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# POEMS

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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  
wearied 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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