
Poems for the Earth

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A little bit of rain
won't be sufficient to repair
weeks of drought

A little bit of zazen
won't be sufficient to repair
eons of ignorance

A generous good rainfall
will water deeply
the myriads of organisms
in a rich and living soil

An assiduous and generous
practice will transform deeply
this body-mind into myriads
of Dharma fireflies

May Buddha help
and guide me on the Path

Polluting microplastics, from oceanic abysses
up to (still) snowy mountain tops

Heavy metals and carcinogenic molecules from
the tip of the toes up to the top of my overheated shaved skull

But most serious remains
the toxicity of my own mind

In the middle of a heat wave
I dove in a transparent and gracefully fresh sea,
where the dolphin friend was already waiting for me

Right away in the big blue, the joyful party
began, letting us inhale a burning air on the surface,
and diving immediately to the deep, spiraling or
gliding in a delicious weightlessness, with
gestures of a great slowness and peace – zen - . . .

But suddenly a noisy bell

brought me back to my bed:
time to finish the siesta, little monk,
we are on sesshin here!
Come on, get up! Zazen!

A robe doesn't make a monk
A nun isn't a shaved head
Nor a beautifully sewn kesa

Important responsibilities may
or may not express an authentic
dedication to the Dharma,
whereas an exterior sweetness may
hide a hard core full of
avidity for power

Innumerable are the pitfalls on the Way
like weed appearing everywhere
on the public roads of our mind

So, let's follow as well as we can
the precepts and the dojo's rules
letting us being shattered like the pebbles
on the beach by the sometimes tumultuous
waves of dojo life and an always moving sangha

Keeping an eye on the lighthouse
of the Master
and
let's repent at every new moon

In my garden there is
not one single paper,
not a single trash neither
waste loosely abandoned
somewhere in a corner

At my neighbour's,
a poor widow who can't manage
it anymore, the rubbish and plastics
build up between the rambles, bindweeds
and other thistles

But the blackbird joyfully
sings on both sides of the hedge

and the dew delicately rests
everywhere until sunrise

Brutally, ferociously, implacably
the sun burns the earth

In the Saharian air the scorched grass
suffocates under some rare butterflies
looking for a still open flower

The little birds remain silent in the hedges
and the bigger one's found refuge under
the leaves of yet yellowed trees

Brutally, ferociously, implacably
like our sun baking the earth's crust
the system burns and dries the hearts
of men, dulled by the unbreathable air
of their unbridled running

More numerous than the few butterflies
in search of flowers, women and men
of every age come to quench themselves
on the colored flowers of the Dharma

The sun went away and
the air became more breathable
under a beautiful decorated sky
with multiple pastel tones

It's time to water some plants
under their shadowed protection
besides the others which were
dried or burned by fire beams

May all infected seeds and plants
by the three poisons in my body
and mind be definitively dried
and burned by the fire of the practice
stirred by the breath and
the compassion of Kannon

How agreeable it is
to cycle in a heat wave
under the shadow of the forest

in this beautiful cathedral of centenarian
beech trees majestically
pointed towards infinity

The wheels of the bicycle
whirl joyfully like the Dharma's wheel
which every branch, every leaf
of the forest and of the underwood
murmurs near imperceptibly

Alas these magnificent trees
suffer of climate change and will
have to disappear of this enchanted scenery
and seek refuge more northwards, joining
these millions of anonymous transmigrants and
refugees on dangerous roads, from the exploited south
to the exploiting north, which became sick
of its stolen wealth

Other, more adapted trees one day
will take the place of these beautiful beings,
beech trees, offering new tastes to hinds and deer,
and new comic-acrobatic challenges to playful squirrels

And another monk
will turn the wheels of his bicycle
pedaling cheerfully the 'Shigu seigan mon'
which the Dharma near imperceptibly will accompany
with the peaceful balancing of new arrived trees
and majestically pointing towards infinity ...

I don't remember having
been so grateful and physically
happy for having been able to see
the rain coming back again

After weeks of drought and
days of endless canicular heaths,
of sticky nights and my incapacity
towards a vegetation in great suffering

Rain! is falling again, abundantly,
in a marvelous regular and uninterrupted
flow on earth, the thunder booming
far away, accompanied by laughing birds

Dharma's rain! since ever is falling in

an always marvelously and uninterrupted flow
since the origin of times to water the thirsty
hearts of all beings

Dharma's rain and heaven's rain
became one in the silence of the night
It's marvelous being able to practice zazen
becoming a tree with the watered trees

I don't remember having
being that grateful and
physically happy for
being the rain

Sanpai

Letting the car at the church piazza
and going down a lovely footpath
alongside a small park with a big
beautiful willow tree under a burning sun
at its zenith, there, just in front of my
pilgrim's feet on the Way, it was lying
on the burning stones of death.

General anthropomorphism stigmatizes
it as an abject and dirty animal,
carrying diseases and stinking to death,
to be combatted and eliminated by all means,
and at the same time subject of
the worst atrocious experiences in
all labs around the world.

It is true that if we could waste less
and try to diminish our tendency of
changing our villages, neighbourhoods
and countryside into gigantic garbage
dumps poisoning all life,
if we would throw away less food and
give it to the hungry or make compost of it,
they certainly would be less striding along
our streets and sewers, our barns and gardens.

This rat, in front of my feet, probably deceased
of drought and heat wave, was indeed a
beautiful animal in all manners. Of a respectable
size, I noticed, perhaps for the first time, that it was

a whole being, worthy of respect, with a soft and shiny fur, departed with a little smile behind it's moustaches, which the flies had already begun to invade.

All phenomena teach us the Dharma, and on that particular day it was a dead rat, anonymous and sublime altogether in its role of teacher, whom I greeted with gasshō nearby astonished passers-by demanding themselves if the sun hadn't hit too hard my shaved skull.

Later that day I entered the compound of a shop center to fill up my car when suddenly, just in front of my wheels, another rat crossed over the access road as to transmit me the joyful and best all salutations of its companion which had passed over into the other side of the mirror . . .

Gracefully balancing rose tree
The moon perfumes a starring nightly air
A black robe in silence contemplates
The splendor of Dharma

The workers hurry on a yet
overcrowded ring road

In the dojo the big bell resonates
up to the far end of the universe

Some peaceful shadows
in front of bare walls

The agitated the city awakens
slowly the incense rises

There are too many words
too many hollow phrases

There are too much
embellished images

too many information
and even more disinformation

The poles are melting
rapidly and yet

the information tsunami
floods the hearts and swells human ego's

Zazen transpierces it all instantly:
nothing left

During daylight
an exhausted hedgehog
dragged itself along on the yellowed grass

Too late
I realized that it was awfully thirsty
while I had been drinking at pleasure

In the evening,
exhausted by my own ignorance
I looked at the water bowl near the bush

Zazen
early morning

A slender rain
on the glass panes

The breeze whispers
the Four Vows

Zazen
in early morning . . .

The altar
tired flowers
delicately draw
impermanence on
the virgin page of
a new day

Their decrepitude
is turning the wheel of time

In the axis of here and now
the picture of time
is dissolving with the incense

And all the libraries of the world
with their innumerable books
and their too many over filled pages
disappear in the black hole
of the instant

Day after day
his footsteps
have slowed down
for harmonizing
little by little
with the rhythm of
Universal life
humming in each
individual breath
of this body-mind
the melody of that
which is and being
perpetually rejuvenated

With or without wind
in a gentle breeze or
in stormy seas he freely
surfs on the twinkling waves
of samsara

At night
the shouting of the neighbour lady
in the tranquility of the garden

In daylight
the noises of hyperactivity
in the urban rush

Yet the earth calmly
continues it's stroll in
cosmic immensity
around a tiny minuscule sun

The flea jumps of
space agencies do not decelerate

hishiryo's expansion of sidereal silence
in the immensity of void vacuum space

Simply sitting
breathing with the winds
stretching like the trees
and touching the stars
of prajnaparamita
a few brief moments

Permanent impregnation
of what was already there
before the appearance
of this body-mind
on this
marvelous
blue
planet

Gasshô

Busy with the summer pruning
of apple trees I felt
observed

It's wings wide open
and carried by the thermal winds
turning spirals in the sun

A beautiful stork
controlled my work from above
helped below by the whinnying
of a beautiful horse behind the hedge

And as in fairy-like enchantment
a beautiful butterfly also came up
adding itself to this scene which wasn't
a movie but simply an instant moment's Life