries suck me into their fantastic cosmos of constellations, of spaces known and unknown. I see a minute black hole that might suck all the images, thoughts and information that pass through it. Now, I don't know what I don't know.

My breath is heavy. I can sense that inhaling my breath is a part of how the water recedes from the sand into the ocean—a calm, deep, and temporal process that will never stop until the apocalypse—of me. How does it feel the same when I sit by the ocean and in a calm room, just focusing on my breath? I am uncertain about what I know, but I am sure of this uncertainty.

Going deeper into my body's metaphysics, my mind is a way. A way that allows me to be, not be, present or absent. It takes me to places, travels with me, reads and writes expressions on my face, holds me back and sets me free. It's a weird creature. It knows the past, the future, but most importantly, the now. Now, I know what I don't know.

Now is where I meet the cosmos- at the crossroads of knowing and not knowing. A way to enter into a realm that is neither on land nor in water. A step inside my body and

another one outside of it. A step inside my presence and another one in my absence, exactly like stepping out during dusk or dawn.

At this moment, a boundary of my physical self is smudged, like the effects that dry pastels create on a white sheet of paper. Drawing and blurring, blurring and drawing. A new boundary however, is constructed. This boundary between the moments of now and then.

TejasviShah