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angkor wat by lee allen

“After you have died
and the elements of
your body have
separated into earth,
water, air, and fire,
where will you go? ”

– Zen Koan *by* Doushuai

When you live with a great question, it changes you. This is what makes it a koan. You become more deeply embedded in the universe, inseparable. I have a friend who, as a child, was identified as the reincarnation of a great Tibetan teacher. He had his own child recently. He was very moved by how hard the mother’s labor was and he is completely in love with the experience of being with them both.

The life we are looking for is the one that is here—the touch of new, impossibly tender skin, the maple leaves falling and turning just as we are falling and turning. That falling is inside everything we reach for. It is also inside everything we turn away from. And when we stop and enter the falling and turning, a great calm appears. It spreads over the world and forward and backwards in time. The tender skin we touch, the traffic noise, the dog’s nose, a horse standing in ancient ruins, are all inside it.

We are always part of a great matrix, my feet are in Manhattan, my head in Angkor Wat. Everything is here. I have always been here. We have always been here. I forget to name what I am, I just step forward.