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## Why Is There Nothing, Rather Than Something

*A wheel of thirty spokes turns on the hole at its center  
A pot is useful for the emptiness within  
What Is is good because of what Is not*

Tao Te Ching

*Why does everyone ask “How are you”—  
Why does no one ever ask “How are you not”?*

Rumi

The most important word in any language is “No”. Every Yes shines forth only against the darkness of the No it is the shadow of. What part of “No” do you (e.g. I) not understand?

### **Faith. Love. Hope.**

Faith, as is said, is blind. To trust in what one does not see, does not know. Blind faith is common; conscious faith is to not even wish to see. To accept not to know. To not see is far better than the blindness of seeing only what one wishes to see. To pray with faith is to turn one’s back to the known world, to face the unknown, the unseen—better not to name it, perhaps it is nothing that exists, only a direction in which to face. But sometimes names seem necessary, even though names themselves are always only empty. This toward which I pray—name it God if you wish—this God remains unseen, He in turn has His back turned toward the one who prays. To whom is God praying? What is it that God has faith in, that He trusts but does not see? This question cannot be answered; but the asking of it establishes the likeness between myself and God, whose image *I am* (or *vice versa*). *Credo, ergo sum. Credo ergo est.* The prayer of faith is an act in the first person singular.

Love, it is also said, is blind. The blindness of love is different—it is to need something, which obscures the actuality of what is loved. Needy love is common; conscious love is to not even wish to possess. When there is possession, it kills love. To pray in love is to face the Other, the Otherness which is beautiful in its promise and in its unpossessedness, to face the Other across the infinite emptiness that exists between all singular beings. The prayer of love is an act in the second person singular, it is to turn one’s back on all other others. One says only “You”—not “Thou” which presumes a claim upon a pre-existing intimacy. In conscious love, there is no reaching across the emptiness, no attempt to lay hold of the Other which would in any case be impossible. One only contemplates the face of the Other, and looking without touching beholds there a reflection of one’s own

face, which otherwise one cannot see. The question is asked: Whom do You pray love to? What do You need?

Hope, let us coin a phrase, is passive. Passive hope is common; to hope consciously is to work, which means to engender a profound passivity that renounces all false effort. To pray with hope is to turn one's back to the past, which is dead even though it lives on in all that one is; to face only what is to come; grammatically speaking not the future perfect but the present progressive—not what will come at some unknown time, or may never come, but what is coming in at the moment NOW, through which everything is always coming in. To wait, without expectation, without demand. The present future, in which whatever is happening NOW is sacred—call it the Will of God if you need a name; we do not know God's will except by whatever happens. What is prayed for is that the impossible shall come in, *inshal'lah*. Who prays the prayer of hope? Call it We, first person plural, because unlike faith and love, *We hope* together, face together in the same direction.