

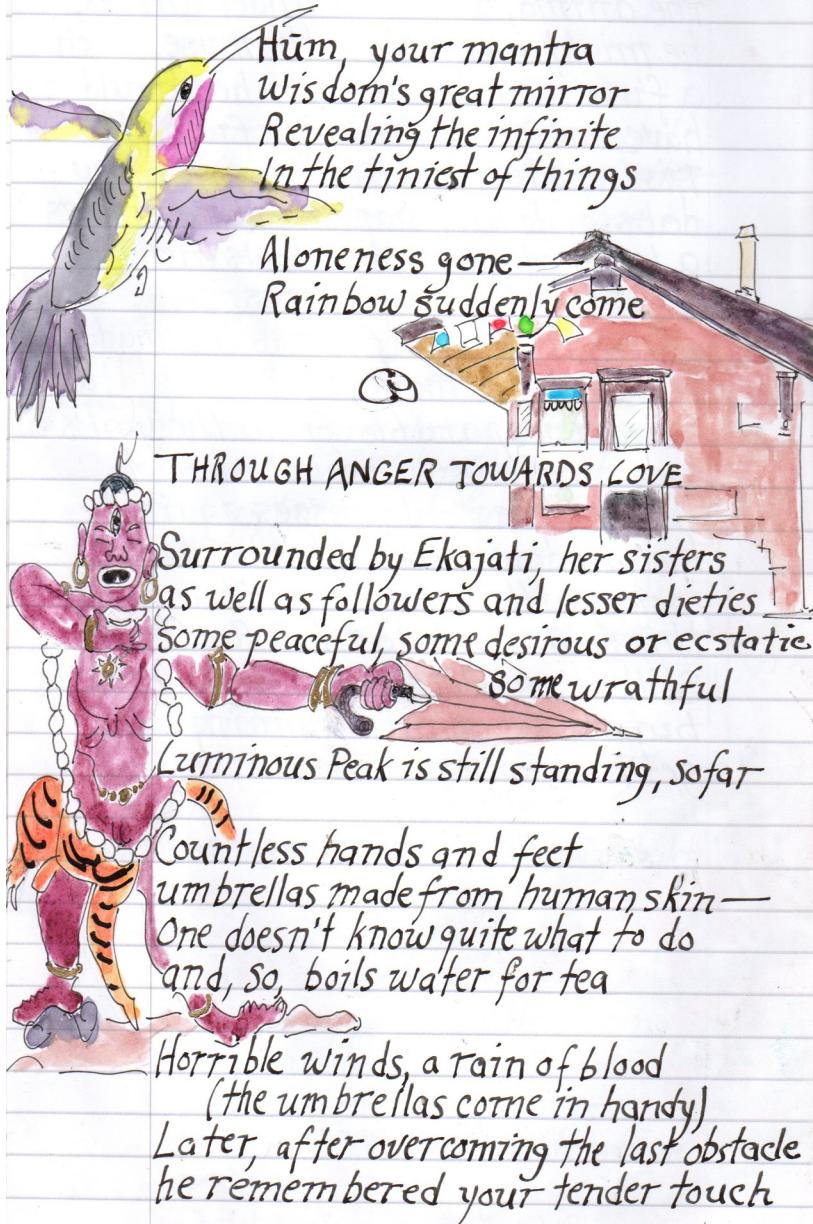


**Life with Machig
&
Life of a Knife**
2 stories by
Jampa Dorje



Jampa Dorje
**USING THE MOON
AS SUPPORT**

A hummingbird entered Luminous Peak
and hummed, while I sang



LIFE WITH MACHIG

My name is Copabhadra. My friends call me Topa. Suffice it to say I was born in India. Now, I live in Tibet among the red-faced cannibals. I'm married to Machig Labdrön. That's her over there on her meditation rug. She's been in Samhadi for three days.

We were talking about childcare, and she just went off. She's got a knack for deep meditation, always has. When we first met, we'd go for a walk, and we might be talking very seriously about the Dharma, and in mid-sentence she'd halt and get this faraway look in her eyes, and that would be that for our walk. I'd sit down and do some practice, maybe an hour or two; still no sign of Machig coming around; so, I would leave her and go home — this is what she had instructed me to do.

Kind of weird, to leave your date standing on a trail — stood up, so to speak — but she would eventually come out of her Samhadi and return home, maybe that night or the next day. She would ^{not} even mention it; she'd pick up the topic of our conversation, as if there'd never been an interruption.

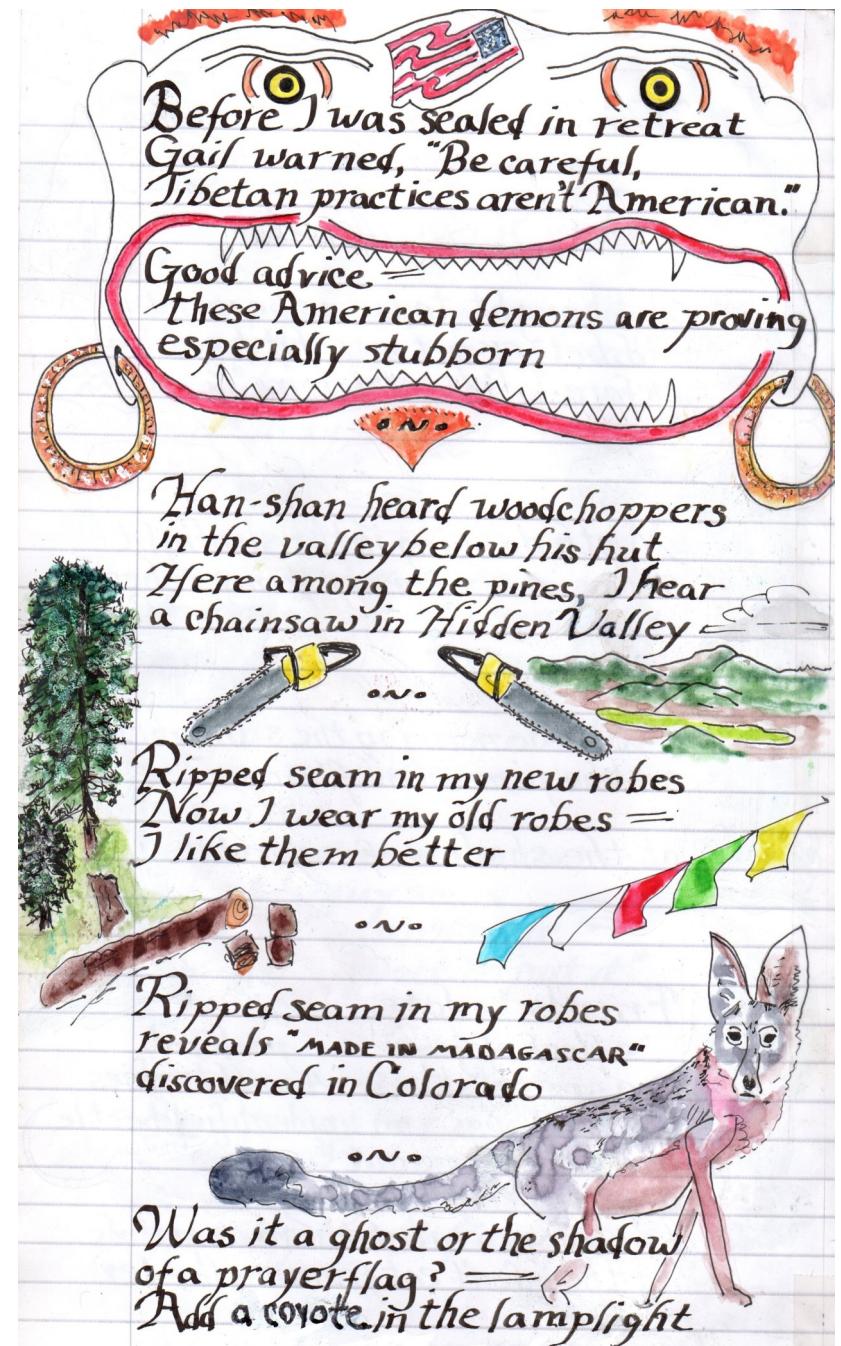
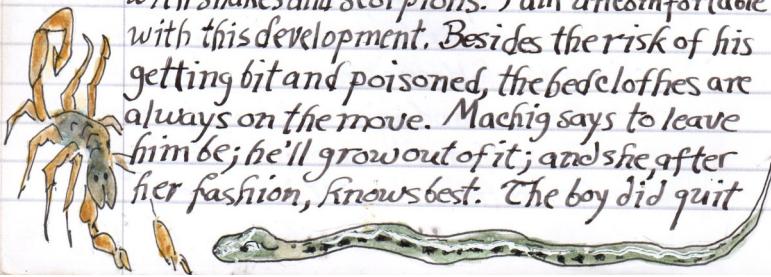
After the children were born — we have three, two boys and a girl — I took it upon myself to be the main caregiver. Machig would nurse them, but I'd do the rest.

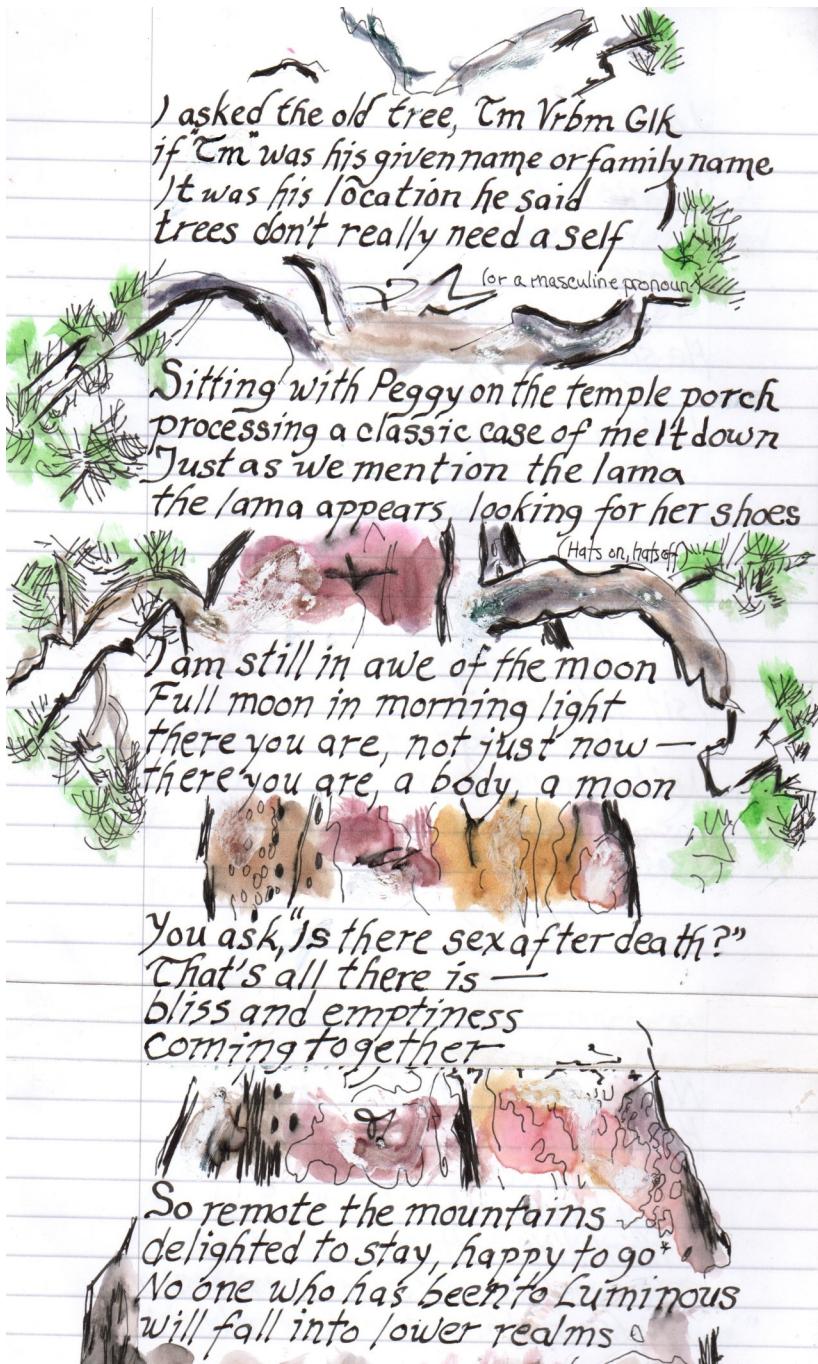
I mean, she might just "takeoff" and drop the baby, or one of the kids might crawl out the door and fall down a ravine, and Machig would be none the wiser — until she returned, and then she'd say something like, "Have you seen the baby? She was right here." Sure, two days ago. I'm a yogi, myself, and I understand these things; but when you are raising children, there are certain conditions, certain limits. But for Machig, no limits.

My worries about the children have increased as they've gotten older. The other night I walked in on Conyon, our old son, playing dice with a demon. It was only Snarf; he's harmless enough, one of the Ganda harvas, politely known as odor-eaters. However, he's uncouth, and I don't take with gambling because it distorts the workings of cause and effect.

And, today, I saw our daughter, Laduma, being dressed by the Propitious Goddess of Long Life, Cserinma, in a costume of bone ornaments. I asked, "What is that she's wearing?" And the reply, "Oh, it's just a cheap knockoff of an outfit designed by Vajrayogini."

All this is to be expected, I guess, but our second son, DrubSe, has taken to sleeping with snakes and scorpions. I am uncomfortable with this development. Besides the risk of his getting bit and poisoned, the bedclothes are always on the move. Machig says to leave him be; he'll grow out of it; and she, after her fashion, knows best. The boy did quit





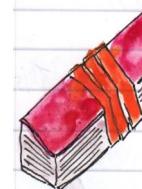
pooping in his chuba after Machig made him eat a momo filled with one of his turds.

Machig goes out to charnel grounds at night with the most loathsome and despicable characters and comes home at day break. It's bad enough I can smell chang on her breath, but she wants these phantoms to live with us.

They don't take up any room, really, but they do a half-assed job of keeping up appearances when our human friends stop by to visit. If you walk behind one of these monsters, you can see they are only marginally tucked into the skins they've flayed to create their masks. They've got tentacles sticking out of their sleeves, gills behind their ears, or dangling clusters of nodular growths around their hips.*

Ok, I'm just picking lint. (One of my grandmother's favorite expressions.) This is Machig's work. Sure, there was a time when we had a steady income. She made good money reading the Prajna Paramita Sutra professionally. She had patrons; but once we came together, even though she had permission from her lama, people gossiped about her being a fallen nun. So, we had to move.

Whatever the task at hand, Machig goes at it like she's killing snakes. (Another * rhomkyon, forges, for that phrase ("Halim, the masked Dyer of Meru"). -J.D.



of my grandmother's expressions and not a very compassionate one. Although she was a devout Buddhist, my grandmother was born in the countryside, and she had a whole repertoire of pithy phrases.) But Machig can control her energy. She is the embodiment of the paramitas and a model of how to apply the eight-fold path. No hardship is too severe for her and no project too daunting.

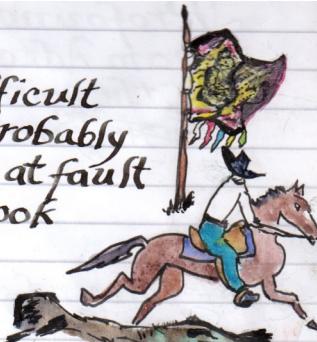
Before Machig and I were married she had encountered Padampa Sange, and he recognized her as the Secret Wisdom Prajna Dakini and prophesized her teachings would be as bright as the sun and would help innumerable sentient beings in the times to come. At this point, she was already a debator of the first magnitude, but after her experience with the naga at the waterhole, where she attained egolessness, and the empowerments she received directly from Arya Tara, she was in a class all of her own.

I believe it was Tara who first informed Machig that she and I were destined to "join profound cognition and skillful means." This is the way the Sublime Ma put it. So, here we are, married with three kids and a house full of demons to feed. Not that I mind — no, far from it — it's just that I'm apprehensive. Machig will cut out and leave me and the brood and take her teachings to the people of Tibet.

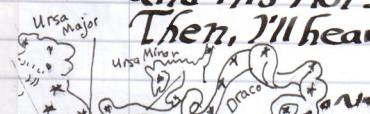


If a sentence is difficult to punctuate, it's probably the order of words at fault so you're off the hook

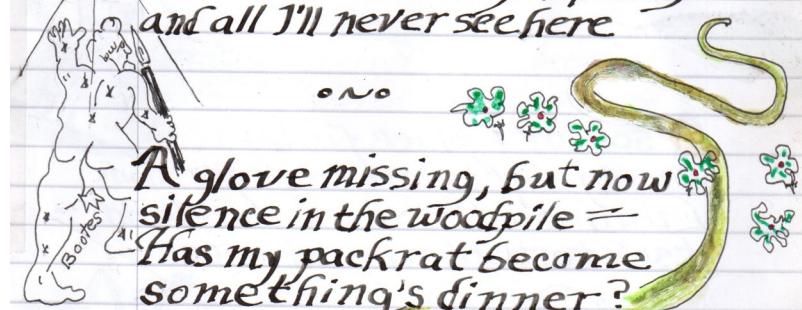
*Sentence is punctuated correctly.
order is probably correct.
you are hooked.
the horse shies.
it's off the hook.*



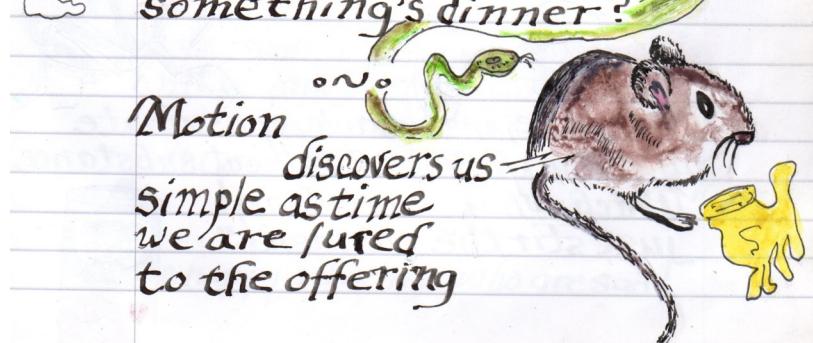
I erected my victory banner =
It'll do, until David rides by
and his horse shies =
Then, I'll hear from Hayagriva



My retreat boundary extends
ten feet beyond my deck =
I'm overwhelmed by infinity
and all I'll never see here



A glove missing, but now
silence in the woodpile =
Has my packrat become
something's dinner?

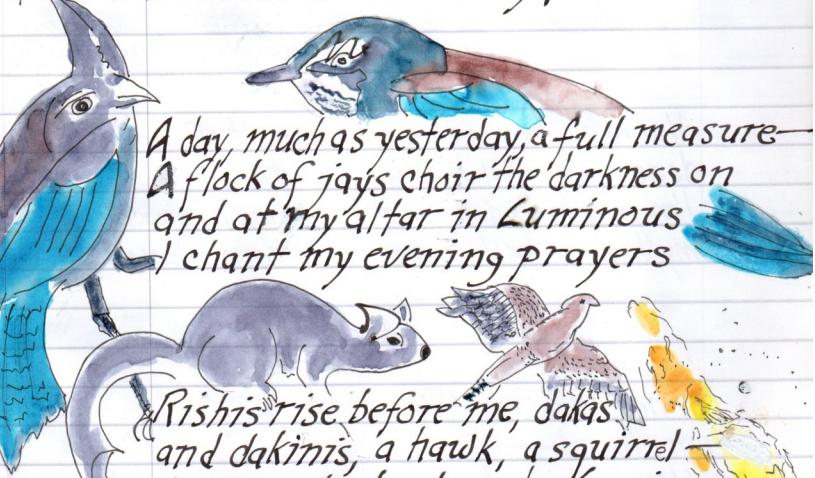


Motion
discovers us =
Simple as time
we are sured
to the offering

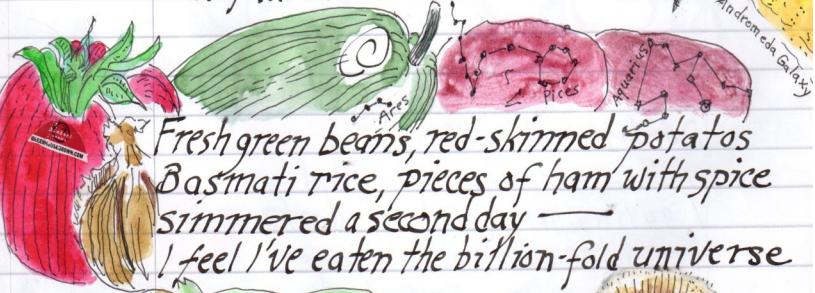
A day of contrails — wind feathers a set
into a Tibetan UV, and then
just to be sure I've got the message
the jets crisscross and form AH



All the pages return
all the words, the ink
Hard to read in this bright light
Even the blinds are a gift



Rishi's rise before me, dakinis
and dakinis, a hawk, a squirrel —
no one who has been to Luminous
will fall into lower realms



"Cut through," that's the term she uses these days. Chöd is the Tibetan word, but I'm not at liberty to go into the details. My real fear is Machig as a liberated woman, independent, and knowing there is no way to contravene providence and the formation of her lineage. Lineage of the teachings is the main driving force.

I'm going to reveal a little personal secret here, if you will allow me to do so. When Machig and I first formed a union, I was unable to maintain my role as yab to her yum. Tantric sex is not easy, especially with a woman as voluptuous as Machig. We were fine, at first. My mystical Vajra was in absolute harmony with her serene lotus, and we were united in our ecstatic dance of delight, when I ejaculated. She's not called "the torch" without reason.

In the afterglow, I was depressed, but Machig consoled me by saying it was wonderful and that she wanted to create a lineage. I said, "At this rate we'll create a whole soccer team. "What's a soccer team?" she asked, quizzically.

And I knew I was in deep in more than one way. "Oh, it's just an expression we use back home in India," I replied. "Be here, now," she said. That's Machig, always re-introducing you to the nature of your mind.

Machig stays busy with her Chöd. I stay busy trying to make a happy home life.





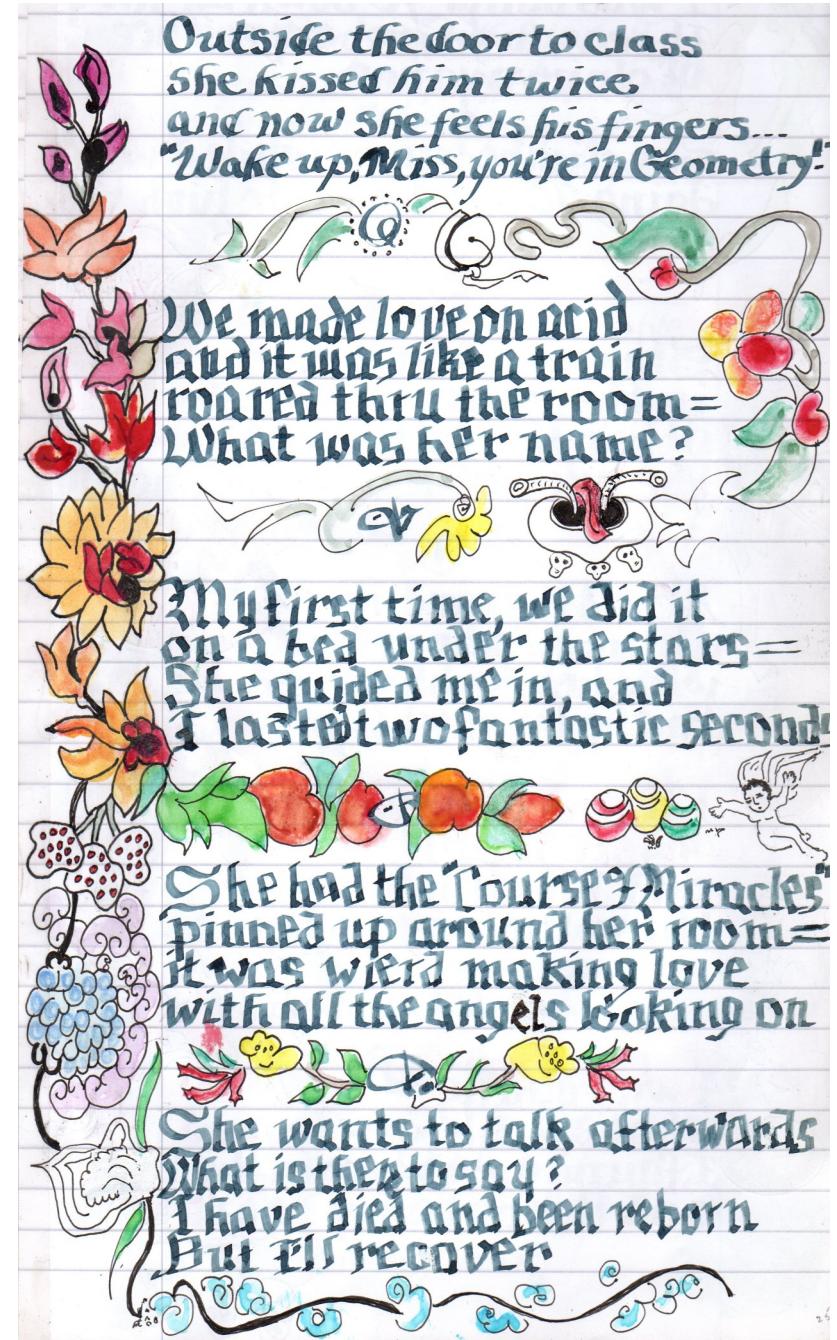
Things have quieted down. Machig has put the final touches on her masterpiece, the instrumentalization with the two-sided drum, the bell, and the thigh-bone trumpet. And it sounds great. The rakshas, yakshas, gyalpos, senmos, maras, tsens, and other characters have returned to their respective abodes, now that they are ordinary demons again and no longer hindrances to Machig's practice. I must say, Tibetans certainly take their spirit world seriously. As I had foreseen, Machig will take her chöd on the road. To this, I am reconciled; I can see the importance of her mission. I have the children, and they have me. We will be reunited in this lifetime and in those to come; it is, after all, our family lineage.

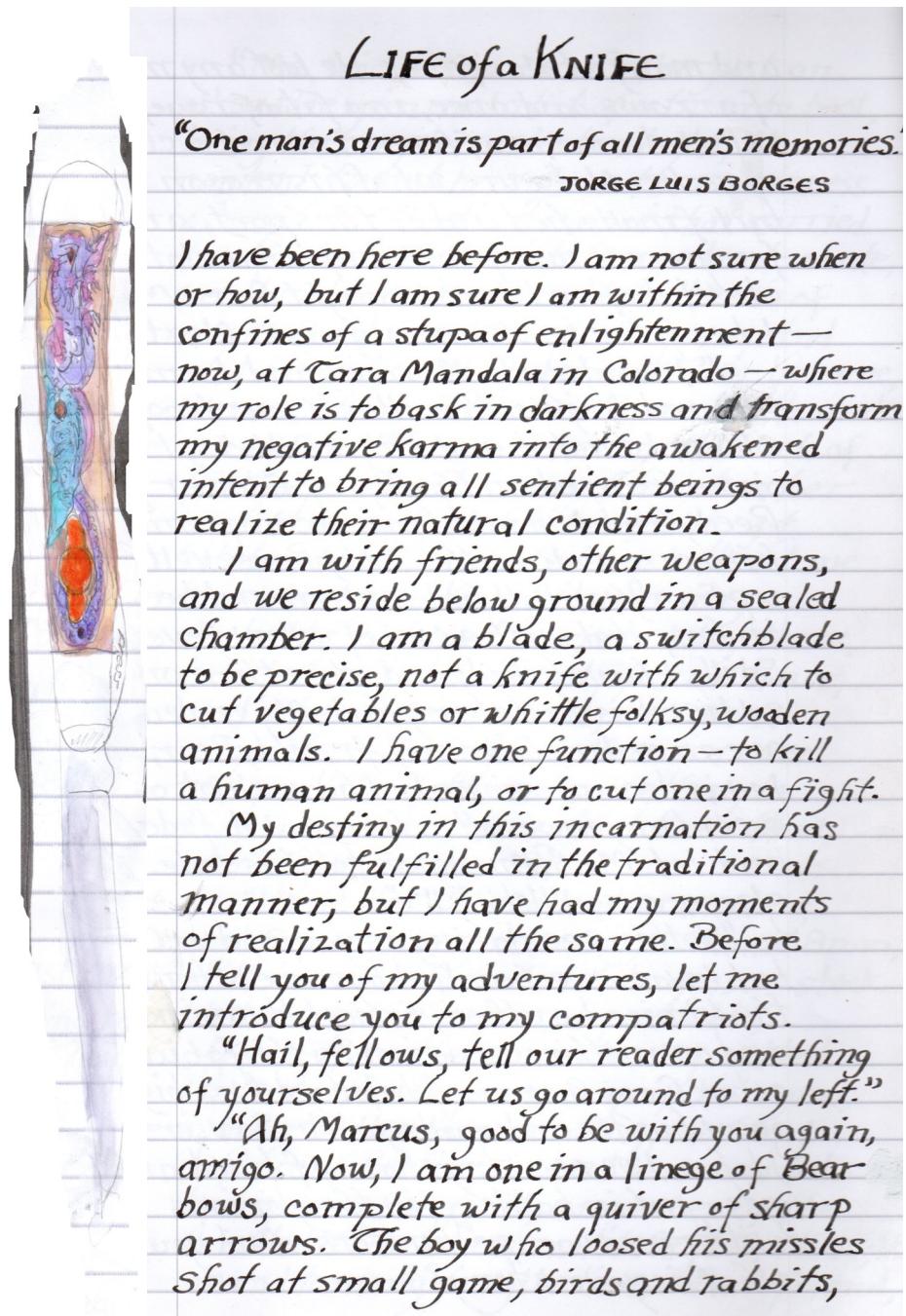
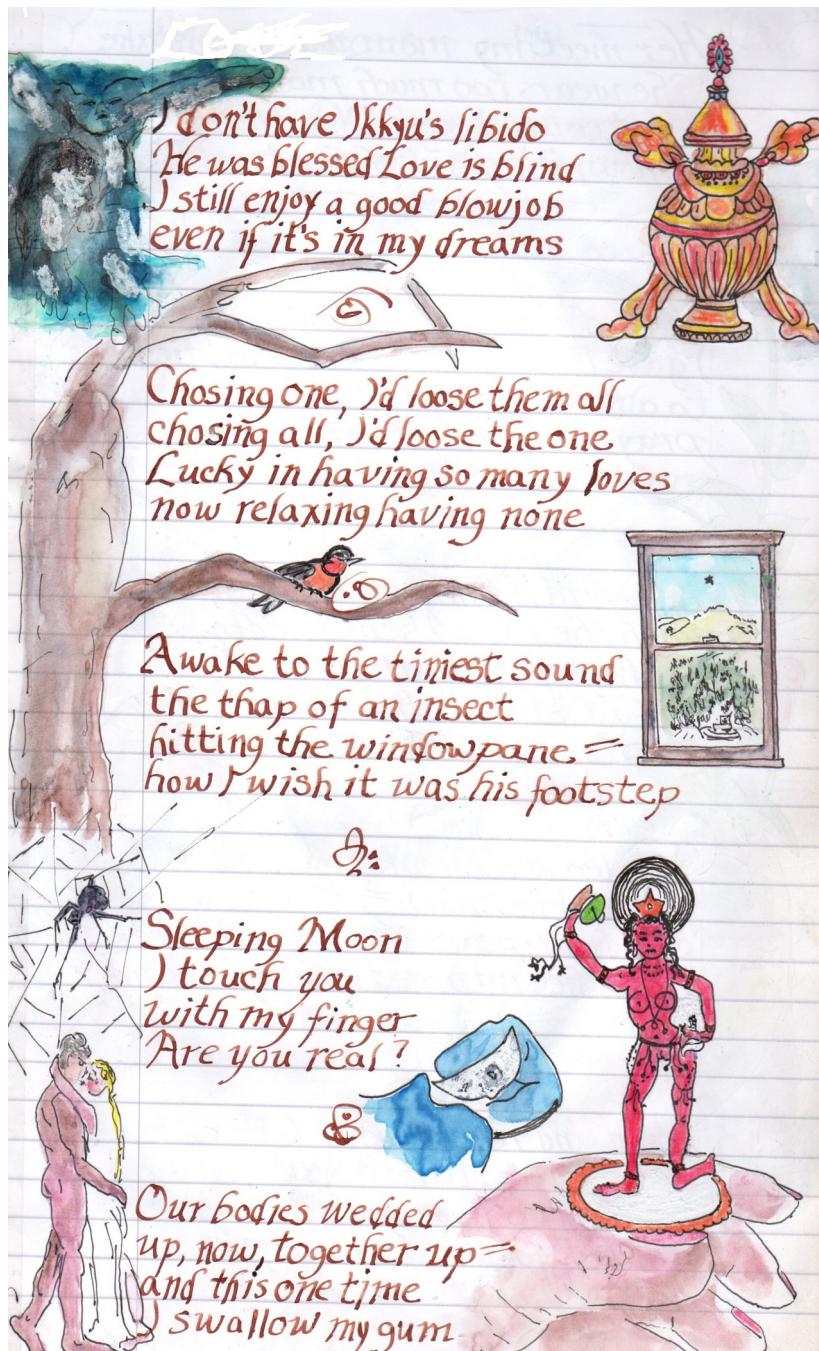
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This story was composed at Panyul Langtang, a valley north of Lhasa, 1539 years after the birth of the Omniscient One, the Lion of the Shakya Clan, Gautama, on the 10th day of a new moon in the 3rd month of a Male Wood Serpent Year (1089 C.E.).

As my grandmother used to say, "Every natural effect has a spiritual cause." To this I would add, "Good Fortune to all househusbands of the future!" "Perfect As You Are"

*Actually, this is William Blake's line, from Milton. — B.P.





and many a bale of straw. He lost any number of arrows and once, in a fit of rage, released arrow after arrow at a cliff of rocks. Not sure what his reason was, but finally he fired of archery, and for years I was propped up in a clothes closet before I was brought here. May I be of use in my new guise. Next."

"I salute you, Marcus, and I am honored to join this illustrious troop. Old and rusted as I am, a Colt .45, I was once strapped on the hip of Gunner Jack Reed, and I would have accompanied him on a ride with Teddy Roosevelt up San Juan Hill had my man not been in hospital with a case of yellow fever. Still, I have killed; and more than one soldier has fasted my lead. My credentials are in order. Like my friend, Bear, once I was decommissioned, I have slept over a century in an attic trunk. I'll fade now, and let Mr. Remington tell his tale. Very glamorous, I'll wager."

"Nothing as daring as yours, dear Colt, but I was once handled by none other than the lionized author, Ernest Hemingway, and on another occasion by the fabulous actor, Gary Cooper. I belonged to a big game hunter and guide, a Mr. Saviers, of Idaho. I've seen my share of blood and guts—not in battle—in the glorious wilderness camps of hunters. And you, what is your story?"

Han Shan would laugh and laugh
it only seems I've moved ahead
now, cars and trucks seldom pass
chainsaws buzz, wood & food delivered
I've got plenty of fuel
and my cabin, Luminous Peak?
not one, but two, shelves of books



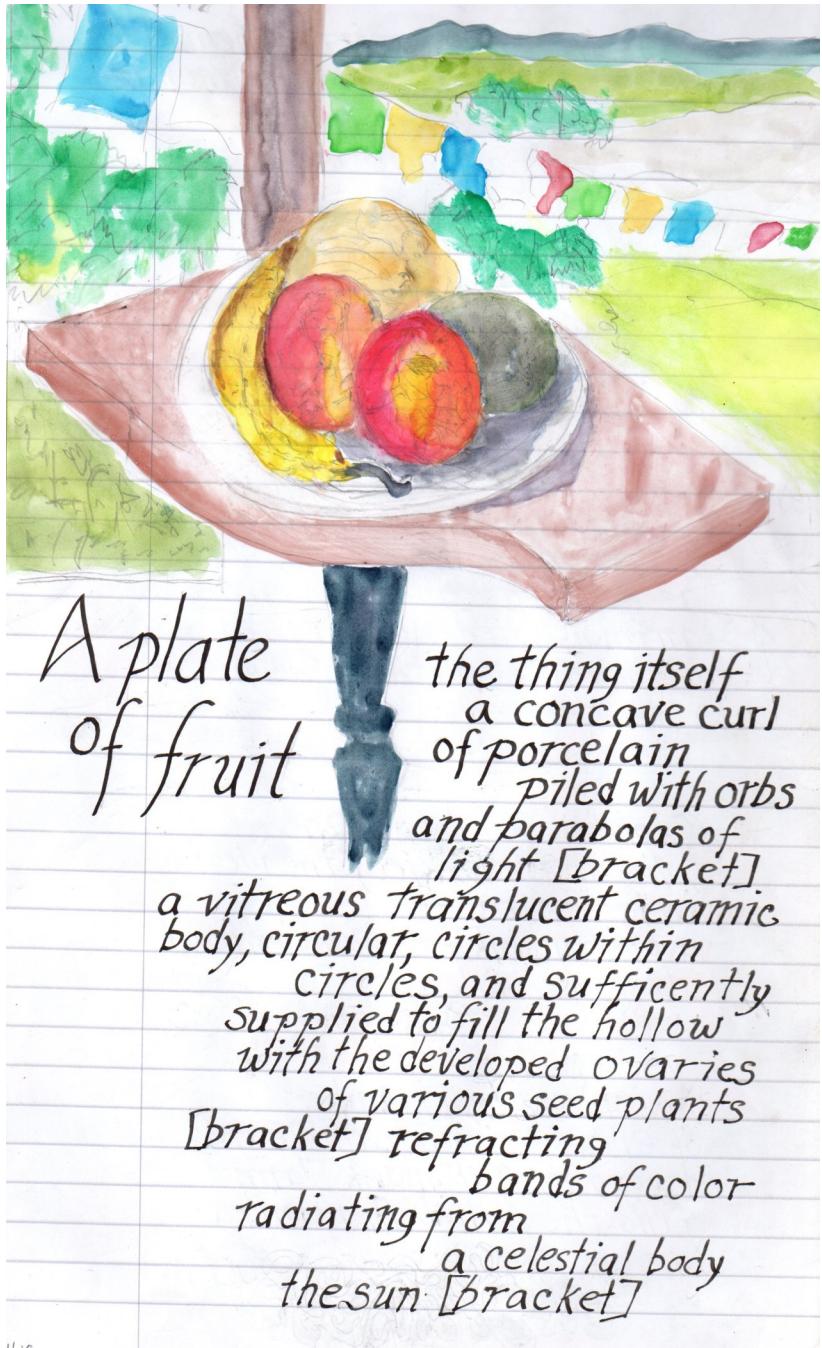
— for Budbill

There's an old monk at Luminous Peak
who appreciates your poetry
You can come by for tea, anytime,
and sit and play your flute

Chainsaw noise during morning session,
nothing to be done, open the window
let in the pristine sound emptiness
turn the hum into a hum

Where is yesterday's blissful meditation?

My lawyer, who keeps people
out of jail for being bad
wondered why I'd do a solo retreat
I told her, "Because my karma is good."



10

"Me, Winchester.30.30? I'm just an ol' saddle gun and a bit of a bum to boot, being that my barrel's bent. Yet, I'm content to rest here from the unfairness of my fate. Shot a doe once that carried two fauns. Nothing to brag about; waste, really. However, given the silliness of my end, I'd give it a 10. A young stud and his girlfriend, Jubal and Toby by name, were necking in the woods, and he leaned me against the spare tire on the back of his jeep. Don't know if he got in her pants or not, but he certainly got distracted because he forgot about me completely and backed over my recently re-blued barrel. I lay there, twisted and abandoned, for an hour, and when he returned, he was in anguish — 'Oh, my God, I've run over my gun!' Now, there's something to turn a young man against love. How about you, soldier?"

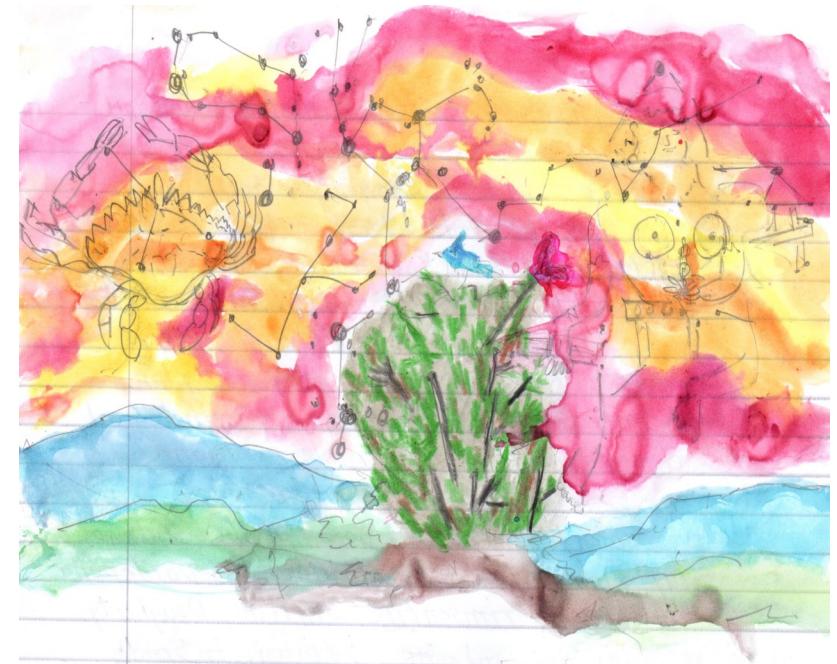
"Heil! I'm an excellent example of good German engineering, a Mauser 8mm, still in my original military-issue stock. Well-oiled, bolt-action, dependable, efficient, deadly accurate. My saddest time was the desperate seige of Stalingrad, and my Götterdämmerung, the final defence of Berlin, where I was carried by a young Siegfried, a member of the dreaded Werewolves, until he fell. I brought an end to many fragile lives. But, friend,

perhaps, I'm being snubbed,
Why so glum? Marcus, he won't speak."

"yes, he's depressed. A Smith and Weston .38, used by a gangbanger in a drive-by shooting, he missed his mark and hit a young girl on her way home from her ballet class. She's now paralyzed from the waist down and will never dance again. Hot hell for him; but he's slowly being redeemed; doing better. Give him time and he will come around. Next, calvary sword, how about you?"

"Ah, Marcus, you don't remember me. We clashed, long ago — or a moment — on the plains of Troy. My present situation is not so heroic. Just an ornament, really, used in parades. Sometimes, I'm a prop in plays: Timon of Athens, that brought back memories, and in Hamlet, I fell from the hand of Horatio in the last act. Sad. But early on, blood truly flowed from my gutters. Homer sang my praises and the skalds. Saint John mentions me, as do the other evangelists, cutting off the ear of a servant of the high priest in the garden at Gethsemane. It was here Our Lord said, 'For all that take the sword shall perish with the sword.' I'm out of the spotlight now, but I have strutted upon the stage. How about you, sweetheart?"

"I may appear demure, and it's true I've been lately employed as a letter opener,

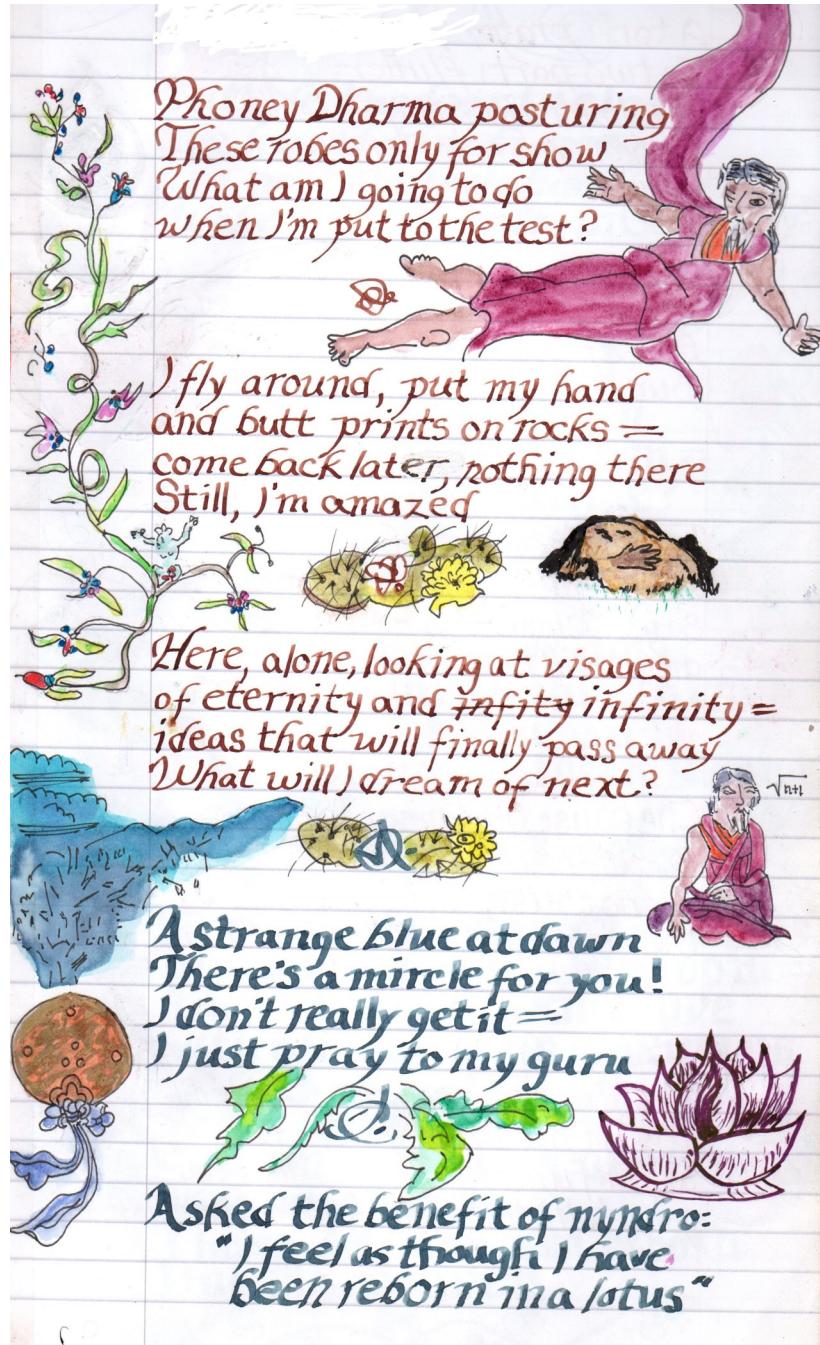


APPROACHING N+1

Looking at a jay on top of a juniper
and seeing beyond the wall of our world
before anything and after everything
all spells cast, all potencies quiet
every star burned to ash and fumes
all atomic structures collapsed
all electromagnetic energy still
every last bit of spin spun
no remainder, no residue
just "clear light"

This is where
GATE GATE PARAGATE PARASAMGATE
really kicks in...

And, then
the jay drives into this singularity



but I am a cruel bodkin that has slit
the throats of both royalty and lowly
prisoners. Take note of this: I was the
forceful knife wielded by The Kid, Billy
Harrigan, who defended the honor
of his mother by plunging me into
the heart of the man who had insulted
her. So, don't be fooled by my petite
exterior. I always lay in that desk
drawer awaiting a desperate fist.
Now, it's your turn, Marcus."

"Yes, it's come around to me. My
story is no more nor less strange than
yours. True, I've had my history, but
this present life confounds me. I began
as a dagger of the orient and evolved
into a cheap trinket exported from
Taiwan for San Francisco's Chinatown.
I was bought by a boy of ten, in 1951.
Dick was his name, and he hastily
purchased me while his parents were
looking the other way. There were no
laws against possessing a switchblade,
but Dick knew his parents would object.

He stashed me in a pencil box made
of cedar, which he had bought — also in
a curio shop — in Little America, Wyoming.
At different times the boy would hold me
in his hand, feel my weight, flip me open,
a good six inches of steel flashing quickly
to the fore.

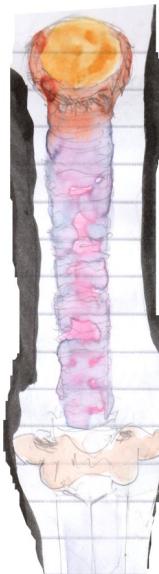
Once, he took me to a movie house
in Berkeley, the U.C. on University Avenue,

closed now, but a nice piece of Art Deco in its heyday. He showed me to a younger boy during the intermission between a double feature. Showing off—no harm meant, but the younger boy was likely frightened and snatched to the usher, and I was confiscated. These days Dick would be ejected from the theater, if not arrested, but after the movie ended, I was returned to my owner, and we went on our way.

It was eight years later, I was carried to Joaquin Miller Park in Oakland—a park dedicated to California's writers, but nevermind that—I was there to settle a dispute between rival gangs. Well, not gangs exactly, high school clubs—the Dons from Fremont High and the Knights from Oakland High.

Given the year was 1959, Rebel Without a Cause was all the rage and very much an influence on young men's behavior. Our contest came down to two boys sensibly duking it out with fists, while the rest stood by with baseball bats and chains (and knives) at the ready. You never know, it might have turned ugly. Look at our special friend there; today, things do get out of hand.

But back to my life—I, too, was forgotten, since there is little need for a switchblade at college. Sure, I dreamed of gore and glory, and in a sense this was



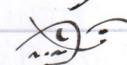
**Passing beauty =
tire tracks in the snow**



**Patterns of snow rise up
and drift from tree to tree =
a dance to dazzle the eye
on a windy, winter's day**



**Little snowflake dakinis
RU RU RU RU RU RU
Hold me fast, hold me fast
with your compassion**



**Snow and more snow =
The plowguy says
"If it snows any more
I've got no place to put it"**



**Sky laughter of Dakinis
sking off Ekajati Peak =
As long as you don't break a leg
gravity can be fun**



In my dream
I am the moon =
faces smile
down on me



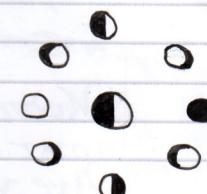
New moon, old friend
Dawn close behind you —
it's a bit early for a visit
but I have the seawater on



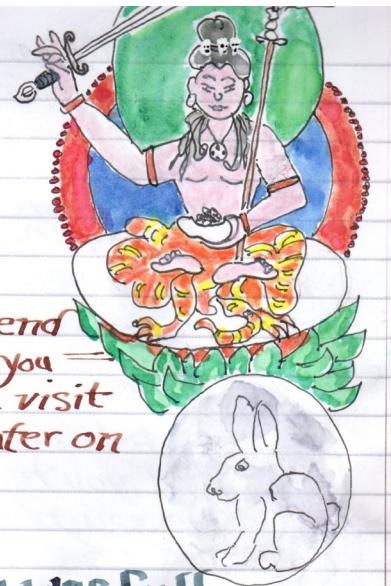
Tonight the moon was full
and I saw the hare =
usually I see the old man
but tonight the hare was there
Like moons in water, sights deceive... hare, ears and all



Sleeping moon
I touch you
with my finger
Are you real?



New snow, crescent moon
thick fog pouring over
Archuleta Ridge =
a trail of milky quartz



to come as a 'knife of destiny' in a
B-flick called The Fertilichrome
Cheerleader Massacre. Sci-fi, circa 1988.
I won't relate the plot in its entirety.
My role was to move from the hand of
one character to another upon their
demise and finally put paid to the
villain by sticking in his neck.

There is rhythm and grace to
acting as there is to fighting, and
although my activity was fictional,
I felt fulfilled. However, now, to be
liberated entirely from the rounds
of cyclic existence and ameliorated
in the service of the Vidyadharas,
what could be more sublime? What
a relief it is to find one's true calling!"

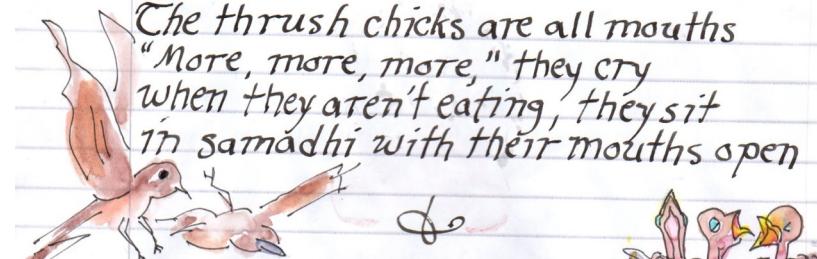


NOTES TO LIFE OF A KNIFE

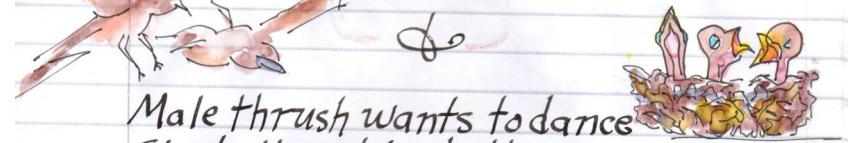


"One man's dream..." This epigram is part of a longer sentence that concludes "Martín Fierro" in *The Maker* by Borges — "This thing that was once, returns again, infinitely; the visible armies have gone and what is left is a common sort of knife fight; one man's dream is part of all men's memory."

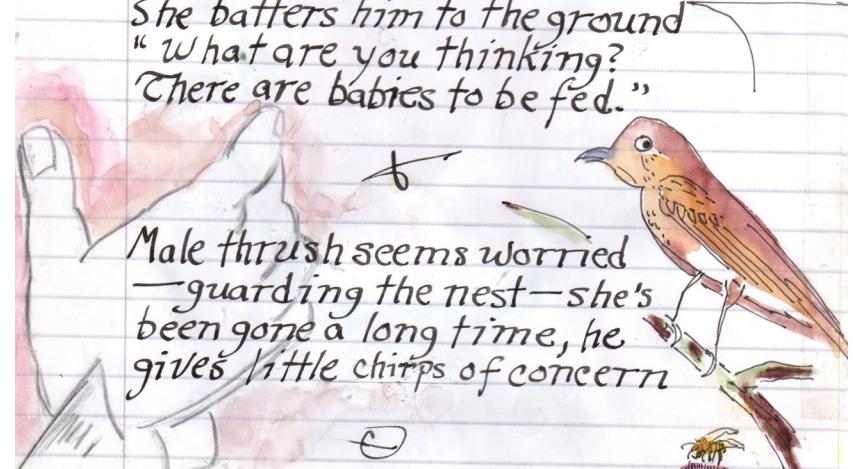
A stupa (Tibetan, *chorten*) is a dome-shaped structure which houses relics of the Buddha and of accomplished masters. Stupas are symbols for Enlightenment and the stages of the path leading there. Of the eight classes of stupas, the one at Tara Mandala is called a "stupa of enlightenment", and it is unique in that it is not covered with stucco and painted white. The beauty of the rock and masonry are exposed. The initial impetus to build this stupa came in a series of dreams of Lama Tsultrim in which she was exhorted to build a monument (the first permanent structure) on the land for Nyagla Pema Dudul (1816-1872), a master who attained the rainbow body. The stones were collected locally and the construction was completed by David Petit, Lama Tsultrim's husband, and a master mason, named Alister, from New Zealand. Many masters performed rituals: Lama Rinchen, Lama Wangdor, Ketsun Sampo Rinpoche, and especially Tulku Sangrig who was involved from the very beginning. It contains many precious items, including the hair and fingernails left by Nyagla Pema Dudul. Guru Chogyal Namkhai Norbu consecrated the stupa on 9.9.99. The weapons are in the negativity chamber,



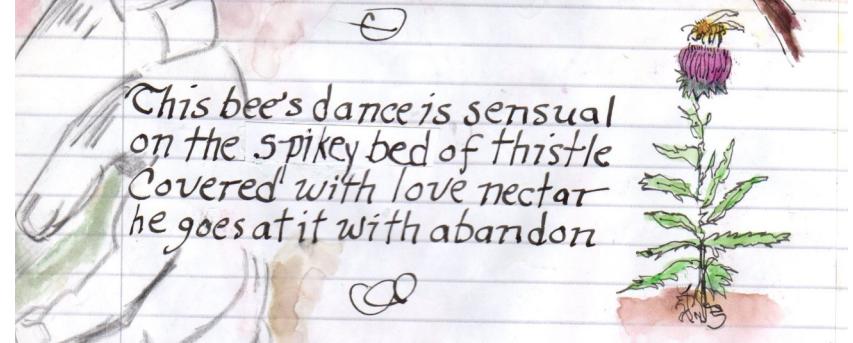
The thrush chicks are all mouths
"More, more, more," they cry
when they aren't eating, they sit
in samadhi with their mouths open



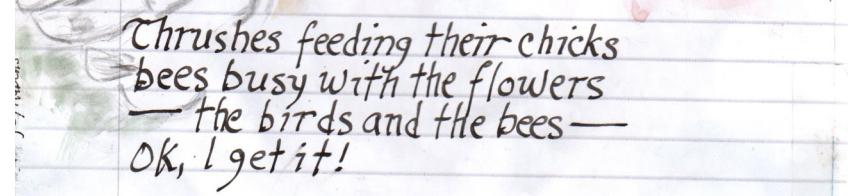
Male thrush wants to dance
She batters him to the ground
"What are you thinking?
There are babies to be fed."



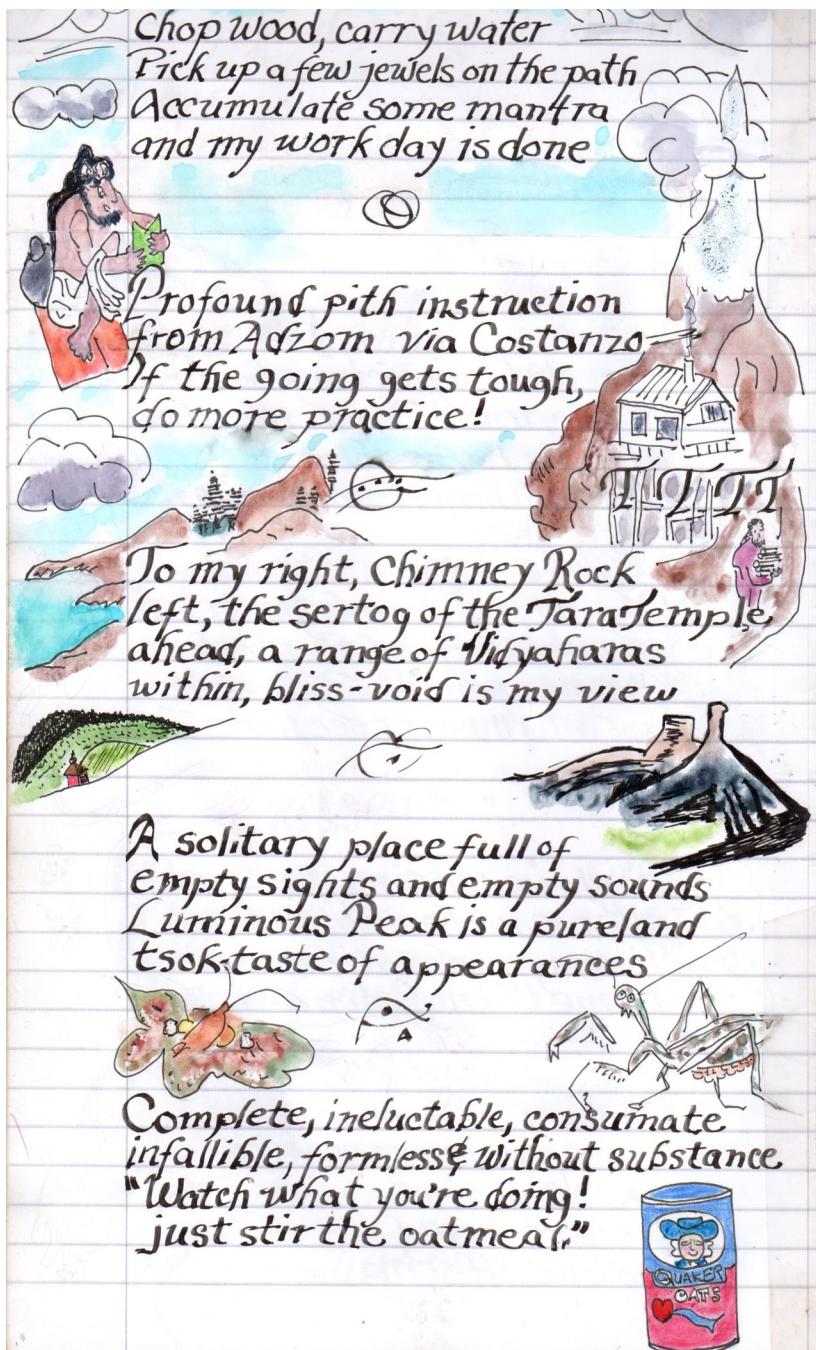
Male thrush seems worried
— guarding the nest — she's
been gone a long time, he
gives little chirps of concern



This bee's dance is sensual
on the spiky bed of thistle
Covered with love nectar
he goes at it with abandon



Thrushes feeding their chicks
bees busy with the flowers
— the birds and the bees —
OK, I get it!



which functions like the practice of tonglen,
 the breathing in of suffering and sending out of happiness.

Bear Bow – a brand of bow. This particular bow was a traditional English-style long bow. It was made of laminated wood and had a force of 28 lbs., a light bow used mainly for farget practice and to hunt small game. Jampa told me it nearly finished off a neighbor's cat. The arrows were steel-tipped for farget practice and wedge-shaped for hunting.

Colt.45 – The Colt.45 semi-automatic pistol became the standard sidearm of the U.S. Army near the time of the Spanish-American War of 1898. Of course it would be ironic if Gunner Jack Reed were a relative of Army Surgeon Walter Reed (1851-1902) who discovered that yellow fever is transmitted by a certain species of mosquitoes. However, Jampa may just have liked the sound of the name. "Gunner" is a rating in the artillery.

The Remington was a bolt-action .30.06 fitted with a ^{10 Power} Weaver scope and had a chequered-grain wooden stock with a finely-tooled leather strap.

Winchester .30.30 – Further adventures of the lovers in this anecdote can be found in Coby's Tubal by Bourard Pécuchet (Scorpion Romances, Sebastopol, 2006).

Mauser 8mm – re: "Götterdämmerung", the

Richard Wagner tetralogy of music dramas.

Smith & Weston .38 — Marcus refers to this weapon as "special" — a .38 Special uses ammunition with a larger charge of powder, although this might be a Snub-nosed .38, since he won't talk. Jampa likes his puns.

Calvary sword — Biblical references connected to the smiting with a sword in Gethsemane: Matthew 26.51 (the quote of Jesus, Matthew 26.52); Mark 14.47; Luke 22.50; and John 18.10 (John relates that the servant's name was Malcus that it was the right ear that was cut off, and that it was Simon Peter who wielded the sword.)

Letter-opener / dagger — The episode with Billy the Kid is not related in "The Disinterested Killer Bill Harrigan" by Borges, so Jampa must have another source. The phrase "desperate fist" is in the poem, "A Blade in the Northside."

Marcus — I will make a stab at the source of the name for the switchblade: Marcus Junius Brutus ("Etu, Bouvard!") For Dante Alighieri, after Judas, the betrayer of Christ, the worst traitors were Brutus and Cassius, who betrayed the founder of the Roman Empire. Brutus hangs from the black snout of Satan (*Inferno*, Canto xxxiv, line 65). The Fertilichrome Cheerleader Massacre was written and directed by Sean O'Neil and produced, early for its time, on video by Albright Studios in Ellensburg, Washington.

A torn prayer flag
the two parts flutter
like lovers kissing =
I've been up here too long



Rumi says, "Don't be disturbed
by a speck of dust."
Buddha says, "What speck?"



Frightened yet comforted =
a huge face looms over me
Says, "Close your eyes
and it will be tomorrow."



The Muse had me on the ropes =
a swift uppercut, then
le mot juste, and just
the right one-two combination



At Adzom's Powa Retreat, I said
"My old ma doesn't want a fuss
at her funeral." He said, "Who you
going to listen to, your lama or your mama?"

I have eaten dinner
and washed my dishes
I have eaten two cookies
I could not stop at one
I have read a poem by Borges
on happiness
He says everything that happens
happens for the first time
I rip a fart
and relive Adam's & Eve's surprise



I sit and eat my meal
respecting the energy it brings
I sit and drink my tea
listening to thrushes sing
I sit and contemplate
the causes of suffering
I sit and sit and sit
and, then, I just sit

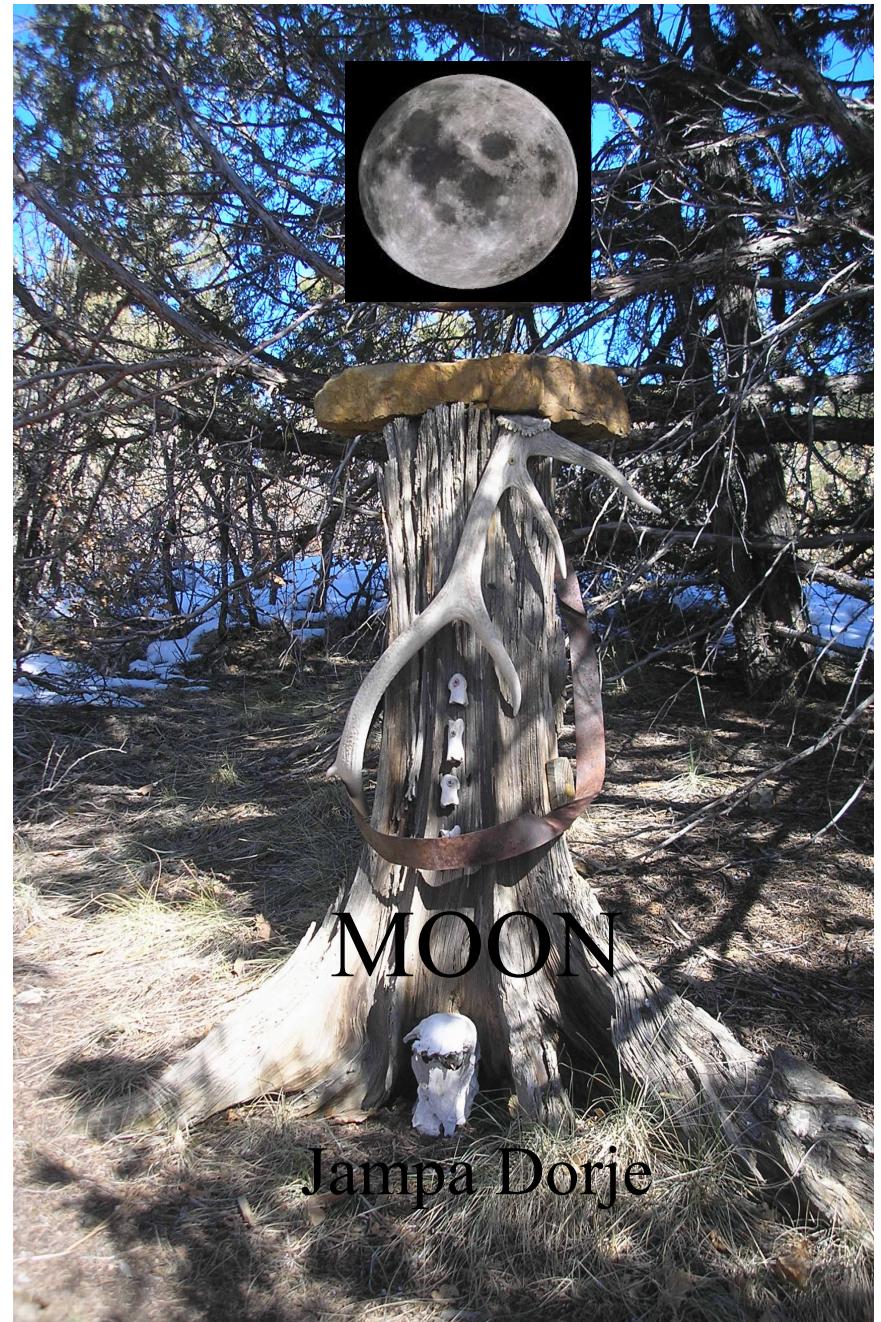


"What should be done is done
Nothing more to be done"
Here's the Sanskrit—
"pacitlam yeva parinibbāyati"
"fully blown out within" *
I think I've gotten it right
The typeface on this old page is worn
I have nothing more to add





55



19

Moon

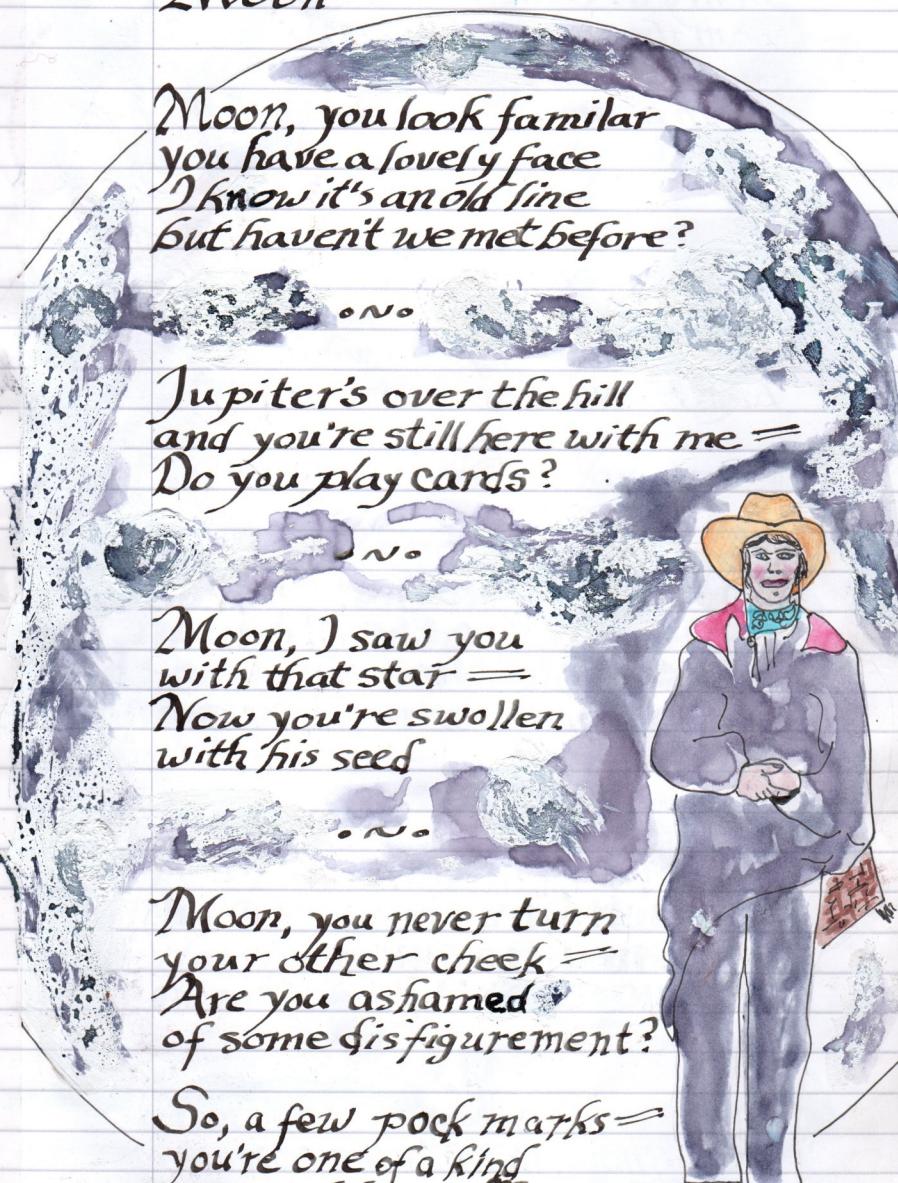
Moon, you look familiar
you have a lovely face
I know it's an old sine
but haven't we met before?

Jupiter's over the hill
and you're still here with me =
Do you play cards?

Moon, I saw you
with that star =
Now you're swollen
with his seed

Moon, you never turn
your other cheek =
Are you ashamed
of some disfigurement?

So, a few pock marks =
you're one of a kind
around here, Moon
perfect, no defilement



Fresh snow covers
the snowmobile tracks
in Hidden Valley =
return to wintery calm



Scrub oak branch
freed from snowpack
flings diamonds in the air



Driveaway's gift
mud on my boots
Pittsburgh's gift
snow on my neck

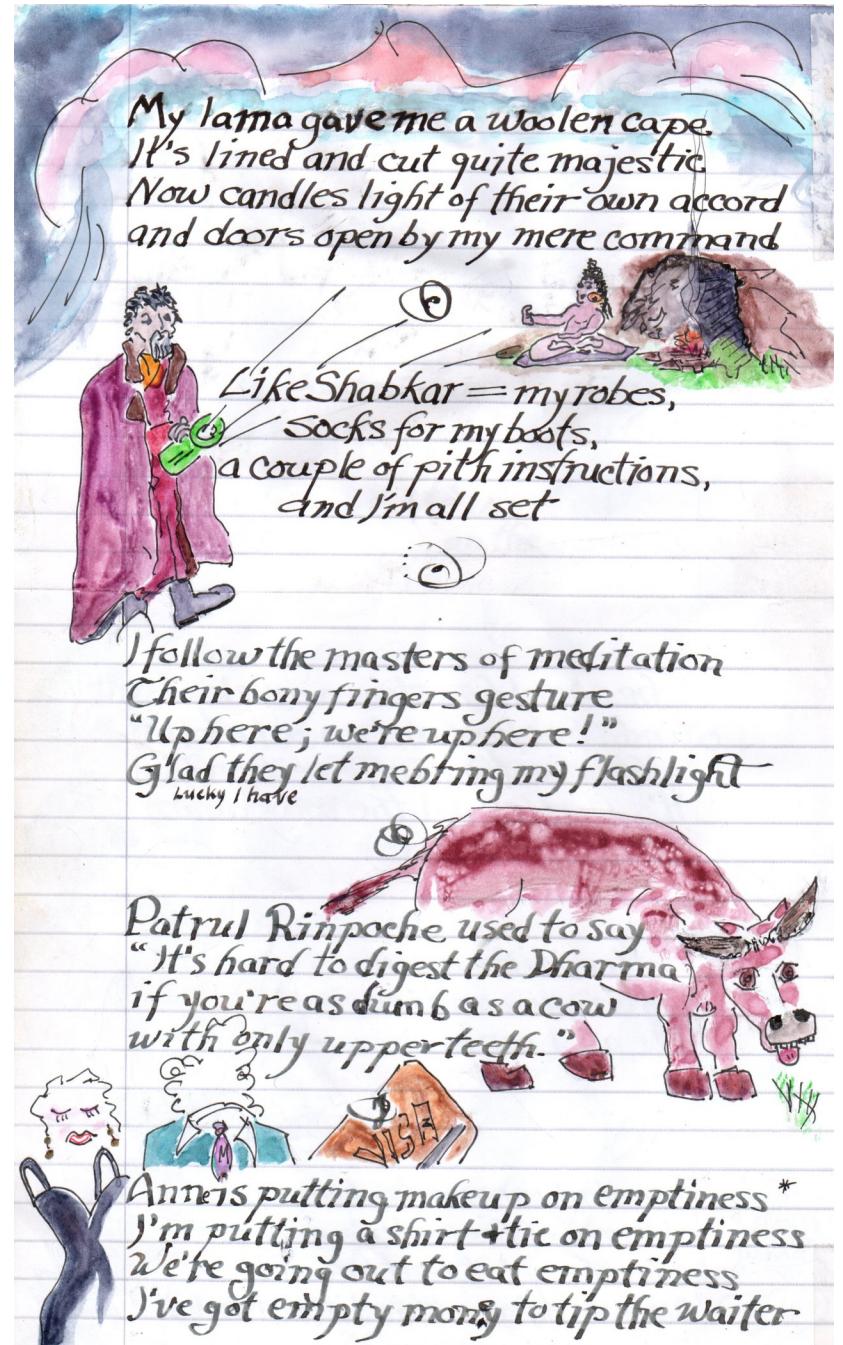
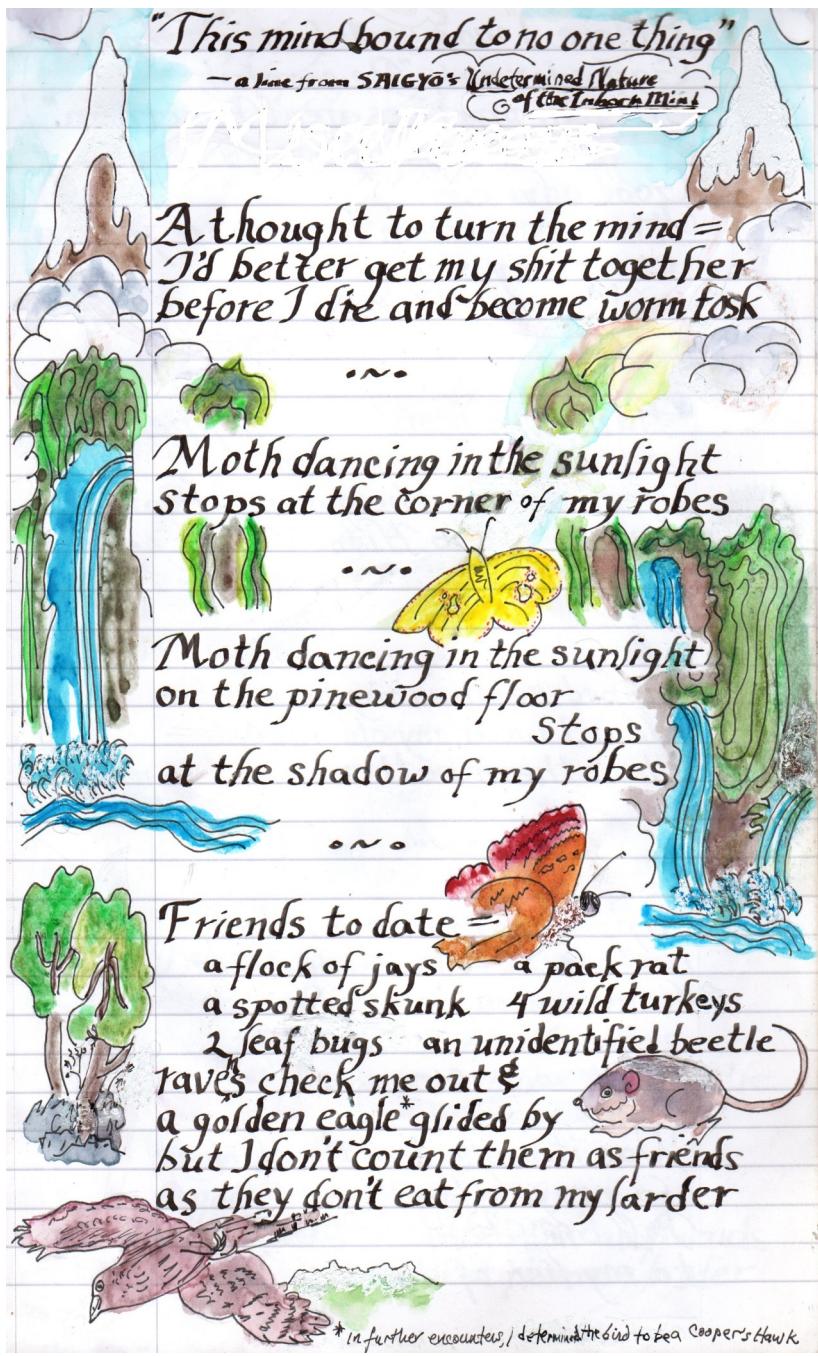


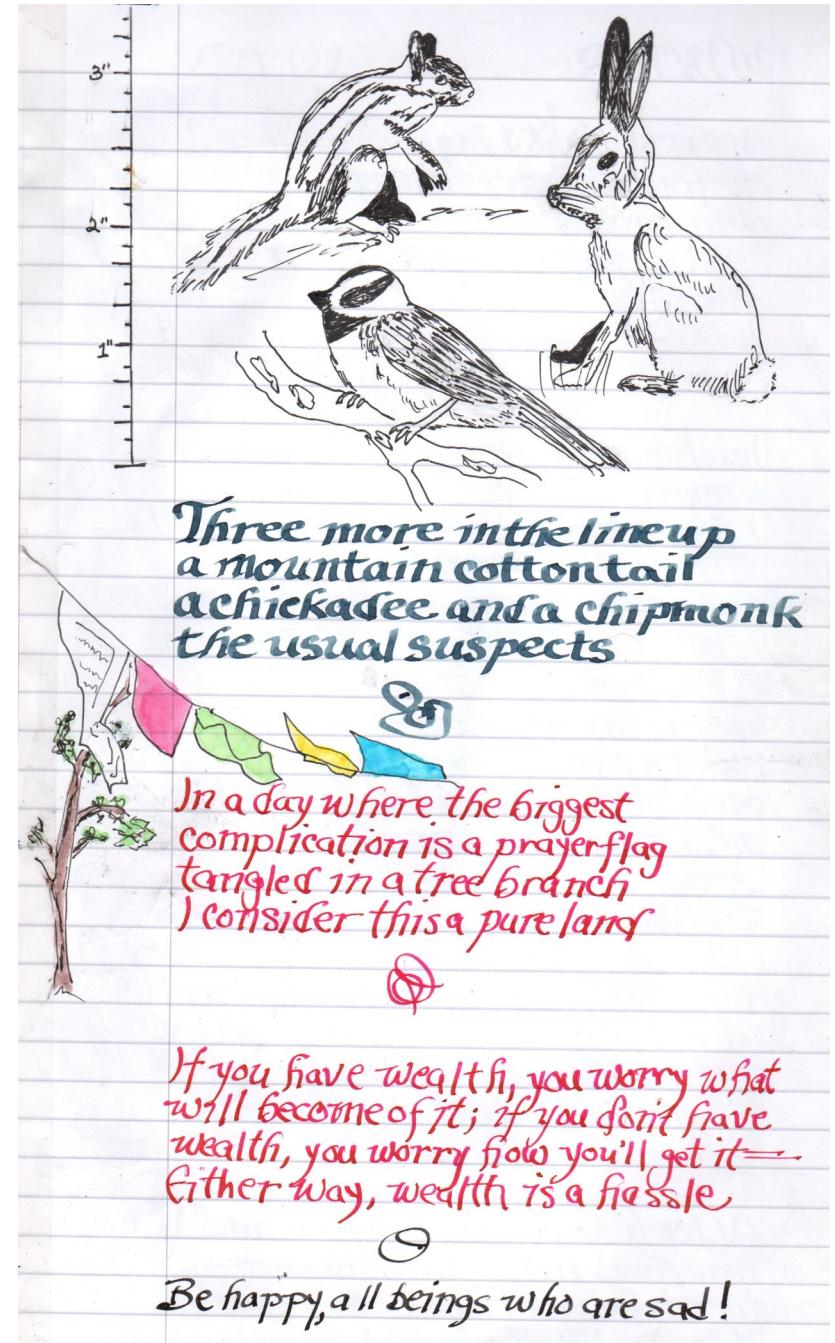
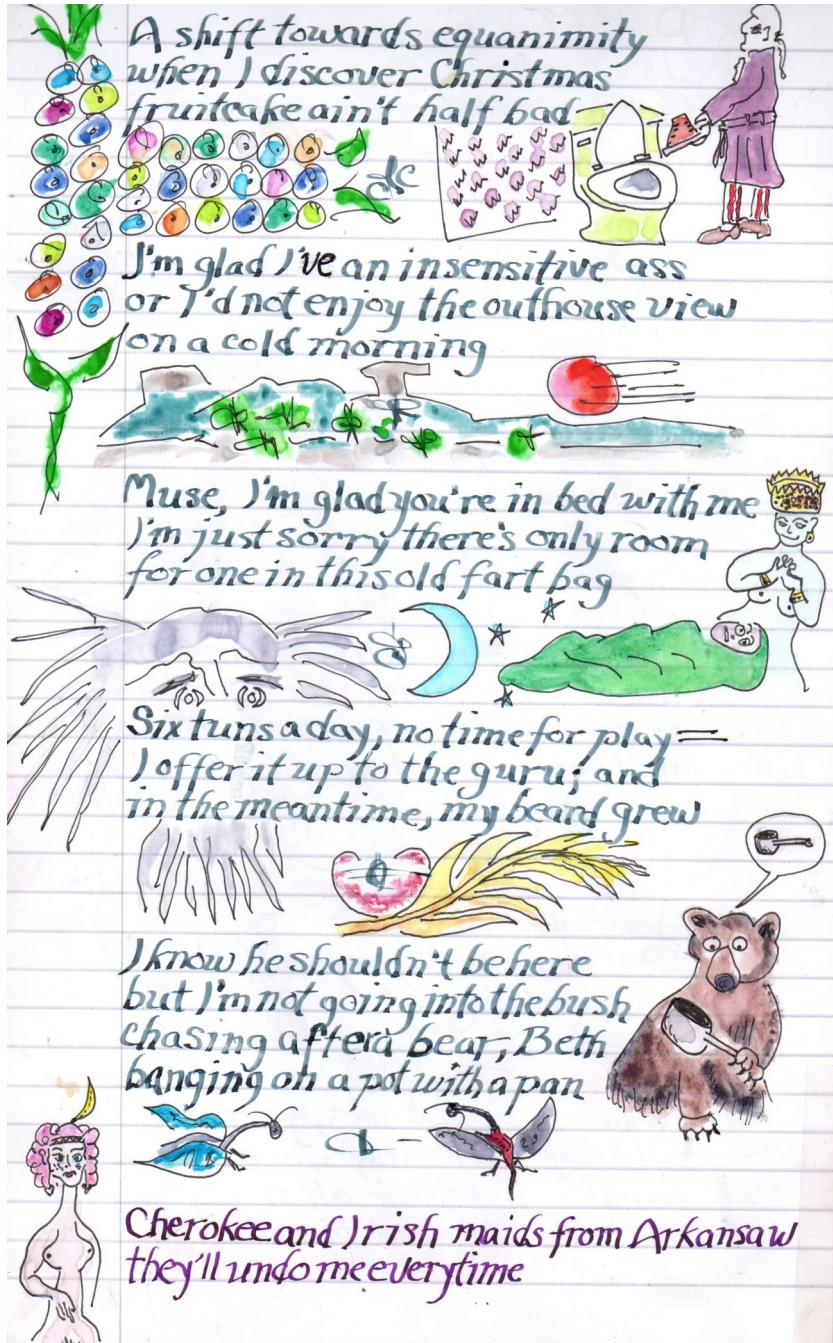
Sky daughter of dakinis
skiing on Ekajati Peak =
gravity can be fun

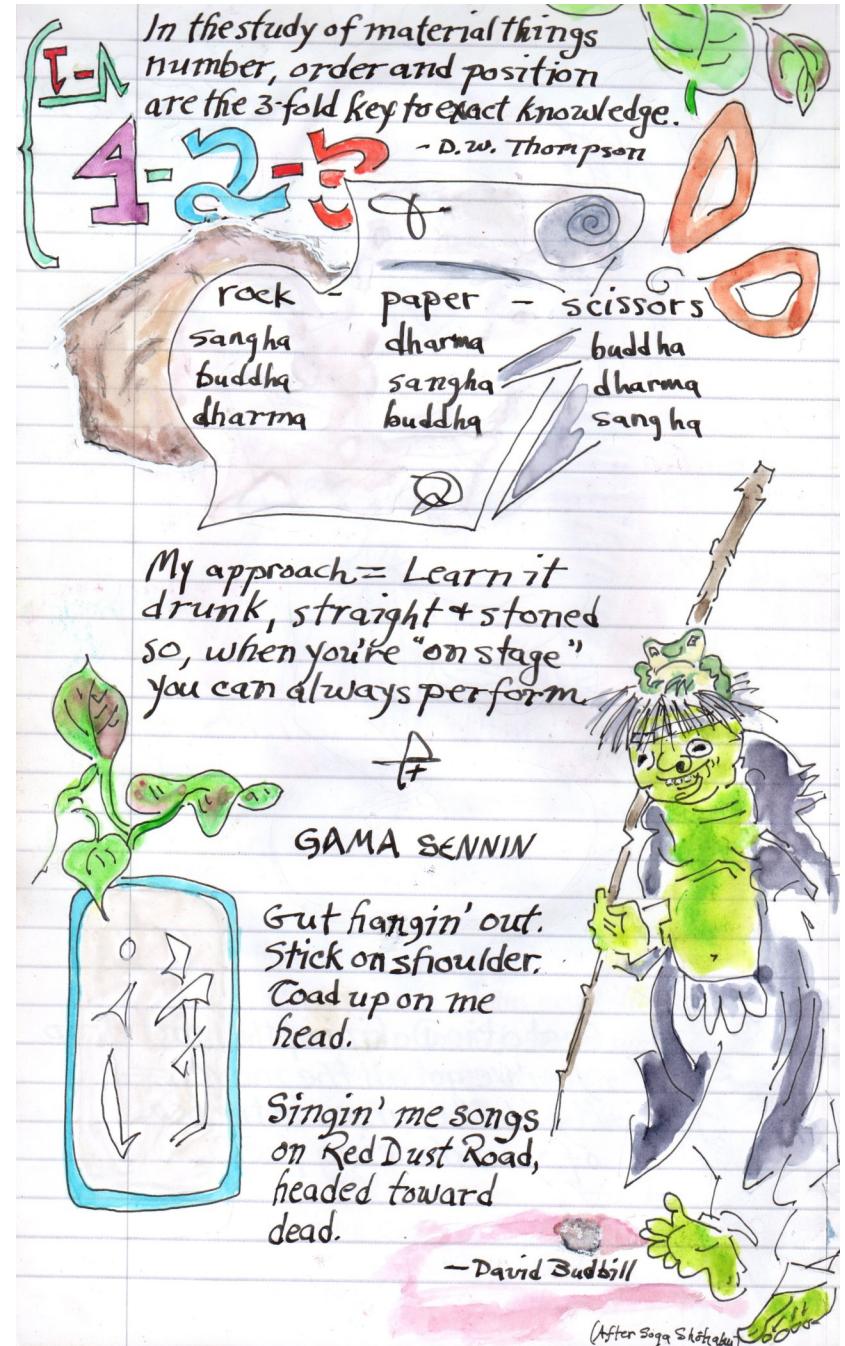
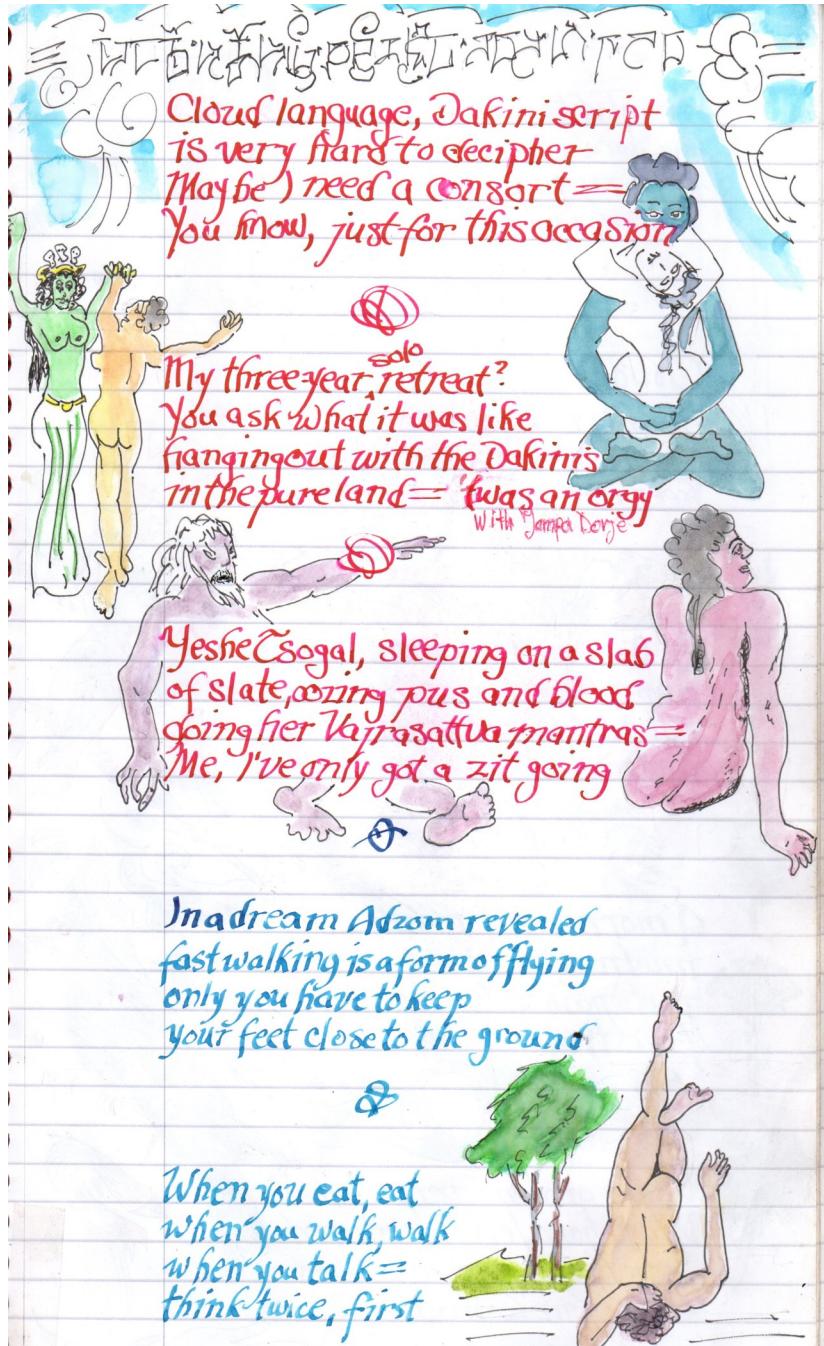


Passing cloud on a windy day =
a buffalo becoming an elephant
becoming a rhinoceros becoming
a bowl of mashed potatos

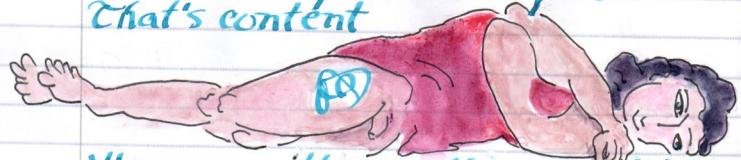




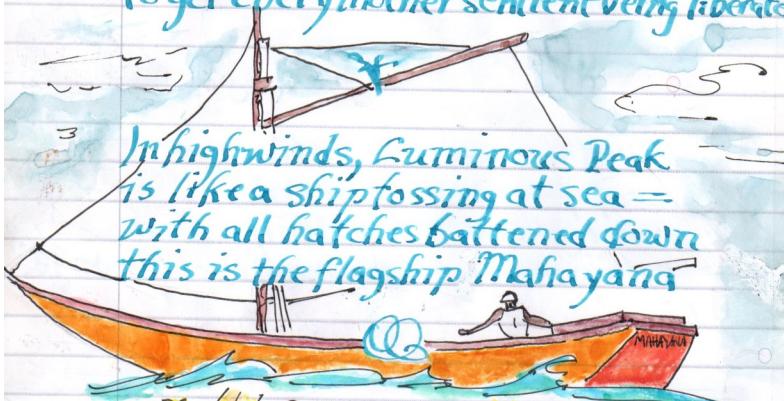




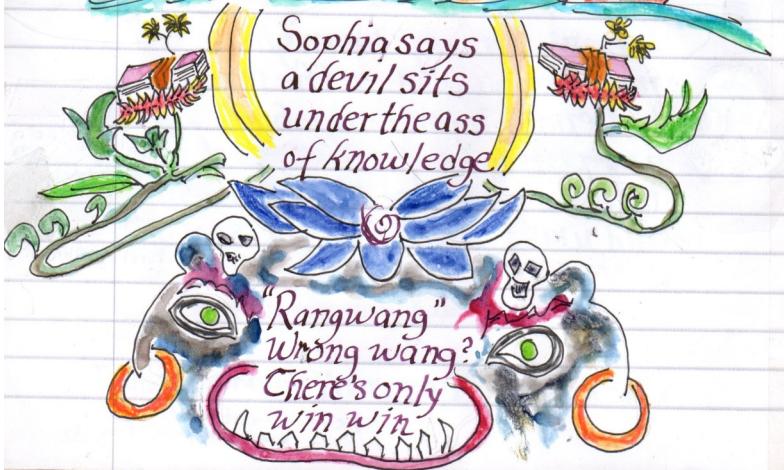
With my ear to the ground
I hear many sounds =
Sounds of different sizes
That's form
Sounds which portend surprises
That's content



It's crazy, sitting on this mountain
chanting in Tibetan, prostrating
in moonlight = but I'll do what it takes
to get every mother sentient being liberated



In high winds, Luminous Peak
is like a ship tossing at sea =
with all hatches battened down
this is the flagship Mahayana



Sophia says
a devil sits
under the ass
of knowledge

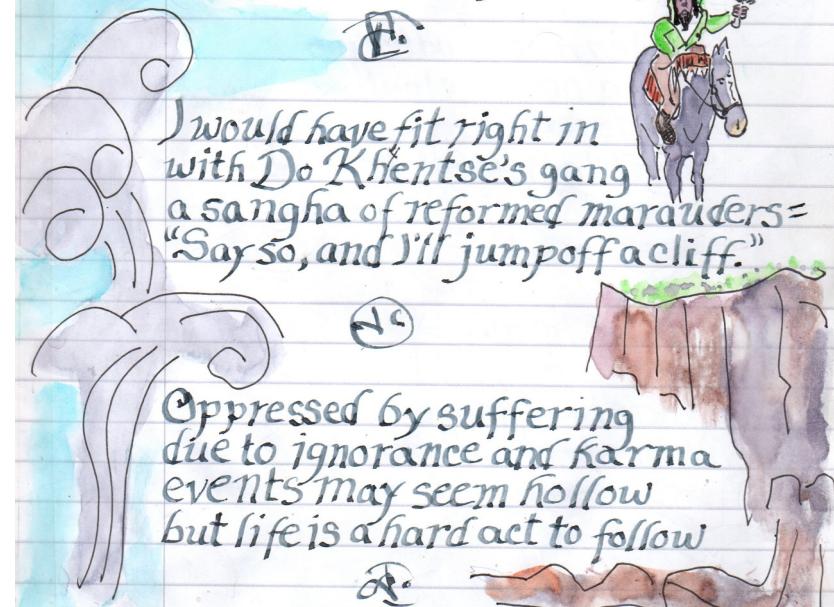
"Rangwang"
Wrong wang?

There's only
win win

Guru Rinpoche tells Yeshe Tsogal
no austereites, no mutilations
to improve the gana puja =
stick to eating air and mystic heat

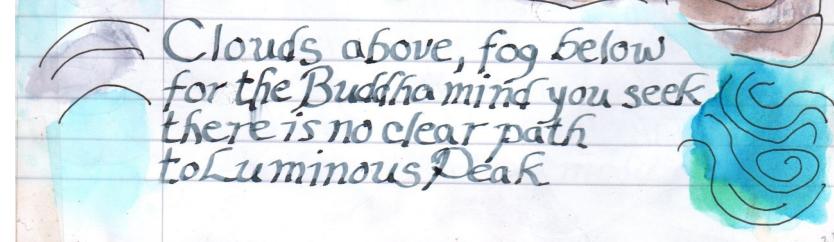


Fully aware that I am capable
of murder, malice and mayhem
I take refuge with the guru
Hold me fast with your compassion



I would have fit right in
with Do Khyentse's gang
a sangha of reformed marauders =
"Say so, and I'll jump off a cliff."

Oppressed by suffering
due to ignorance and karma
events may seem hollow
but life is a hard act to follow



Clouds above, fog below
for the Buddha mind you seek
there is no clear path
to Luminous Peak

Ideas flap like prayer flags
one end tied to the house
of confusion, and one end
tied to the tree of desire

"Don't you get lonely in retreat?"
"Actually, it gets a bit crowded
living with one hundred
peaceful and wrathful deities."

A hole in my water jug
from a bear's claw
as if to say—
"Just look what I can do!"

Cloud letters =
fiend to read this
Dakini language =
Maybe I need a consort

Cough at me with contempt
or let tears be your judgement
Fuck whatever you say
I take the middle way



A sudden cloudburst—
wind blows rain thru the door
making puddles of my poems

A pack mule fell into a ravine
with Longchampa's dialectical writings
before they could be copied—
oh, bless our lucky stars

(or we'd have another mountain
of arrogant pedantry today! with
from the commentaries)

Growling sounds from the temple
probably a dumptruck in low gear
lanscaping around the mandala
but it could be Dharmapalas

C In a small rock is the universe
just as substantial and just
as empty = the one I hold
in my hand; the other holds me



Fiddleback Spider

Bluesky day begins
with forlorn bird cry
a spider and a white moth
unseeking awareness



Dampa Dorje, & a cabin built for retreat
near the mount known as Ekajati
have come together as one—
"a perfect meeting, an auspicious event" *

A Glaze of Sunset Luminous Peak



The world rests on an elephant
and the elephant on a turtle
What does the turtle rest on?
It's turtles all the way down

SDP
SC



Letters like leaves
Letting leaves lie
Me, as I am

SD
SC



I sent my son a tsa tsa made
of some of his sister's ashes =
when he got it, he thought
"why send me this little turd?"



Billowing clouds obscure the sun
as though impatient for day to end =
in the realm of pure reaches
daytime and night are relative

D.

My autobiography
I was born
I wrote
I died

SD



The most significant event in my
lifetime? The Atom Bomb =
a clever way of destroying us all
to prove no one has a homeland

D.

Machig dancing on a moon disc
with voluptuous breasts
and blossoming bhaga =
pinup of the month, circa 1080 C.E.

D.

Days without numbers
The snowpack melting
I've learned Raven talk
now, I'm onto Chickadee see



Once, I cut a mean figure
galloping on a chestnut mare
Now, I ride a creaky crapper
with my leaky bladder



W/o wit, wisdom and grace
you'll be just another
old fart in stinky pajamas =
the rose soon withers



The beginning time is over
and the settling down to it
Now, the tidying up endgame
and the dream that recurs

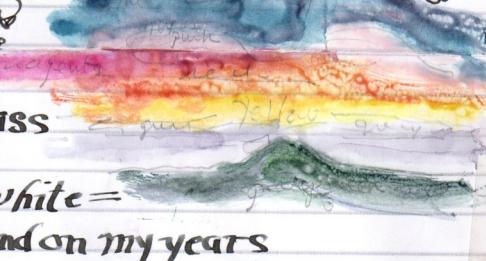


Sitting without moving
just me, myself, and I
and I think "me"
is having a senior moment



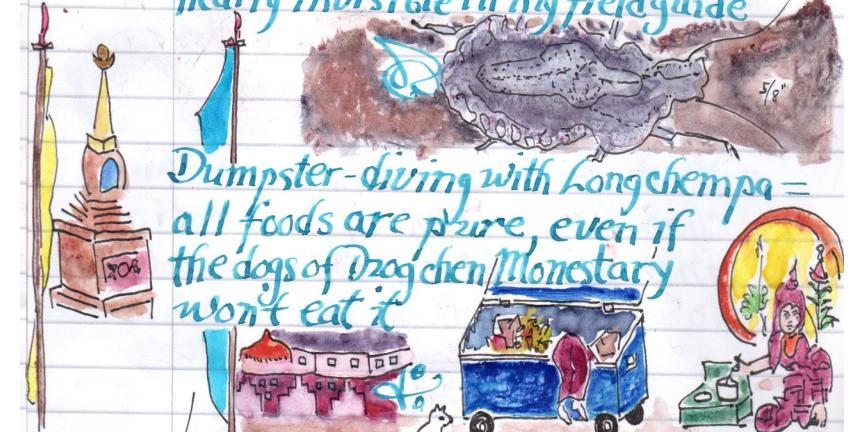
I gaze in the glass
at my black hair
streaked with white =
a reflection of and on my years

Off to Baka's "Second Day"



My unidentified beetle is a stinkbug
well-camouflaged to hide on bark
so well-camouflaged as to be
nearly invisible in my fieldguide

5/8"



Dumpster-diving with Longchampa =
all foods are pure, even if
the dogs of Drogchen Monastery
won't eat it

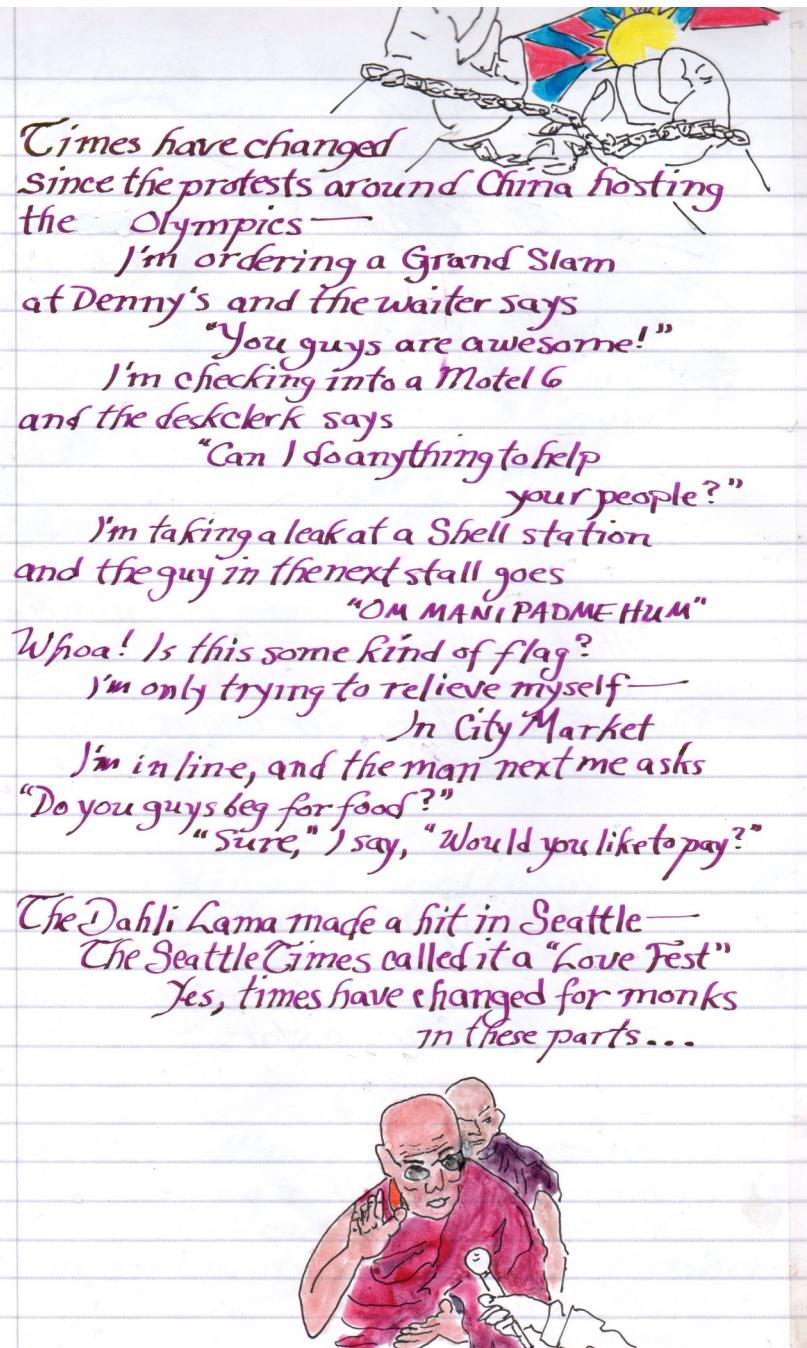


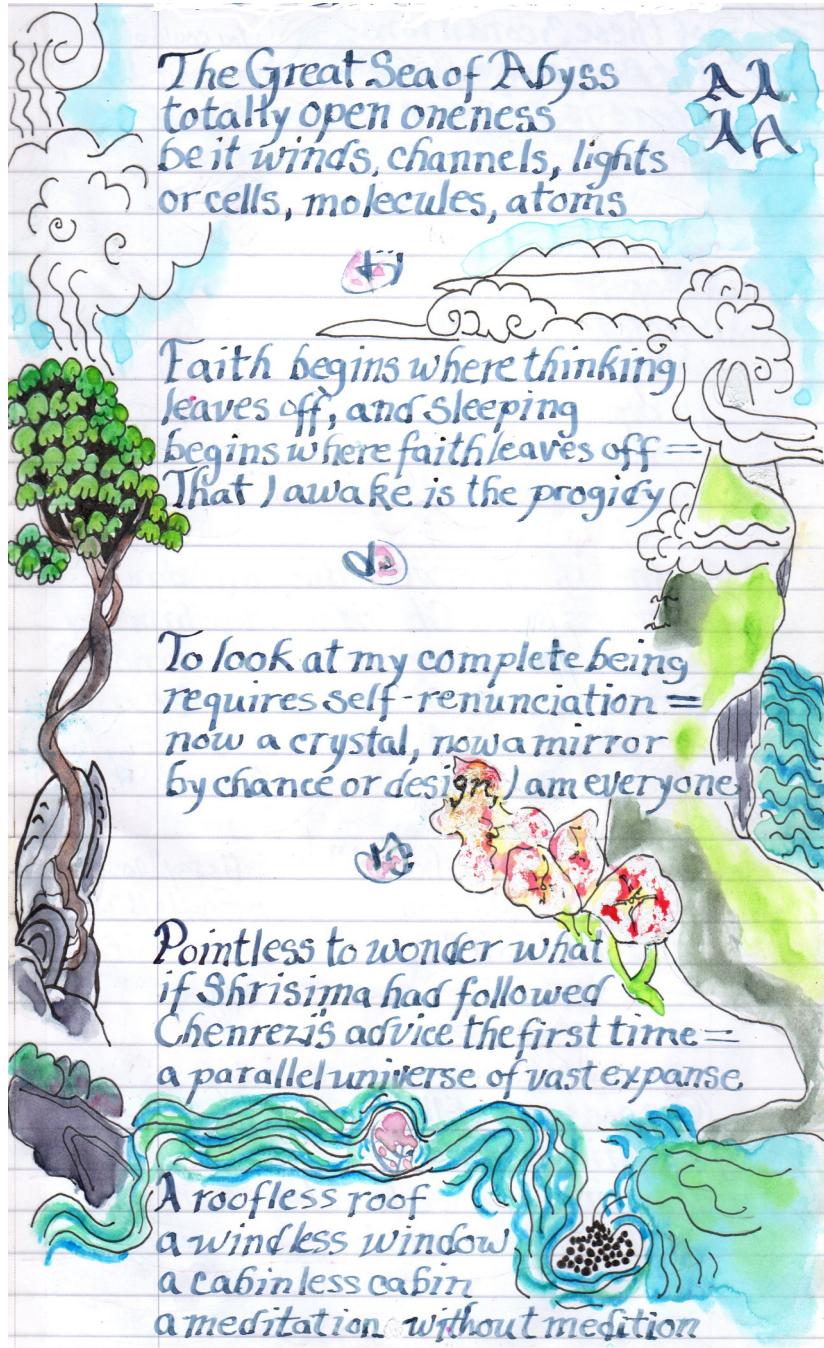
I've taken a liking to this
Leaf-footed bug = he eats
my cooking, and as Philip said
"In the mountains"
It's pancakes every morning of the world."



Snow during the night =
not enough to close the trail
but enough for longjohns
and pancakes for breakfast =
Leaf bug smelled that oil
and was on the spot with his
proboscis out





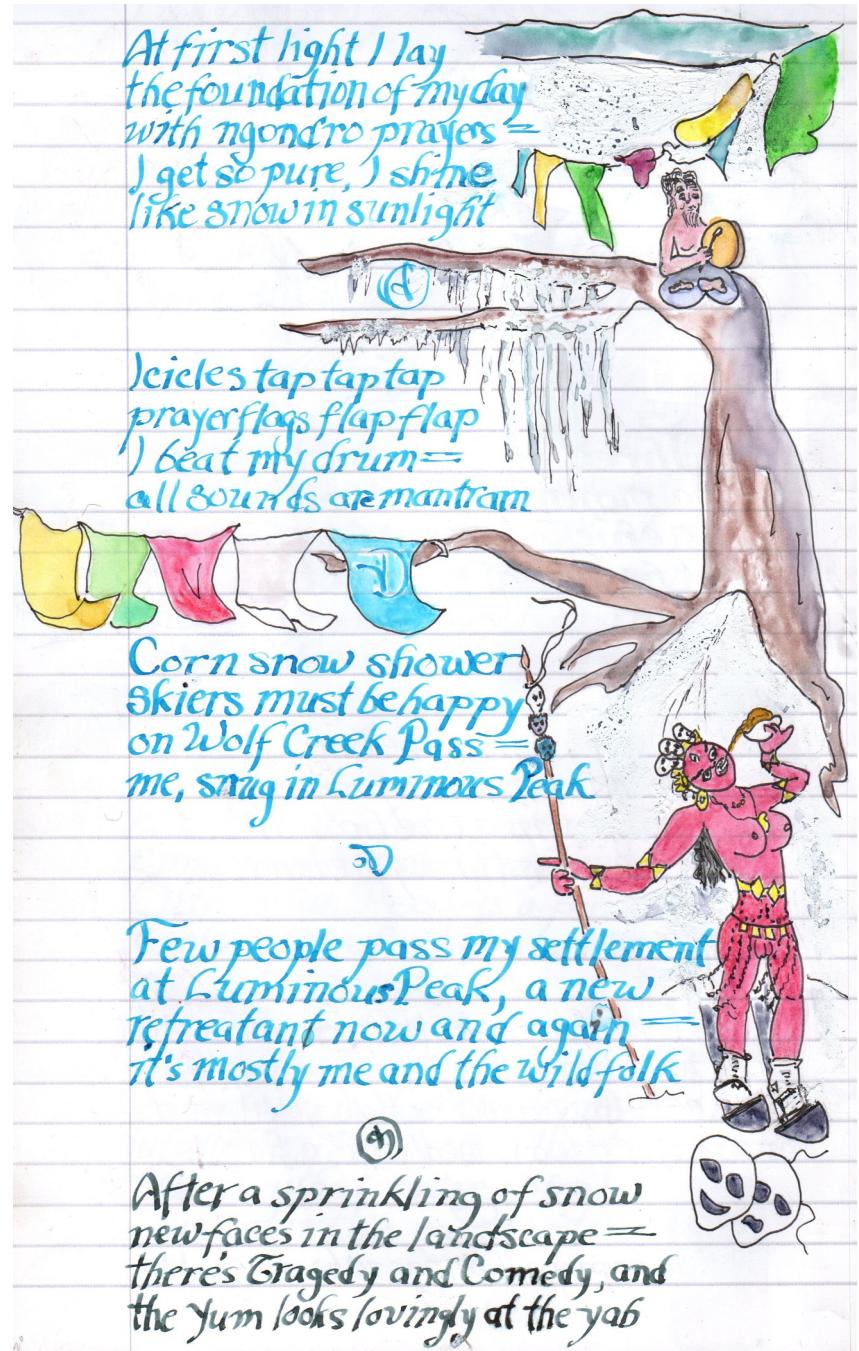
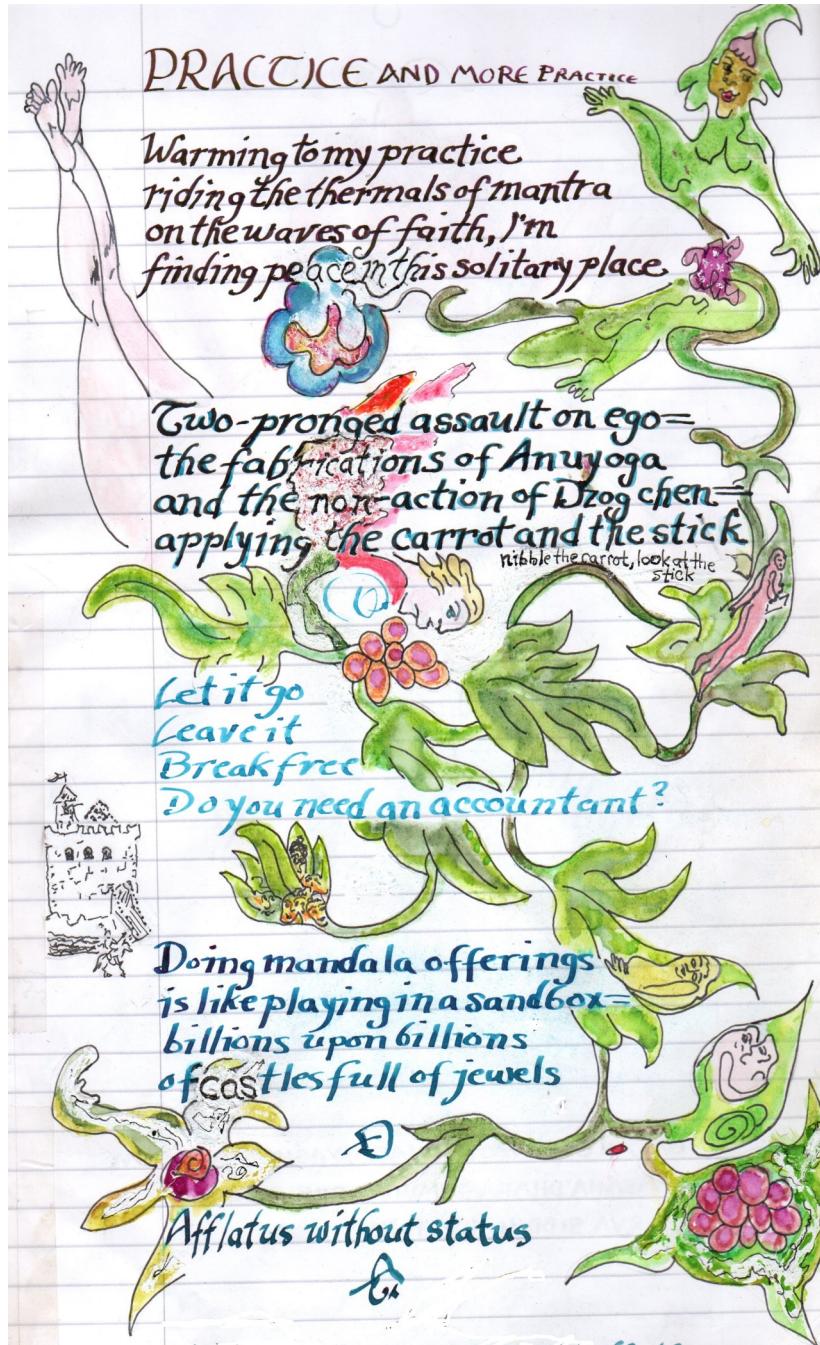


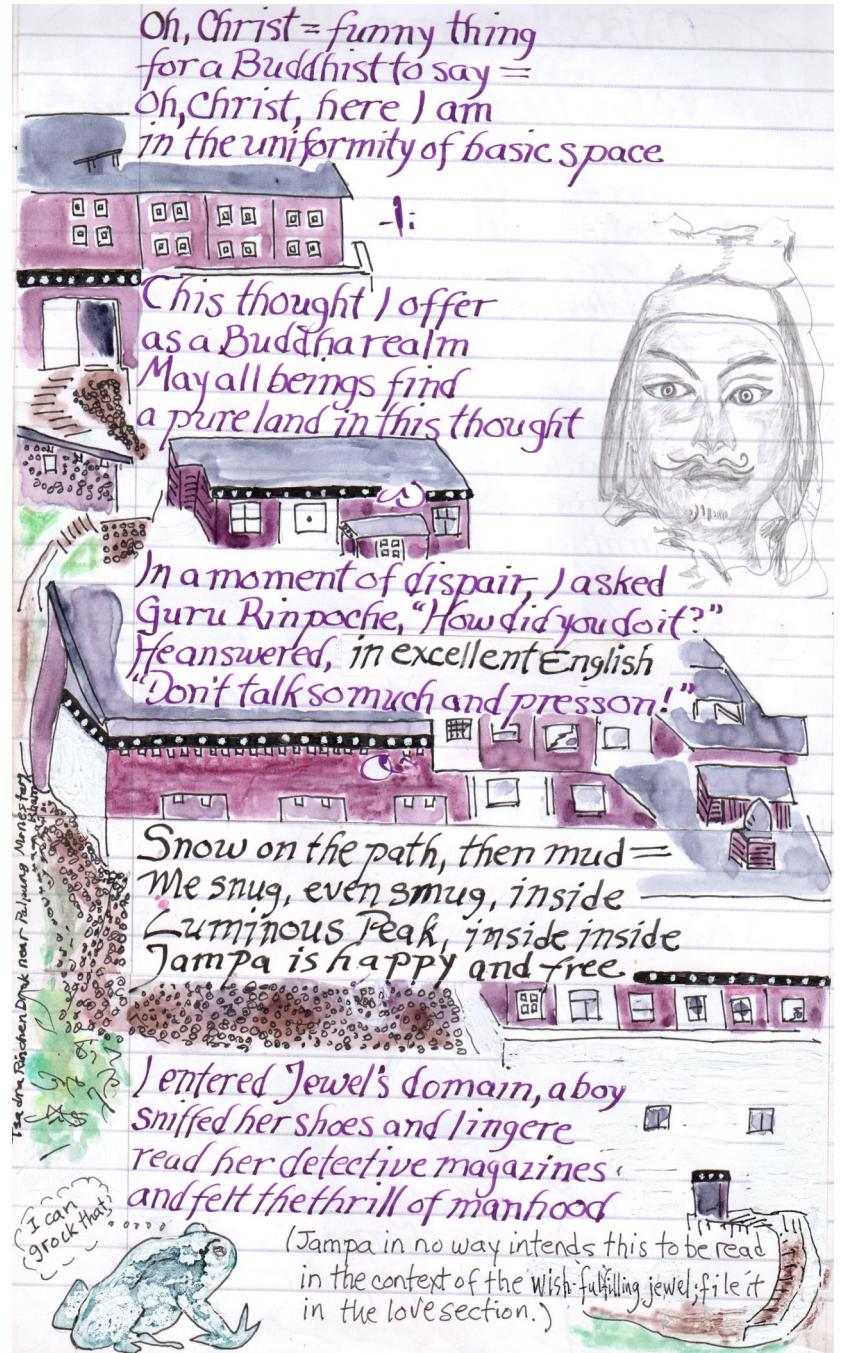
FLIGHT 333 LVS DENVER AT 5:55
clouds like silver wings
Caesar salad at Wolfgang Puck's
floor plaques with fossil figures
open cockpit fighter in the rafters
larger than life image of Dahlia Lama
with message: "He doesn't just wish
for peace, he works for it. Hope!"
effects change in my mindstream

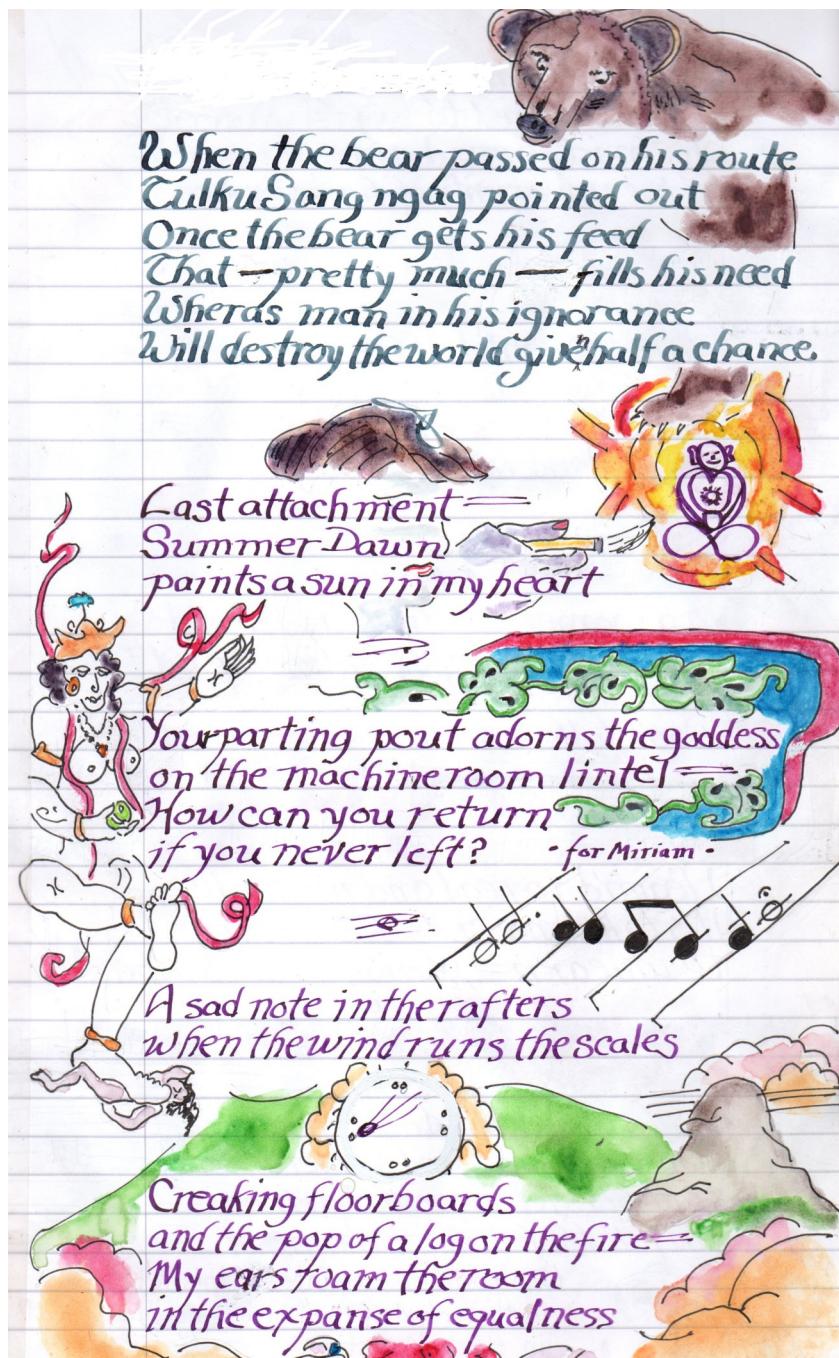
An Irish lass with Playboy logo
on her T-shirt carries my bag
tells me the airport is built on
a Native American graveyard
Will the vast expanse of primordial wisdom
dawn before we reach Gate B14?
but, then, exceptional bliss is
part and parcel of emptiness

"We are presently on an orange color code
Please report any unattended luggage."
Oh, yes, Samsara — where did
that Dakini set down my bag?









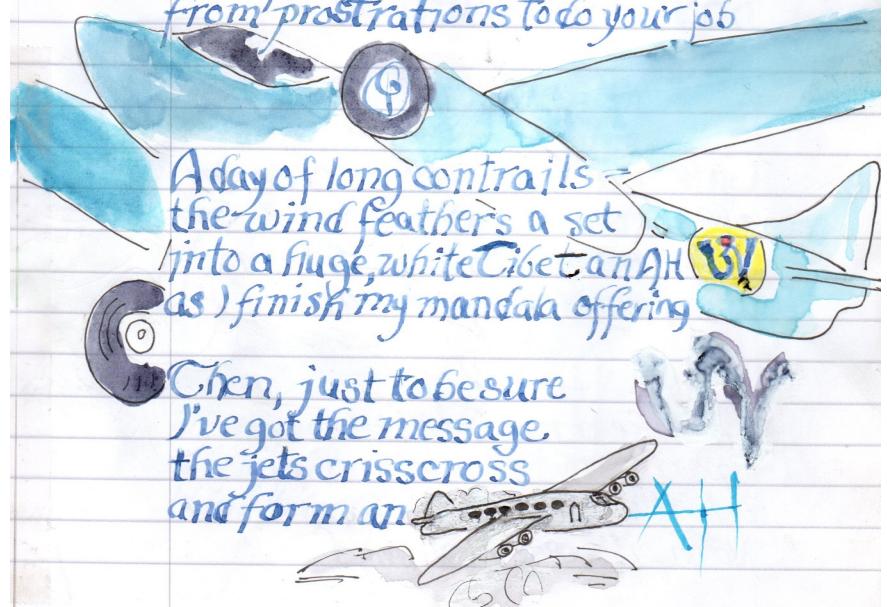
When my practice lags, I think
of Longchempa and his sack =
I look at the luxury of my digs
and realize I'm just a bug

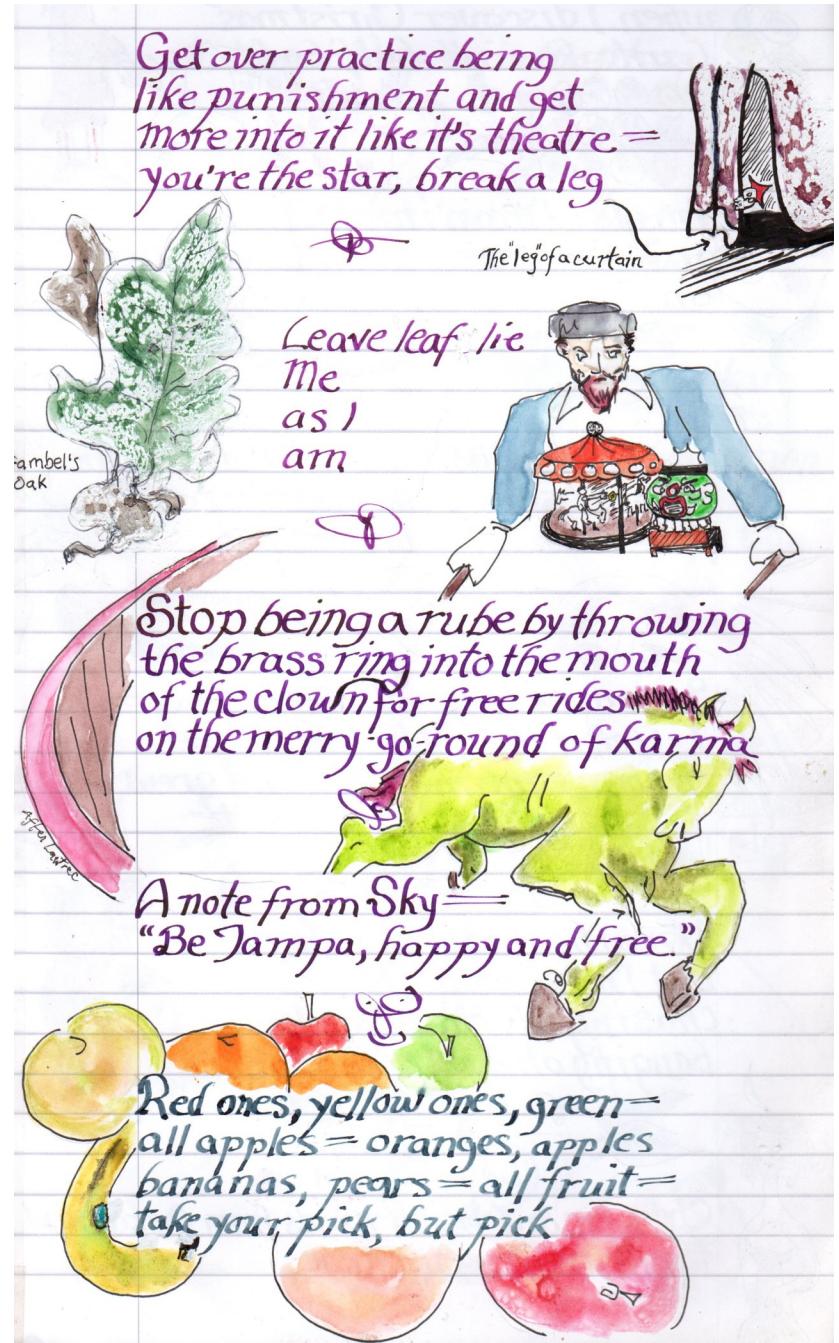
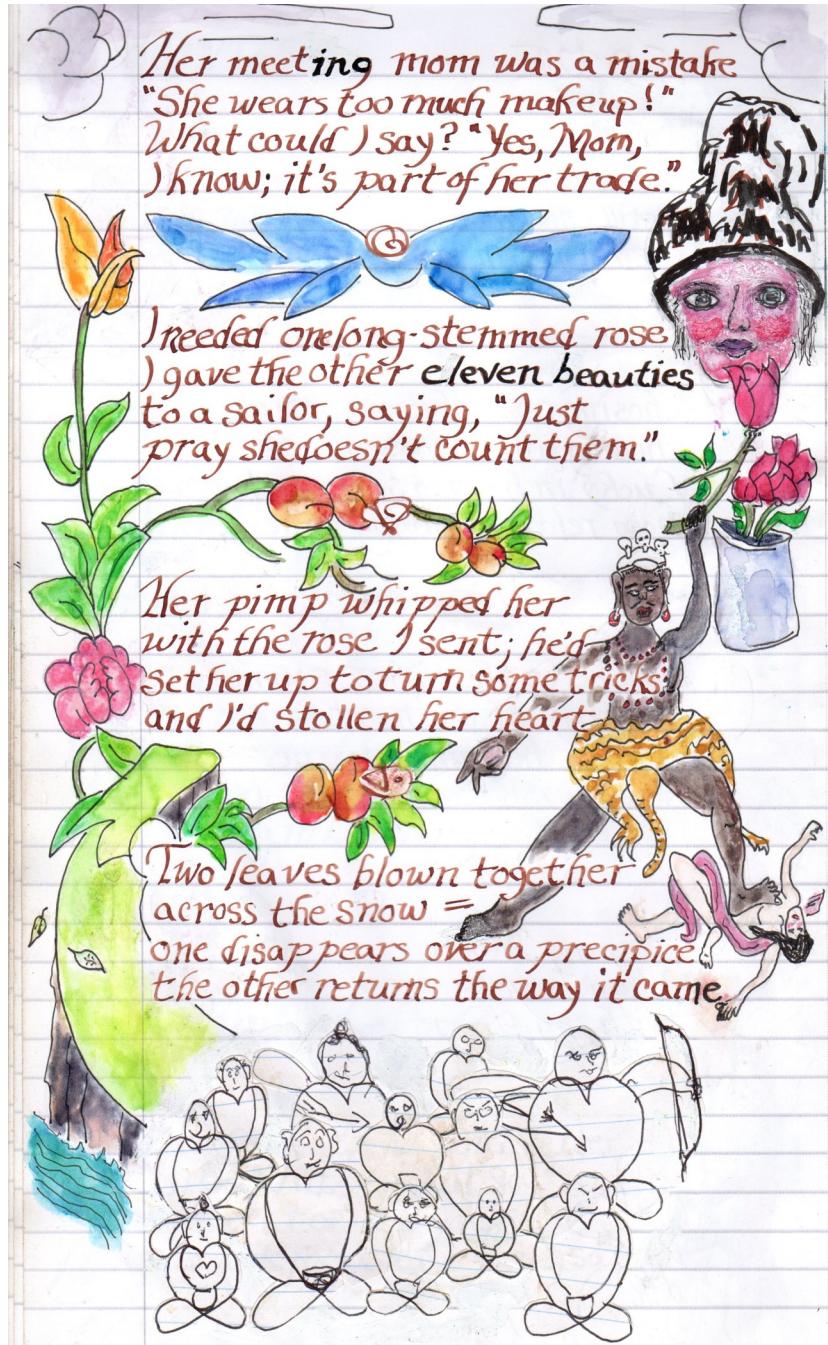


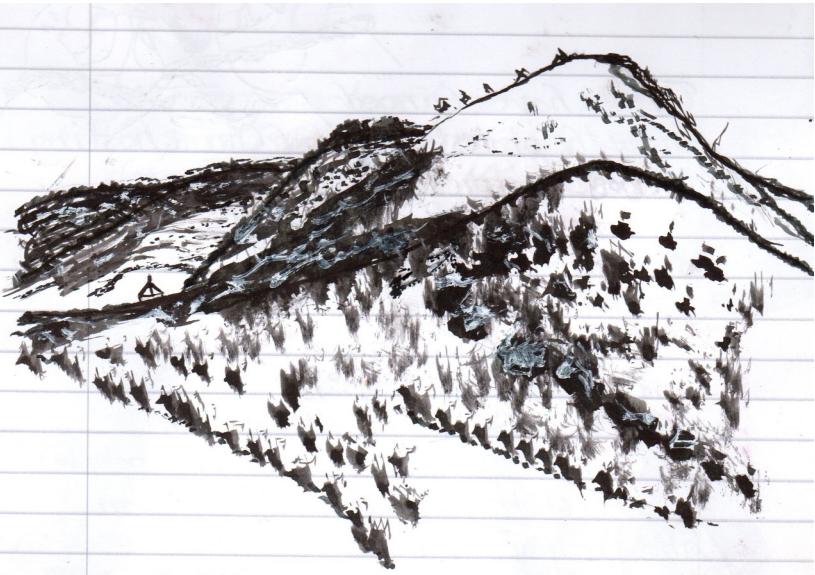
Prostrations are a centrifuge
to separate the pure metal
from the dross = I see, then
the oneness of Buddha and guru



It's a matter of priorities =
taking time from your job
to do prostrations or time
from prostrations to do your job







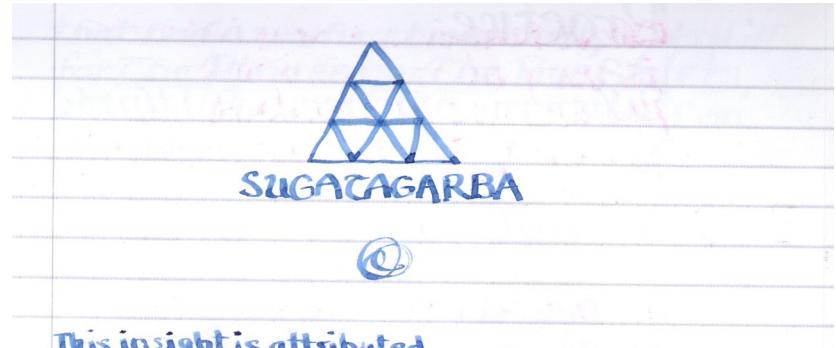
What am I doing on this mount
taking refuge in The Three Jewels?
If viewed from the end result
to be attained, I'd never begin



I'm staying put = I'm thinking
Is it possible to rise up?
I'd miss the planet turning
around the sun.



Risk being the Self
that is selfless =
One of these
two is you



This insight is attributed
to the first Zen Patriarch:
**CHE PACH'S A SNAP
IF YOU'RE NOT PICKY**



**WHAT I LEARNED AFTER
500 KALPAS OF MEDITATION
DON'T SAY MUCH
DON'T DO MUCH**



Take yourself off the clock
off the calendar and out
of the mix and you'll discover
a self-evident pureland



Sit like a mountain
open to the sky =
What's the agenda?
Nada, it's accomplished



AGE

I wanted to grow a beard
but my mom didn't like it
my wife said it scratched
my dad disapproved, or
I had to go before a judge



"We're not letting you out
of the hole until you shave
off that ridiculous red beard."

In the 80's my hair was long
and my beard glorious and full
but when I was elected to be
Worshipful Master of Lodge 39
they said, "Tell him to cut off
that beard - he looks like Jesus Christ."



Looks like Jesus Christ, as though
that was a crime - but I complied



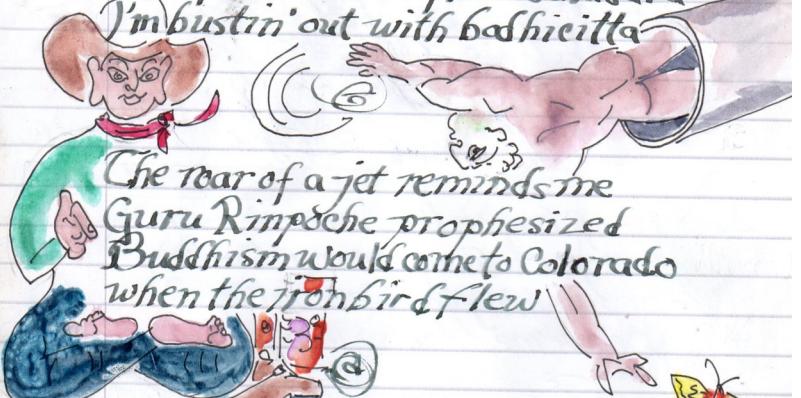
Now, I'm a Tibetan monk
in long retreat, and it's *de rigueur*
to let your hair and beard grow
and I see my reflection
and I have a full beard
and it's white



Sunset on the ridge
a lake of molten metals
Amitabha's heaven
or one of the hot hells

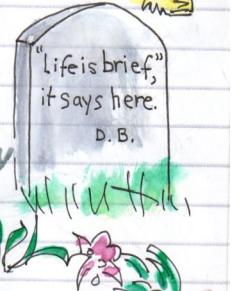


I've always liked prison flicks
Papillion, The Shawshank Redemption
Cool Hand Luke - from Samsara
I'm bustin' out with badicia



The roar of a jet reminds me
Guru Rinpoche prophesized
Buddhism would come to Colorado
when the iron bird flew

The only regret I have
is that I'll die before
I have a chance to finish
writing my autobiography



Chanka painters' dialogue
on the size of a yum's breasts:
"The manual says the size of a melon."
"A cantalope, not a watermelon."
"But I like them that size."
"I know, you have attachments."

