

You are hanging by your teeth from a branch above a void. Someone asks you to express something about Buddhism. What do you do?

Dotoku – expression – consists of two Chinese characters: ‘do’ meaning ‘the way’ or ‘to say’ , and ‘toku’ – ‘to attain’ or ‘to be able’

So for Dogen, everything is expression: the branch is expressing itself, the void is expressing itself, the teeth are expressing themselves, the words are expressing themselves.

Implicit in an ordinary reading of the story is an assumption that the world is just the backdrop to the drama of us, when in fact the world is continually leaping out of itself. As are you.