Overall plot:

Main character wants to explore the legends of a mysterious temple - said to help the lost - that sits deep within a forest on a mountain. Learns about themselves

“You’ve traveled so far to get here, but you’ve learned that it was never about the temple. The temple was just an empty place. You were the thing that changed here. you are the thing that brings you happiness and purpose. Your journey here was to help you discover this.



1.

The sound of birds chirping wake me up.

I slowly get up from my bed, still very tired.

Not just from sleep, but from the monotony of daily life.

I’ve heard talk of a mysterious person is deep within the mountains in a temple. It is said that this person is enlightened and knows wisdom understands what makes life wonderful. I need guidance from this person.

I need to find this temple. Today, I’m finally getting out there and going on an adventure

2.

I go to the train station, morning air still fresh. I buy a ticket to the farthest stop possible, way out past the edge of town, and board the small car.

Trees speed past the windows, the daylight shimmers through the large glass windows of the train. I’ve never realized how beautiful this place looks until now.

I’m not sure if I should get off at the next stop or stay on the train until night.

3.

The train reaches a stop in town. Somehow, I feel like this just isn’t the place for me. Just before I am about to leave, I look outside to see a mysterious old stranger with an umbrella, getting on board the train. He and I are the only two passengers on the train.

He gives me a polite nod, and he sits down in the back of the car in silence. We wait until the sky turns dark.

Should I go talk to him?

4.

I stay on the train until night. The thick darkness outside envelops the trees. The moon shines brightly on the blossoms.

The train seemed empty. but I didn’t even realize – at the last stop, a mysterious stranger with an umbrella had gotten on board. Should I go talk to him?

5.

The trees fly past in the darkness.

Illuminated by the light inside the train car, I walk over to talk to him. The lights are dim, but the atmosphere is friendly. The man is old, and he smiles at me. He looks wise. I greet him, and he offers me a seat.

He asks me –

“Would you like some tea?”

“Yes, please”

“No, thank you”

6.

He pours me some tea. It’s beyond delicious. I’d never realized how much I really enjoyed tea. I thank him for the tea, and he replies he’s glad I enjoy it.   
“You gotta learn to appreciate the small things,” he says. “The beauty of the little things in life.”

He asks me who I am. I tell him I’m looking for an enlightened master deep within a temple within a mountain. The old man smiles a knowing smile when I mention this.

“You seem wise,” I say, “Do you know anything about this temple?”

7.

I politely refuse. He nods. “That’s okay” he says, “You know what you like and don’t like, which makes your life better. That’s important – you gotta be confident in your decisions like that, even if they’re seemingly trivial”

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“You seem wise,” I say, “Do you know anything about this temple?”

8.

He laughs. “Hah! Why, yes. I went there a long time ago. I met a man up there who helped me to see the truth about life, and about happiness. He was wise, and he made me the person I am today. In truth, I can never forget him.”

We both notice that the train comes to a stop. The breaks squeak and the steam fogs up the windows.

“Well, I think this is you. Thank you for sitting with me.”

I smile, thank him, and stand up to exit the train

9.

Birds sing, the mountains grow dark as I exit the car. I put on my jacket.

I remember the old man’s words. I wonder how he’s so content with life?

Stepping outside into the forest, I look up at the massive mountain before me. I think this must be the path where the temple is. The trees are snow covered, and snow gently begins to fall. I notice:

How beautiful the trees look

How beautiful the sky looks

10.

The trees are massive and heavily blanketed with snow. The wind has settled, the blossoms have fallen. The snow sparkles in the trees.

They remind me of all the friends I have back home. Sure, life can be a little dull, but friends can always be there. Have I really never noticed the things like this before?

I see the lights of a temple in the distance -

Should I run ahead towards the temple?

Or stay and admire the sky?

11.

The moon brightly illuminates the entire mountain. Thick clouds overhead are tinted dark grays and blues. I breathe in the fresh air and admire the smell of air here.

I really never stop to appreciate this kind of thing anymore. I’ve been so caught up with life that I don’t take the time to notice the small things that make me happy. I need to...

I see the lights of a temple in the distance -

Should I run ahead towards the temple?

Or stay and admire the trees?

12.

The temple is massive. There are a few lights inside, but it’s oddly quiet. The air is still. The snow stops falling. Perhaps whoever is there could be meditating?

I step inside and prepare to meet the enlightened one.

13.

It’s…empty? There’s no one here.

There is a large room that makes up most of the temple. The walls are tall and made of an ancient stone. A small bowl of water sits in the center of the room.

Have I really traveled all this way for an empty temple? For nothing?

I walk up to the bowl, stare into the water and look at my reflection…and that’s when it hits me.

15.

It’s…me…! I am the enlightened one. I am the wise person in the temple. I’ve spent all this time searching for this place, and I realize now that I am the only person that brings me true happiness and fulfilment. I’ve traveled so far, but I’ve realized just how beautiful so much of my life actually is in doing so.

I smile, and sit, and quietly reflect.

It’s time to go home.