

Temple for the Pictures

Childhood

You enter the Temple the same way you enter life: alone. You walk through a long, high and narrow hallway. Your fingers touch the rough walls while you gaze at the tiny strip of sky. Light passes through the slit between the walls. You feel small as you walk onward. Further down, the walls seem to slowly separate. You start feeling the sun on your skin as the gap widens.

Youth

You find yourself in a wide, open space. Unsure of where to go, you start wondering around the enclosed garden. There are rows of lilies and roses filling the space with an intoxicating scent. In the centre, there is a dark circle. Something is bellow it. But the dark and uncertainty frightens you. You dare not look down. Curious, you try to see what lies behind the tall walls surrounding the garden. There are slits in the walls which allow you to look outside, but your view is limited. Standing on the tips of your toes you try and look outside. You see a blue horizon reaching as far as the eye can see. But you still don't see the whole picture. Suddenly you notice there is someone else in the garden. After an initial moment of uncertainty, you start exploring the garden together. You sit together between the roses and the lilies and imagine what lies in the space bellow the circle. Maybe you could go there together.

Maturity

Suddenly you get startled by a sound in the distance. You realize that you have fallen asleep in the garden. Once again you are alone. You notice a passage behind one of the high walls. You turn around the corner and you can see the blue horizon again. You now realize that you are standing next to the water. A long dock extends towards the horizon. The further down you go, the more of the world you see and understand. At the end of the dock you turn around. You notice a path leading downward. You see your friend there so you decide to go down together.

Old age

You enter a dark room. There is light coming from a circular gap in the ceiling. It must be the same gap you saw in the garden. But now you see it is a beautiful window towards the sky. How your perspective has changed. You start noticing large paintings on the walls surrounding you. You look back and see Childhood, Youth and Maturity. Finally, you come to Old Age. You observe it together. In this light, unlike with the other paintings, it is difficult to see where Old Age ends or begins. You slowly find your way to the exit. There are multiple stairs leading to the higher level. But the hallways are quite narrow. You leave the Temple the same way you leave life: alone. But maybe you will run into each other again when you reach the top.

