

THE UNIVERSE FOR
BREAKFAST

Dharma Diary Poems

by

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BLACK
APOLLO
PRESS

To the Dads –
Marty Magezis & Ed Biderman
To the Moms –
Florence Magezis & Fannie Biderman
To the ancestors
back through time
interconnected
to essence of life

To new generations
and those yet to come
out through space
interwoven
through boundless universe

In gratitude
for being alive
to experience all this

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INTRODUCTION

Eight years ago
back from holiday
to write my novel
a poem appeared
Then this flood

What lies beyond?
Journey begun
with the help
of great teachers
family and friends

Finding way
through thickets
of suffering
fear undergrowth
dazzling joy

Unimagined path
to tread life
each very instant
Dharma my guide
I make my own way

Dear friend
I invite you to share
my inner heart life
Perhaps it will help
on your own way

7 January 2007, Cambridge, UK



*Dharma is the teachings of the Buddha and those
who followed along the path of understanding and love.*

27 September 1998

I.

The sun,
shining through the trees,
crosses my heart.
It brings the warmth
I so desire.
Igniting the light within.

Touching my fear with comfort,
focusing my essence on growth.
The light,
shining through the trees,
is part of me.

II.

Droplets fall from the leaves.
And the fields echo
with the thumps of horses' hoofs.
As they run out their restlessness,
I touch my own with comfort
and hold my fear with understanding.

I, too, can find peace
in interconnection,
for I am horses, rain and sun.
All of these are my precious life.
And the hoof-beats echoing within
resound with my longing
to know what lies hidden.

Beyond my vulnerability
there is a great sun
which I want to be.
It shines through the branches of my fear
and lights the glen beyond.

9 November 1998

Love, Light Grow.
Fear, Guilt Go.
Go with my blessing.
No anger left
just faith
in this very moment.

Hold that faith.
Shine that love
into my very depths.
Spaces so dark
they cringe
to be recognised.
Places I've dared
not touch
for fear of spreading
deadly poison.

But I need not fear.
I will not drown
in my own poison.
Fear expanded it.
The light shows
only droplets
awaiting transformation.

How simple it sounds.
But it takes
that leap
to a new dimension.
Diving into
intuitive love.

From that place long forgotten,
denied, abandoned,
comes a wish
for the crystal
to refract such light
as I didn't know was there.

A rainbow appears
shaking the caverns
of my very doubt.
'And you ain't
seen nothing yet.'

Suddenly I draw back
in terror of the jinx
who will twist my words
of blasphemy.
Knock on wood
quickly before it hears
I shall worship fear again.

NO!
I'm scared,
but I'll go anyway.
Into my rainbow,
softening my heart
blessing my fear
remembering that –
I am worthy of love.

17 November 1998

FEAR NOT WRITING

Fear not this writing
from true heart.
Ask not its meaning.
Take the insights and live.
For life is but a flash.
And you can only
live each instant
when there is no time
so you live forever.

Fear not your own words.
Don't censor them.
They will not ruin you.
They are not evil
or discordant.
Your words are perfect
if you trust them.

Fear not
the imaginary tiger within.
Those depths are holy places
disguised as dungeons.
Fear has veiled them in pain.
When disrobed
the sun will shine in.

Fear not
what others will say
or their judgements.
Needn't write for them.
Forget them behind you,
wagging their fingers.
Forget their echoes within.
(Or is it the other way round?)

Fear not being selfish.
You can only love yourself
if you want to be able
to truly love others.
Love self.
Write for self
and the river of love will flow
with golden light.

Forget to limit you
and the ocean within
will break lose
and flow through
your fingertips.

Fear not
the white waves breaking,
as they did at the start of labour,
giving birth to art.
Trust your own muse.
She will not harm you,
if you are receptive
to your true self.

Perhaps I could
write like this forever.
If I feared not
what came out.
Some would be useful.
Some later deleted.
But how purifying
just to sit before the keys
with my eyes closed
and let my fingers
bring the words
from my mind
to the page.

No time limit.
No audience.
Suspending judgement
just smiling at the chance
to flow.
The thrill
of being ART.

For art is process
unbounded, uncritical.
Expressing my soul,
exposing my inner depths,
uncaring of product.
From this groundswell
seeping up
from what I thought
was the deepest sewers
comes ME.



22 November 1998

CHANUKAH

Changing seasons.
Darkening light.
Chanukah approaching.
Family gathering.

And I miss you, Mom.
You who recreated
holiday lights
in the darkness.
Feeling so deeply
the vacuum left
without Christmas.
Reaching back
for that heritage
bursting with light.

Thank you, Mom
for making Chanukah
so wondrously bright.
For the latkes,
cray paper decorations,
origami dradles,
you taught us to make.

Thank you for helping me
be proud of my culture,
beyond religion, oppression,
self hate, aggrandisement.

Focusing on positive,
with meaning for us,
creating the holiday
you longed for as a child.

And most of all
thank you, Mom,
for your shining love.

7 December 1998

WINTER CONNECTIONS

Energy at my scalp,
beyond headache,
branching out
from the boundaries
of what seems to be
ME.

I can sense
the branches
that protrude
out from my scalp
in all directions
to the very edge
of bare bark.
There sprigs await spring,
beyond fear, disbelief.

Tara, so sure,
sitting on windowsill
with the big, old tree
beyond the glass.
And me,
on my cushion,
trying to follow suit.

I am sure.
I feel
those branches
growing
from my backbone
out to my potential,
beyond understanding
to faith, wisdom.

I feel those branches
growing from the pain
in my back
transforming it
to lightness and warmth.
Bringing me to the very edge.

Here in the depths of winter
those bare branches
sustain energy,
deepening mine
to go beyond.

Out on the spread of branches
birds roost awaiting spring,
without need of explanation.
Out there I want to fly
with my birds.

Wings expanded,
large black birds
soar on currents
of winter winds,
without being cold.
Inner warmth protects,
spurring them on.

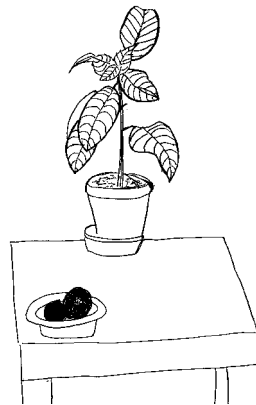
Beyond the birds
lie streaks
of white clouds,
holding the sky
in their winter mist.

I am the haze
of moisture
which stripes the blueness
with its life-giving water.

Beyond the clouds
I am white snow
which begins to fall
as tiny dots
building to heavy clumps.
I feel the force
drifting to earth
with ever increasing ferocity
until finally
it covers the land.

I am the earth
deep and strong
covered with snow
brimming with life.
I am the earth,
as I sit
on my cushion,
kneeling on blanket
crocheted by Mom.
We are the earth –
life itself.

Grounded,
I feel energy
against my shins.
The heat, beyond snow,
works its way
up my body.
I see the redness
and feel my scalp,
expanding out
into branches,
growing ever stronger,
connections.



19 January 1999

Waking to image
of spiritual woman.
Her glistening, white hair
standing up on end -
an electric crown.

Electricity, too,
extending out
her finger tips.
Her arms spread,
palms upward,
welcoming me.

She stands tall,
body contentedly full,
legs apart,
feet touching earth.

Her aura is rainbow,
invitingly beautiful,
shining toward me.
But I can't help
being scared.

'Are wise women scared?'
Her smile grows wider,
'My old friend fear.
Such good energy
once transformed.'
'But how?'
'By not allowing
fear to block you.
There's so much more.
It's merely a trifle.'

From her heart
a golden light
eases my fear.
Now I see
her third eye
brightly coloured
across her forehead.

My concentration deeper,
I notice her round
belly stone,
dark and heavy,
grounding her.

She wears a long,
multi-coloured coat.
In it I find
possibilities abound.

6 February 1999

RELEASE THE JEW

I

Release from bondage
so deep a fear
scared of evil
the Holocaust
witnessed by my people
victims of Auschwitz

Release from bondage
of subterranean belief
in the power of evil
touch wood against
the evil eye
for we so vulnerable
to death and fear

Release from bondage
of inner fear
that I, too, contain
the potential to inflict
torture and death
That I, too, could
be a party to genocide

Release from bondage
the deep fear
that within me lies
tiger of destruction
if unleashed
anger and hurt
would cause me
to be evil

Release from bondage
the deadly power
of pain, the spin
of negative force
before my birth
that I arose
out of energy
of the Holocaust

I am the rebirth
of those who died
screaming in gas chambers
horror vibrating
over and over
millions upon millions
Bodies looted for gold fillings
burnt in open trenches
the stench of mass death
polluting the earth

Release from bondage
for I am more
than the terrible deaths
More than the evil
which caused them
For 'evil' is merely
a human construct
of fear and pain
poison spun
into hurt and anger
manifested in
human destruction

Release from bondage
for I am also
the earlier life
of Holocaust victims
before rounded up
packed into cattle cars
humiliated and murdered
I am their music
their art, their theories,
their hopes and dreams
I am their future

Release from bondage
my fear of becoming
the devil of evil
my people witnessed
I am their hope
their love of life
Heart opening
I discover not evil
but pain and hurt
fear and death
creativity, energy
deep abiding love

Release from bondage
I need not copy
destructive energy
of the persecutor
Even Israel
when it persecutes
the Palestinians
is not me.

II

Released from bondage
I'm amazed to find
I'm the shining light
compassion of Tara
potential of growth
generosity, warmth
Suspicion itself
my fear of depths
is the very lock
holding from release
that storehouse of energy
of those who've gone
of what I am
What I can become

Released from bondage
opened to universe
the source of love
vibrating orange
yellow and green
Life itself
purple of spirit
heat of success
touch of energy
flowing through fingers
conscious breathing
balancing aura

Released from bondage
mistaken self-hate
misguided suspicion
maintenance of 'evil'
for they are but
the spinning of fire
in the wrong direction
That energy released
can cool, transform
as I can become
a daughter of light

Beyond bondage
of biblical stories
of Jewish slaves
the power of God
suppressor of Goddess
who are but one
All forms of love
separated by religion
contain the essence
to guide us all
Compassion and hope
faith and openness
await me now

Beyond my habit
to brace for evil
expect the worst
fear the devil
hear the screams
of horrific torture
Scares –
seemingly unhealable
nightmares suppressed
and taken in
turned on one's self
turned on others

To fear's manifestations
with deep compassion
for all its victims
I send my love
protecting my heart
with translucent shell
allowing positivity
to permeate out
for all who suffer

19 February 1999

In deep meditation
I contacted ancestors
who told me they wanted
me to transform
all their suffering

Opening my eyes
in shock, despair
so much darkness
such heavy weight
Impossible job

Once calm I returned
to ancestral connection
and they said,
'Ve just vant
you should be happy'



19 March 1999

SPRING
TRANSFORMATION

I gave this poem to my teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh, who is a Zen Master and peace activist. It was part of my letter asking to take the 5 Mindfulness Trainings. They are an expanded, insightful version of the 5 Buddhist precepts. After the transmission ceremony, Thay (the Vietnamese word for 'teacher') gave me the Lineage Name of Restoring Life of the Heart. At the time I was surprised that the name sounded like that of a healer.

In light green dress,
floor length
I stand, legs spread,
surrounded by grass
growing longer
aglow with sun.

Atop high red mountain,
arms lifted
touching sky
feet grounded,
limbs form an 'x'.
Belly, my core,
I breath
and breath.

I am
the green
sprig of growth –
life itself,
photosynthesis,
charge of electric
impulse splattering
across time
to this very moment
when life
sprouts forth
beyond old growth
and I become
anew.

This poem was inspired by Thich Nhat Hanh's Retreat.

5 April 1999

THE UNIVERSE FOR BREAKFAST

Looking into
my cereal bowl
I find
the universe, smiling.
Banana –
from the Caribbean;
rich soil,
mother of growth
for wide-leafed tree.
Tropical rains,
cooling thirsty earth,
born of clouds,
bringing water
from distant lands
to the buds,
ready to flower.
Sun, kissing
the petals opened.

Grape Nuts cereal –
brown, ripened fields
of wheat and barley
swaying in the winds
of America's bounty.
Country of my birth
loved, with mixed emotions,
sad at your misused might
thankful for the refuge
of my desperate ancestors.

Pumpkin seeds –
from far off China,
soil for Indian wisdom
of wandering Nuns
bringing tofu and love,
germinating kernels
of Zen simplicity.

Sesame seeds –
from Guatemala,
land of hope
and death squads,
repression and
Liberation Theology.

May the sweat
upon these seeds
be repaid with
just bounty,
giving child labourers
a place at school,
full bellies and
warmth of home.

Organic milk –
from British cows
like those I see
beyond my window
munching spring growth
on Stourbridge Common,
leaving fertiliser.
All the same
to mother earth,
great transformer
of putrid smells
into rosehip buds
for next year's tea.

Sitting at my table
I taste the sweetness
of childhood food,
feeling distant products
transforming within.
Suddenly, they are real,
beyond plastic packaging
divorced from storms,
deep roots and light.

Even a city girl,
raised in cement,
can taste the universe,
chew the wind,
digest the sun
and know
it's all possible
at this very instant
when I breath,
beyond time/space,
in the ultimate dimension.

