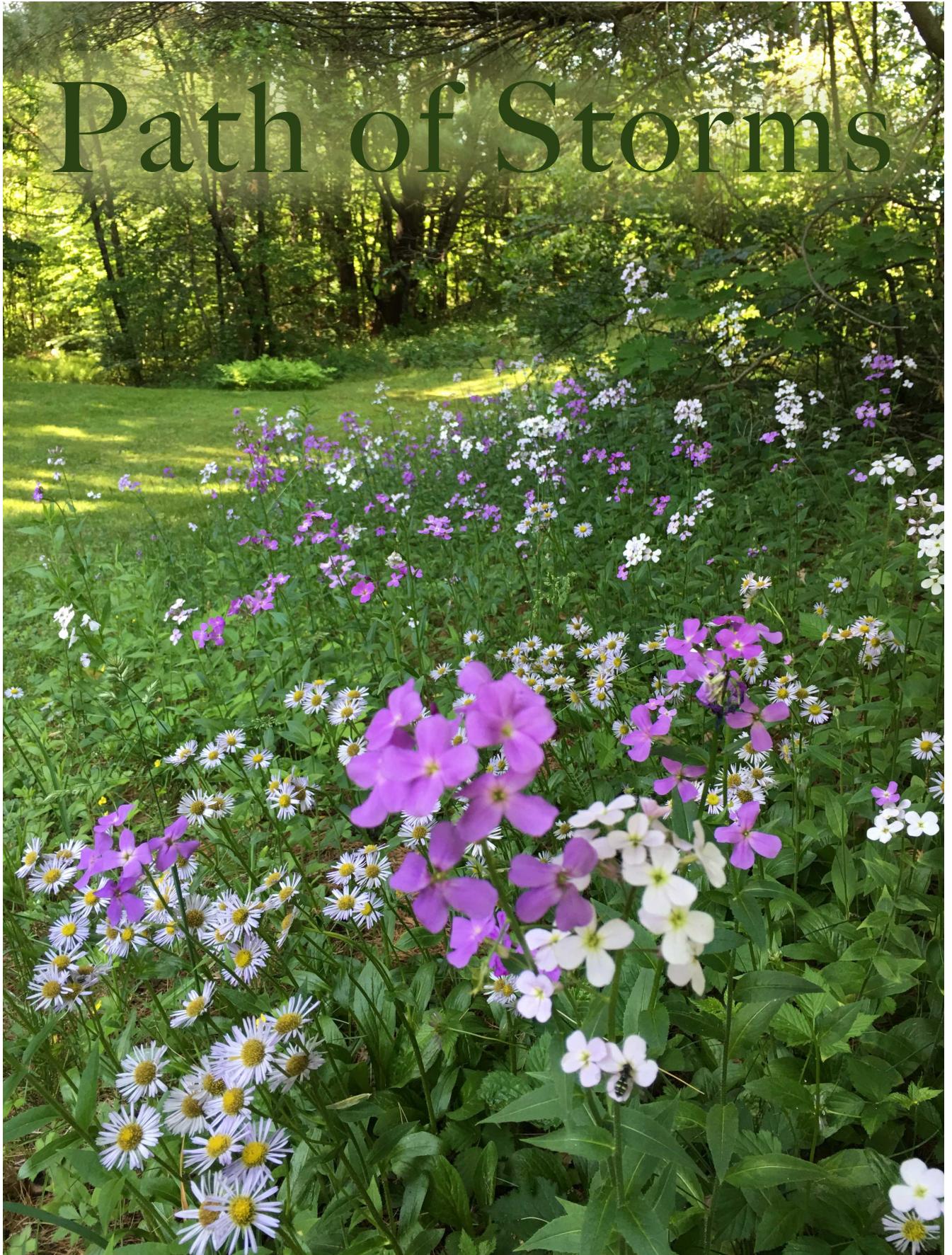


# Path of Storms



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*My sixth little book of poetry, for my friends and teachers in Vipassana Mediation. Text, photo and layout by me. Thanks to Hawley for editing. Revised October 27, 2019.*

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IN THE DEEP

it is so confusing  
what is willpower  
and what has power  
over will

we are sorting it out  
as we watch the motion

motion only seen  
while being still

*CDM October 31, 2011  
for Ben*

## MOUNTAIN

There are many different approaches  
but it is the same mountain  
the mountain of suffering

we come from north and south  
east and west  
all trying to overcome  
this great obstacle

how do we know we have  
reached the top?  
when we can see the other side!

may we all work and work  
until we see the other side

the side of peace,  
happiness,  
understanding

gratitude comes –  
deep gratitude to  
my Dhamma family members  
all over the world  
who are helping me learn  
the universal steps  
of liberation

appreciation comes –  
deep appreciation for  
Goenkaji and Sayagi U ba Khin  
and the entire chain of teachers  
back to the Buddha

thank you for your skillful training  
for showing us how to  
work the slopes  
no matter what side of the world  
we find ourselves

*CDM January 26, 2016*

## FADED FLOWERS

last night i dreamed of buildings full of people, and walking through familiar rooms, but everything was changed, and i was being urged on, but my progress was sluggish, difficult walking, up a hard slope.

in my hands were beautiful, brilliant flowers, but with a shock i realized that these flowers were not fresh, but slightly fading.

today blue sky after yesterdays wet and rainy, a fall day gorgeous. crisp dry coolish, flowers and leaves and bees but everything slightly faded, not fresh but slightly out of date.

being in the middle of my life, winter is not here yet, but perhaps i am wondering about the flowers, will they be fresh or faded, what will be my fate?

dreams color my waking, waking colors my dreams, and with a shock i see the burning of daylight, the steaming of night, the rolling of the seasons, am i to come with flowers, or is it too late?

*CDM October 5, 2014*

HA!

When one begins to understand *anicca*  
as personal experience,  
everything changes  
ha! everything,  
changes

When one begins to understand  
*anicca* and *dukkhā*,  
at the level of *vedanā*,  
everything gets up close and personal  
ha! up close,  
personal

When one begins to understand  
*anicca* and *anattā* and *dukkhā*  
as the universal experience  
everything gets some distance,  
some perspective  
ha! perspective

Arising due to one cause,  
or another.  
arising at one of the 6 sense doors,  
or another.  
ha!

Both the problem  
and the solution  
arising  
and  
passing away

*CDM October 9, 2014*

YOUR WAVE

*Dhammadāna*  
you received  
you multiplied  
we are awash

*Bhāvanā-maya paññā*  
you received  
you multiplied  
we are awash

some thought  
you were a  
stubborn stone  
until the stone split  
with a sandy smile  
and cracked  
with the rumble of  
hearty laughter

the little dogs danced  
the clan gathered  
and painted Buddhas  
on the walls  
of many a home  
smile  
with your smile

Lallie Pratt  
your wave has come and gone  
but the light remains

*CDM February 12, 2017*  
*For Lallie Pratt, Vipassanā Ācāriya, neighbor, mentor to many*



ALL AT A GO

oh the multiplicity of  
ekāyano maggo

with its octo-folds  
and quadratic efforts  
and triple parts  
and 37 factors  
and diversity of starting points  
and septo-stages

one path?  
sometimes they say it so

but here we are  
all the complexity of  
all of us  
all at a go

*CDM September 4, 2017*

## APPARITION

it is apparently true  
it is an apparition

you give the gist  
I see the mist

how to distinguish  
fact and fiction?

we get the argument  
but what is apparently true  
must therefore be  
– an apparition –

perhaps time will tell  
experience will tell  
careful observation will tell  
what is fact  
and what is fiction

*CDM October 6, 2017*

GOOD DEEDS

In this enlightened age  
the sun doesn't rise  
the sun doesn't fall  
we know it is just  
the earth  
that is spinning  
that is all  
that is all

In this enlightened age  
we don't take it personally  
when the dawn breaks  
when darkness falls  
we know it is just cause and effect  
that is all  
that is all

And when anger breaks  
and the rains fall  
looking within  
looking without  
this is anattā  
this is anicca  
seeing cause and effect  
that is all  
that is all

In this enlightened age  
doing good deeds  
interest us all  
because we know  
how helping each other  
elevates us all  
changes us all

The sun doesn't rise  
the sun doesn't fall  
it is we who are moving  
examining our actions  
trying to learn  
the good of it all

Anger can break  
depression can fall  
good can arise  
if proper action we take  
having examined and learned  
of the effect we make  
on the earth that is spinning  
that is all we need  
that is all

*CDM October 23, 2017*

LITTLE VICTORIES ON THE TRAIN FROM NEW YORK

each time I sit or serve  
is a victory.  
each hour that I go for  
awareness-equanimity  
is a victory

each moment I can be  
alert-present-effective  
in the world,  
and yet still know the wisdom  
of the changing body sensations...

This is victory!

And yet  
most of the time  
my life  
is simply the  
continuation of craving  
of aversion,  
of ignorance,

and yet  
more and more  
I smile,  
knowing that

progress has been made  
progress is being made  
progress can yet still be made,  
even though

I do not yet claim to know  
really  
what it means  
to achieve  
truly lasting victory

little bits of renewed effort  
little bits of renewed understanding  
little bits of peace

little pauses in the process of being  
– perpetually perturbed –

for now,  
little moments of victory  
are enough

*CDM December 16, 2017*

GO AHEAD

go ahead, have a cruddy meditation,  
go ahead, have a bad meditation.

no time to meditate? so what?  
meditate when you can.

fell asleep, so what?  
meditate when you wake up.

obsessed over this or that?  
it's not odd  
go back to the bod

forgot you were breathing? so what?  
maybe just now you know  
you have a nose  
that has something that flows

too agitated to sit? so what?  
pace around  
and when it gets tiring  
then sit down and feel it

nothing but pain?  
just want to complain?

yup, I've been there  
yup, I've heard that

can't hardly meditate at all –  
yup, that means  
you have a little something  
that can tolerate it all  
that can stay sane through it all  
that can accept it all

meditate for the good  
the way you once knew you could  
meditate madly  
even though all you can is badly

this is how we develop  
effort  
tolerance  
balance  
and teeny weeny bits of  
– determination –

to go steady when life is rough  
and strong when life is weak  
and gently when life is fast  
and know misery as it is  
and learn to meditate badly

meditating madly –  
how we learn to deal  
with reality  
so much better  
than not meditating  
at all

*CDM December 23, 2017*



(I) STORMS

The path of storms  
is the path for me

the tempest comes  
when we stay the stirring  
of the bitter sugar  
and the sweeter tea

These airy blossoms  
populate the path  
after the moments  
of equanimity

(II) BEGINNING

gone, all gone  
everything i have learned  
is all gone now

i am a beginner  
once again

beginning, beginning  
my life is just beginning  
beginning in the body  
with *samudaya*  
and *vaya*

feeling this lump  
in the darkness  
of the cell  
once again.

(III) ALTERNATE DEFINITION

*Sampajañña*: constant thorough surprise that things keep changing

(IV) YUMMA: THE FOUR IGNOBLE TRUTHS

Yumma: there are snacks

Yumma samudaya: there are cravings for snacks

Yumma nirodha: the cravings for snacks are hard to eradicate

Yumma nirodha gamini patipada: there is a path to the kitchen

(V) PRUNES

The taste of Dhamma  
is the taste of prunes

Never before tasting the Dhamma  
had I tasted prunes this way

Stewed, that is

Gratitude  
to all the kitchen workers  
at Dhamma Dharā  
for all those courses  
after all those years

For all your love  
and compassion  
in serving me prunes  
each and every day

*CDM February 22, 2015*