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There was no pearly gate.

The only reason I knew I was in a cave was because I had just passed the entrance.

The rock wall rose behind me with no ceiling in sight.

I knew this was it, this was what religion talked about, what man feared ..

I had just entered the gate to hell.

I felt the presence of the cave as if it was a living, breathing creature.

The stench of rotten flesh overwhelmed me.

Then there was the voice, it came from inside and all around.

“Welcome”

“Who are you?”, I asked, trying to keep my composure.

“You know”, the thing answered.

I did know.

“You are the devil”, I stuttered, quickly losing my composure.

“Why me? I’ve lived as good as I could”.

The silence took over the space as my words died out.

It seemed like an hour went by before the response came.

“What did you expect?”

The voice was penetrating but patient.

“I don’t know .. I never believed any of this”, I uttered

“Is that why I am here?”

Silence.

I continued: “They say the greatest trick you ever pulled was convincing the world you don’t exist”

“No, the greatest trick I ever pulled was convincing the world that there is an alternative”

“There is no God?” I shivered.

The cave trembled with the words: “I am God”

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