

Path of Storms



C O N T E N T S

in the deep.....	1
mountain.....	2
faded flowers.....	4
ha!.....	5
your wave.....	6
all at a go.....	7
apparition.....	8
good deeds.....	9
little victories on the train from new york.....	11
go ahead.....	13
– five silly and less silly mettā day poems –.....	15
(i) storms.....	15
(ii) beginning.....	16
(iii) alternate definition.....	16
(iv) yumma: the four ignoble truths.....	17
(v) prunes.....	17

My sixth little book of poetry, for my friends and teachers in Vipassana Meditation. Text, photo and layout by me. Thanks to Hawley for editing. Revised October 12, 2025.more at craigdmiller.com/poetry

Craig Douglas Miller

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 crisp dry coolish, flowers and leaves and bees but everything slightly faded, not fresh but slightly out of date.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

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