



The Sound of Rain

Supporting the work of Emily Carson

Released June 2008

© 2008 Emily Carson

Night

Transcribed from a sitting with Emily Carson, Sunday, May 25, 2008

Night falls and it becomes what you have been waiting for. Night comes as promised, and with it your fears take shape behind your closed eyes. Things are revealed in darkness that we can't see by the light of the sun: things foreign and things terrifying, but things long awaited. Night comes and, so, what you have not faced is here too, what you have not seen is closer now, as close as your own breath. Night falls and with it your defenses, your protection, and your hope of escape. Night brings with it the memory of all things lost; it brings with it all that was held dear just as it vanishes. There is memory sometimes, but more often there is just loss and fear. There is nothing in darkness that we need to defend against, nothing there truly worthy of our terror. But that is no relief; we still feel it as darkness comes, we feel it as a need to be sheltered, a need to be near people, a need to be occupied. Little is as terrifying as being alone with the night; little else can bring us that close to what we thought we had forgotten. When night finds you, when darkness falls, be glad to remember and welcome whatever you are afraid of. It doesn't visit often enough, this terror, the dark image of what we imagine will destroy us; it's not with you enough. And so, whatever you find when you are alone with the night, whether that be death or pain or loneliness, it is worth it to find those, to let them visit, to let darkness have you. The consciousness consumed by darkness has nowhere else to run, it has nothing left to turn to; it can see, finally, whatever must be faced. In that emptiness it knows, finally, that pain must be felt, that death is inevitable, that loneliness is fundamental to existence. In night, we know these things; in night, we are taught. Let it fall like the curtain on the last act of your dramas; let it fall like a shadow over your distractions, like a wedding vow, restraining you but committing you. Let night fall so you might see finally, though it is what you have not wanted to see. Let that darkness show you that all things—even the unmentionable ones—belong to us, are ours, for better or for worse.

And all of them—even the unmentionable ones—bless us equally, leave us in the same state of absolute holiness and pure potential for joy. Night is the best teacher. Meet him; meet that darkness.

Questions and Answers

Q: I'm trying to use my relationships to work on my life lessons. Also, I've been told that this is a vital time to release the trauma stored in my second chakra and that these relationships, both personal and at work, play a key role in the healing opportunity—and that I have to show up differently, change my patterns, when I get triggered or when I'm deep into old patterns. How can I make the most progress? I want to heal both my physical issues and emotional stuckness, and I think I need your help to figure out new tools.

How do you know that you have stuckness in your second chakra?

Oh, because I pulled...all the muscles in the whole area, and I talked with a healer about...making progress and she identified that it's actually...like when everything comes to the surface of a boil—or like that—to be healed, that that's really what's being presented here...

You have to start with the contraction and tension that you feel you have. Can you feel contraction in your second chakra?

Yes.

Are you able to breathe into it and see what emotional issues live there?

I can breathe into it and make space for all the energy that rises there, but I can't see what the issues are and that's why I feel stuck; I keep having the charge without the answers.

There are two things I would have you assume in your investigation of this. Assume that that chakra contains your wanting and that it contains your fear. Generally speaking, you can make some headway in that area of your body when you investigate those two emotions and the way that your contraction seems to relate to them. Pulling muscles happens because you are tense or because you

simply overworked them; in your case you should assume that tension played a role. But there is no time when the body presents these issues to be dealt with as somehow an exclusive opportunity, or even as a most right one. You can always do this. You can do this when your muscles are pulled and when they are fine. Contraction exists at a level much more subtle than the physical, and although physical symptoms can be related to emotional and energetic issues, they aren't always—sometimes you just pull a muscle. You need to talk to people from your belly. That is the one piece of advice I would give you about how you might relate to people in a way which is more useful for you. A productive relationship—that is, one in which you might heal yourself—is founded on your honest communications. It doesn't matter what the other person says or does; if you are honest and you are speaking from your belly, then you will learn what you need to learn and you will move the emotions that need to be moved so that you are able to feel them explicitly.

Q: I'm also feeling very stuck, for months now—it seems like all my efforts are manifesting nothing and I keep having this image or feeling of being squashed or really, really held down, and I don't know if the universe is trying to teach me something, or if I'm doing it to myself, but I can't seem to find any movement in any direction of my life. And my physical body is hurting, and I can't find a job, and...my friends are fading, and I'm wondering if there's...a different approach that I need to take to get out of the rut.

Maybe you are just going through a period of loss. And there is nothing wrong with the fact that less is happening rather than more. If you look at it this way, can you feel any emotional reaction to what I am saying?

Yeah—'What a bummer.' Also, though, just that it might be true, it might be that simple, because it does feel like a lot of loss.

Have you ever had a period of loss that you've enjoyed?

No.

But you've had others that you disliked?

Yes, I've had some pretty strong ones.

There is no way to be full without first being empty. This is not a koan; it's just the simple obvious fact. You are not yet empty, not even empty enough to feel full again. You're not losing anything you value very much, you're just panicked because it's not being replaced by things you do value. And so there is just less; each day, each week, you're a little emptier, your life a little more hollow. But you rely on something quite unstable, something which cannot be maintained and certainly not guaranteed. You rely on excitement and a sense of meaning and purpose. You want things to seem always like they're in bloom, growing, but of course things have to die back in equal measure. This is just a dying-back, and the one thing it brings which you tend to undervalue is space: space in your mind, space in your life, space in your heart. There are all kinds of ways that emptiness might move in and take up residence, but you want only fullness and so you object to all this wonderful loss. Whatever you have lost and whatever you lose now could not be necessary to you; it might be loved and it might be missed but you must not need it or you would not be able to lose it. Call this period of loss by its proper name. The only thing stuck is in your hesitancy to embrace it. You need this, T. You need this just as it is. Let it be just as it is.

Q: So I'm feeling a lot of loneliness and I guess kind of a sense of failure in my life sort of across the board right now. And in my efforts to accept it...I seem to freak out because I feel like it will be this way always, so I feel like I could use a little more skill at staying present with it, if that's the best thing, and I also feel that I could just use any perspective that will help me just be with it...or use it or value it....

What have you failed at?

I guess the biggest place I feel a sense of failure right now is just...having such a hard time financially, and...I'm seven months into having a private practice, and the seventh month looks about like the second month, and I feel like it's really taxing my confidence and I'm in this double bind where I don't have confidence so I'm not radiating that thing that is going to grow my business, and it's not growing and then I'm more not-confident and then it's more not-growing.

You have an entirely inaccurate expectation regarding this. Your seventh month should look very much like your second month. If you imagine that your timeline for growth is somewhere near five times what you had expected it to be, not because of you but just because of the nature of the enterprise, then do you feel relieved or lighter at all?

I think I feel a little bit lighter, but I still feel panicked financially.

Panic is wholly optional, and cannot serve you in any way. There are ways of dealing with your financial limitations, but tell me, first, does what I've said effect your feeling of being a failure?

I think so; I think some part of it.

And does it have any effect on your loneliness?

No.

You don't need to feel being a failure because that's just something you made up based on expectations that can be corrected. But you have to feel being lonely because that won't go away no matter how successful you are, and it won't go away no matter how occupied you manage to become with other people's company. There are certain things that disguise loneliness but they never ameliorate it, not really. It remains as a sort of substratum, a foundation of so many of our actions, and then, in rarer moments, the sad resting place that we must return to when there's nowhere else to go. You need to deal with the issues of your business at the level of your mind, beginning by correcting your expectations, but you need to deal with your loneliness at the level of your belly and your heart, and you need to allow yourself the full embrace of that feeling whenever it seems to want to arise in you. No one has ever taken this away from you, and that is no fault of or lack in your relationships, it is just that relationships don't touch this. Emptiness is like a space carved out that no one else can reach into but in which we find ourselves, body and soul, whenever we are lonely. It's a good place to be, S. You should let yourself be there more often.

Q: I'm looking for some practice that can help me not let my ego take over.

How do you know when your ego has taken over?

When I'm working and I fail and I look at why I failed and it's because of my ego, I can see it.

Give me an example of how you fail in your work.

I was in the process of helping some people in my practice and I was very eager to help them and I knew I could, and they decided they didn't want to work with me and I...felt like someone...had stolen my opportunity to help them.

It can't be called help, then—can it?—if you are the one benefitting from the arrangement. When you want people to be helped by you so that you can feel that they are, you have already ruined your chances of helping them. That is, I think, what you mean in this case by your ego getting in the way, does that sound right?

Yes.

There is one way out of this, and it's not very easy, but it is the only possible route. You need to remind yourself, as often as it takes until you believe it, that no one is being helped by you, that what you do you do out of love and out of the inherent prayer of the practice, but not because it helps someone. If you must serve someone, serve God—and I do not mean God in those people, I just mean God. You cannot help them, S., not a single one. You never have and you never will. And it is, then, a mystery, perhaps, why we engage in these communications at all. And yet we do. We engage for the sake of the action itself and never for the sake of its consequence. You are not doing anything. You are, in the kindest analysis, someone else's instrument, a tool of something you have no power over. In the less kind analysis, you are nothing at all, not essential in any way, and certainly not helping. This perspective is nearly impossible to fathom, wholly impossible to explain logically, and absolutely true. You can't help anyone, I can't help anyone; no one can, no one will and no one needs to. The ego, then, can't get a footing anywhere, and falls down under the weight of its own erroneous assumptions. The problem is that you thought you could do something, but you can't, and so you are blessedly relieved of the burden you now carry. Continue your practice for the sake of itself, attending to it wholeheartedly and single-mindedly in each moment you spend with a client, and then, the second it is over, let the whole thing fall from you like something you didn't even do, and don't give it a second thought. And the next time a person refuses you, you will know it makes no difference; they didn't need help anyway, and they weren't going to get it. And that will be a surprising relief.