

DANIIL KHARMS
(TRANSLATED BY ALEX CIGALE)

The Whorld

I told myself that I see the world. But the whole world was inaccessible to my gaze, and I saw only parts of it. And all that I saw, I called parts of the world. And I observed the qualities of these parts and, in observing the qualities of the parts, I was doing science. I understood that there were intelligent qualities of parts and unintelligent qualities in those very same parts. And so I divided them and I gave them names. And in accordance with these qualities, the parts of the world were either intelligent or unintelligent. And there were such parts of the world that were capable of thought. And these parts looked at the other parts, and they looked at me. And all the parts resembled each other, and I resembled them.

And I said: parts are thunder.

The parts replied: farts of time.

I said: I'm also part of three turns.

Parts averred: But we're only small points.

And suddenly I ceased to see them, and then the other parts as well. And I was afraid the world would end. But then I understood that I do not see the parts individually, but all at once. First I thought that this was NOTHING. But then I understood that this is the world, and that which I saw before was not the world. And I always knew what the world was, but that which I saw before, I do not know even now. And when the parts vanished, then their intelligent qualities ceased to be intelligent, and their unintelligent qualities ceased to be unintelligent. And the world ceased being intelligent and unintelligent. But as soon as I understood that I saw the world, I ceased to see it. And I was afraid, thinking the world had ended. But as long as I thought so, I understood that, had the world indeed disappeared, then I would no longer be thinking this. And I looked out, seeking the world, but found it not. And then there was nowhere any longer left to look.

That is when I understood that as long as there was somewhere to

look – around me was the world. And now it is no longer. There is only me.

But the world is not me.

Though, at the same time,

I am of the world.

But the world isn't me.

But I am of the world.

But the world isn't me.

But I am of the world.

But the world isn't me.

But I am of the world.

And then I thought no more.

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