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### **LAST TALK IN SAANEN 3**

## **WITHOUT BEAUTY AND LOVE THERE IS NO TRUTH**

J. Krishnamurti, *Last Talk in Saanen*, LONDON VICTORY GOLLANCZ LTD, 1986

So we are asking ourselves: What is beauty? Is beauty in a person, in a face? Is beauty in museums, in painting—classical paintings, modern paintings? Is beauty in music—Beethoven, Mozart, Bach and all the noise that is going on in the world called music? Is beauty in a poem? In literature? Dancing? Is all that beauty? Or is beauty something entirely different? We are going into it together. Please, if one may respectfully point out, don't accept the words, don't merely be satisfied with the description and explanations, but let us, if we can, put from our brain all agreeing and disagreeing and look at it very carefully, stay with it, penetrate into the word.

As we said, without that quality of beauty, which is sensitivity, there is no truth. That quality implies not only the beauty of nature—the deserts, the forests, the rivers and the

vast mountains with their immense dignity, majesty, but also the feeling of it, not romantic imaginings and sentimental states—those are merely sensations. Is beauty, then, we are asking, a sensation? Because we live by sensations—sexual sensation, with which goes pleasure, and also the pain involved in the feeling that it is not being fulfilled, and so on. So could we this morning put out of our brain all those words and go into this enormous, very complicated, subtle question: what is the nature of beauty? We are not writing a poem.

When you look at those mountains, those immense rocks jutting into the sky—if you look at them quietly you feel the immensity of it, the enormous majesty of it, and for the moment, for the second, the tremendous dignity of it, the solidity of it, puts away all your thoughts, your problems—right? And you say, ‘How marvellous that is.’ So what has taken place there? The majesty of those mountains, the very immensity of the sky and the blue and the snow-clad mountains, drives away for a second all your problems. It makes you totally forget yourself for a second. You are enthralled by it, you are struck by it, like a child,

who has been naughty all day long, or naughty for a while, which he has a right to be, and is given a complicated toy. He is absorbed by the toy until he breaks it. The toy has taken him over and he is quiet, he is enjoying it. He has forgotten his family, the 'Do this, don't do that': the toy becomes the most exciting thing for him.

In the same way, the mountains, the river, the meadows and the groves absorb you, you forget yourself. Is that beauty? To be absorbed by the mountains, by the river, or the green fields, means that you are like a child absorbed by a toy, and for the moment you are quiet, taken over, surrendering yourself to something. Is that beauty? Being taken over? You understand? Surrendering yourself to something great and that thing forcing you for a second to forget yourself? Then you depend, depend as the child does on a toy, or on the cinema or television, when for the moment you have identified yourself with the actor or actress. Would you consider that state—being taken over, surrendering, being absorbed—would you consider that that quiet second is beauty? When you go to a church or a temple or

a mosque, the chanting, the rituals, the intonation of the voice, are carefully organized to create a certain sensation, which you call worship, which you call a sense of religiosity. Is that beauty? Or is beauty something entirely different? Are we understanding this question together?

Is there beauty where there is self-conscious endeavour? Or is there beauty only when the self is not—when the me, the observer, is not? So is it possible without being absorbed, taken over, surrendering, to be in that state without the self, without the ego, without the me always thinking about itself? Is that at all possible, living in this modern world with all its specializations, its vulgarity, its immense noise—not the noise of running waters, of the song of a bird? Is it possible to live in this world without the self, the me, the ego, the persona, the assertion of the individual? In that state, when there is really freedom from all this, only then is there beauty.