
POEMS

BY BHIKKHU DHAMMĀNANDA



MAKE YOUR HEART IDEAL

Draw your ideal in your heart
That is in truth the highest art
Or better still,
Chisel thy heart into the form of your ideal
Else quickly ye may fall b'low lives wheel
b'cause the morrow will weed out the chaff
And turn to compost all useless stuff
A compost that's needed only for the seeds of promise
an ideal flower for which all the low just wrong is
A tree that groweth into highest heavens
For which only suns and stars the right companions
Whose roots and crown indeed are free
Which is at once both high and deep

So set yourself then now to toil
And make well fertile your good soil
Leave not a bit of strength unused
For what is left may get abused

THE FIVE CONSTITUENTS OF BEING

MATTER

If you but seek'st enlightenment; first it's opposite must comprehend. But what is the opposite of spirit? Tis matter whose coarseness is most vivid.

But what is matter?, we might ask. Everything, that you can grasp. Anything, that you can see, can touch, can hear, or smell, belongs indeed to matters spell. Anything solid, liquid, fiery, or moving, is matter in its forms you spooking. But he who all these knows, indeed he knows, what to enlightenment is opposed.

Yet, if you know them to their border, and in your mind can put in order; their spell will cease to reach you then, their trouble for you will come to 'ts end.

LIFE (AND FEELING)

Next we have life. That 's something more than matter. That, if compared, is refined and better. Be't plant, polyp, giraffe, or man, the life within is all the same. Makes grow, what starts as smallest thing, takes in,

excretes, and dies at end. It feels, that is it's central mark,
if you seek to explore it, here embark.

MIND

Yet higher still a thing is mind, be it cruel, or be 't kind. It
thinks and thinks, is glad or sad, becomes enraptured or
else b'comes mad.

PERCEPTION

Perception still another thing, distinguishes between a
cube or ring, distinguishes: tis good, tis bad;
distinguishes a rat from cat.

CONSCIOUSNESS

Yet, what is it, that knows these all? Whose vision may
go beyond each wall? Tis consciousness spelled out as
name. And of this whole set, deserves best fame. It
measures universes space, and calculates an aeons
days. It knows the life without, within; can know a
thought, be't brilliant, be't dim; can see, can know
perception's workings and with each knowing, will be
growing.

SUFFERING, SEARCHING, FINDING

Unfortunate that good fate has passed
I sit, my happiness is blast
wearyed that life is so unjust
that even strongest iron rust
that there is no sky without a cloud
now no mind moment left without doubt
Mere resignation still will not do
Before I was one now I am two

I summon hope and see there she comes
sending light in the night from her suns
Seeing light, slowly my mind again becomes bright
My mind becoming bright,
I again feel delight
'T wasn't so bad after all
Before I was bend,
now my stature becomes tall

What a silliness all these shifting moods
The ever changing our wit constantly eludes
But how to make our wit un-delud'
How to make sure
mind won't just now become persecut'd

as has happened so often before
Yesterday I was wise, tomorrow I might be a boor

An answer I hear in my ear
Y' must train hard to become a great seer
A seer who comprehends the wholeness of life
Easy said, but difficult to contrive

Anyhow now I strive to accomplish the task
All the fleeting I try to unmask
All the changing I try to perceive
Giving my mind not a singular leave

And see there, the ever changing fades
Unexpected after hardships I gaze
Something underlying it all,
that's not ruffled, yet not hard as a wall
Is it my self or is it a god?

About orthodox reproaches I care not
It is there and hence forth is my lord
Ye may reprimand me or show me the sword

Still, again back into the changing I'm forced to dive
Yet with the promise that my vision, the changing
survives

Even if ever again I would fall,
the fall at most will be small

OH DEATH

Oh death please be my guiding light
through lives bewildering maze.
And show me where it ends at last,
that I shall'nt be surprised.
Please warn me at each turning point,
that all ways lead to thee
For him who does not know before
The risk of foolish spree
Besides, I ask imploringly,
please come to my advice
When I begin activities
that rob my mind its spice
Then too I hope I'm not alone
when old age lasts too long
At last I wish I've trained enough
that I have thee outgrown

CAN DHAMMA BE HERESY?

If I'd be asked: "Dost thou believe in god, a creator?",
I'd say to him: For you it might be odd, I'm not a traitor,
but with surety I can only say:

A god that dost create, be he imagined or be he real,
if his creations skill display,
I don't abhor, nor will I reel;

And if his creations reach some excellence
greater than mine own,
he shall deserve my reverence
and sure deserves renown.

But, he who rashly hopes destruction
of another one's construction,
for himself is an obstruction.

I pray: may no one heed such one's instruction.

Furthermore, I'd be tempted saying:
"Didst I myself not have created this body of my own;
by words, by thoughts, and too by deeds, done in days
bygone?"

"Tis not that I desired: "May I be human yet again"
and then a body sprouted, in mother's belly's den?
'And tis not this body also, in truth, a world itself?,
peopled with a myriad lives,

to each other husbands, wives,
but to me not more than cells?
And if that be admitted,
am I myself then not a god,
towards those very beings
that found in me the host to all their lot?

RAIN POEM

It is raining, dark it's outside,
both at daytime, as well as at night
The darkness is earth, water the rain,
put against these two, the flame of your mind
Let your conscious mind move quickly,
where the earth's rotation's slow
Where time is just dragging,
depression still y' must disavow

ONCE UPON A TIME

Once upon a time,
someone came to be,
and as he arose,
he soon began to see

His eyes saw good things,
but bad things they saw too
to the good he became a slave,
to the bad an enemy

Then spoke to him a wise one,
If you seekest to conquer life,
another way embark upon,
for better things please strive

That made the other thoughtful.
Indeed, it is my lot,
that outer things, do enter me
and pull me back and forth.

That made him slightly worried.
Perhaps indeed I'm here quiet follied
But how to search for better things,
where are there truly living kings?

Thus searchingly he starts,
to look for higher truths.

At first it was around
and then it was in books.

And as he studied thus,
understanding came to be.
Which gave him certain powers,
to look at life more clearly.

Looking at life anew
His wisdom slowly grew
Thus slave he ceased to be
Nor was he enemy

A balancer of life
He gave up personal strive
Found sorrow come to 'ts end
Illusion's veil was rent

WELCOME DEATH!

When death has arrived within our midst,
then our duty still is to not loose our wits

We should try to see that only a body is lost
and that what is left has the value most

What is left is the indwelling life,
that during the lifetime, did its best to strive

It grew up, and doing that, developed manifold skills
Went through many a ditch and climbed a thousand
hills

Now it earned itself heaven
Why should you sorrow feel

When a good life just becomes better
When off the body we peel

THE SILENT ROOM

Alone I sit in my little room
In one corner my bed
In one corner the broom

Here I live, day in and day out
Make myself happy
From my mind remove clouds

What joys and what sorrows
I have lived here through

What heavenly flights
My demons I faced too

All in the end for wisdoms sake
Eternal knowledge is on the stake

It is undying purity that I crave
I hope to accomplish it before the grave

LATENCY AND THE MANIFEST

What's manifest evr'one can see
But latency 's sight 's not that free
Manifestations edges sharp
But of latent things we can't see the start
But is a dream not a reality too
Are reality's hardships all that's true?
Aren't the latent things much grander
Giving life a substance, which the earth won't grant ya
Is it not the dream which makes reality
When life's hardness destroyeth thee
Is it not the latent whence it all came from
And to which in the end all things 'll return
Hence let's explore this mysterious condition
Together with its twin physician:

Manifestation structure gives,
And structure is indeed its gist
Latency on the other hand
Provides a meaning diff'cult to comprehend
For how to grasp what's substance-less
What neither is nor nothingness

In unison they seem to weave
One giving substance, one relief
One holding upright, one lets go
One seeks to know, yet receives a blow
The other neither knows, nor feels
But mysteries reveals
One knows destruction, as well as birth
The other worst or best becomes earth
Thus they complement each other well
Each the other somewhat to life impel

HEAVEN, DARKNESS AND BETWEEN

Heaven is vast,
Narrow the earth
Darkness and voidness of joy
And those who goodness seek to destroy
Dwell below earth's upper soil
In the gloom darkness

Above the devas reign in glory,
Below the demons play their pranks
It is in the middle were most of us find their ranks

However nobody's rank is fixed
If fate with an effective will be mixed
Then a desired destiny may be won
And a bad fate may be gone

All nature indeed is within us
Each's gain akin to what he does
Upwards we may seek to climb
Downwards may us drag the grime
Or in the grey middle we else may pass the time

Waging the inner war
We came to earth truly for

Becoming nobler than a boor
Walking through a loftier door
This is the call we should listen to
This is the path that is only true
All else precisely what we seek eschew
Never the lower we be found to do
Even if this means companions having few
Even if each day we start from scrap anew

This is the price
For indeed all true good only comes from sacrifice

THOUGHT

It is in the mind's thought
Where earth's fate is wrought
In the war between light and dark
There seek to understand each side's mark
Where gods and demons seek become the lord
There wisely you should choose to-where resort
And from whom you seek to gain your due reward

DISSATISFACTION

I don't see what the future holds
The past gives me no guidance
Today, tomorrow, any day,
seem pointless, useless, anyway
So what then can I say...
If the Reaper were to come
The last thing I would do is run
The grave appears so peaceful still,
When my head is full of noises
From each side I am pressed with ill
come-on, please quickly make your choices
My life such sad a thing to bear
I wish something were worth to dare

FACULTIES

Be it the eye or be 't the tongue
An instrument even if low the rung

It is how the indwelling life,
comes to know where to strive

Yet higher faculties develop
As life with truth b'comes enveloped

Then at least five faculties begin to form
That is indeed the usual norm

The truth inspirations spark will light
Then effort moves towards that sight

Effort, if intelligently employed
Will not be of clar'ty void

And if these three will good develop,
then unity will crown the effort

These four together will make him wise
Who properly them all employs

Then truth is not just glimpsed but once,
But leads to b'coming living suns

SEQUENCES

Where one thing another follows,
a sequence we have before us.
'Tis what spans birth with death's end
Each stage we separately can rend.

First A, then B, and then comes C.
A babe, a boy, a man grows old,
until into the grave to go he's told

A dream, a thought, a plan, and then,
into reality we hope 't will span.

This is was gives security,
The universe's predictability

Even on the spiritual path,
one thing another follows till the last.
Is this not a sign of marvellous order—

These things which show us matter 's not the border?

But rather just the coarsest thing,
Which through sequence's knowledge
we to order bring.

Let's do this then with all we know,
To disavow chaos, and let order grow.
Thus life's confusions we overcome,
With wisdom from sequence's knowledge spun

SYNCHRONICITY

When 2, or 3, or more b'come one
When the sense of self is gone
When separation broken down
When of unity all thoughts come from
When lives, without, within,
in unison begin to spin
When synchronicity wonder works
And no thing there which an'one irks
Then dear friend contemplate this wonder
Which common life does rend asunder
Seek to feel what lofty god
Has come to sanctify this spot

Seek to breath that unity
Which cleared away what troubled thee
Try to feel of godly kind
Of godly nature make your mind
Then all your life points heaven wards
And heaven shall be your reward
But if thou givst up heaven even
Then liberation to your bottom 'll deepen
For liberation means giving up the all
The highest last, but first the small

BEING OR BEING NOT

To be, or to be not
Such question is indeed a knot
To find an answer we must seek,
What's on life's bottom, What's on life's peak
But not easy 'tis to go such place
For in common life's space
Everything is not deep, nor high
Common people just get by

But where to find then lofty heights
Where to find what oceans depth supplies
 'Tis indeed within this heart
Which common life does continuously dart
 'Tis where shallowness b'comes painful
And even suff'ring we won't want to lull
 'Tis where we really want to know
Whether we receive a medal or a blow
 'Tis where continuously we fight
 For continuously greater height
 And costs it even death to us
If through it common life we 'll off-cast
Then beings b'ginning, beings end
 We shall truly comprehend



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