

Poems November 2021

Winding Road

(For Chris on his 65th)

When we started
down this winding road
we were young.

We could play music
all night and on into the dawn.
Blues, jazz,
improvisation,

we let it all hang out.

As we travelled
we laughed
at the wind and the rain,
the cliffs and the canyons.

The ocean was intriguing.
Although it was
so distant
that we could not see it,
nonetheless
we wrote songs about it,
songs of realization.

Now we are nearing
the shoreline.
At times it seems
that we can actually smell
the salt air.
We feel a sense of urgency
to practice our scales
in preparation
for the final jam session.

Yet it still remains
beyond our comprehension
that the road
will end at the ocean,
and that our instruments
will be left there
while we go on alone,
surrendering to the harmony
of the tide.

Mountain Drum
8November2021

Poems November 2021

Incognito

At the hospital
they didn't recognize me.
Not surprising.
They are busy.
As long as the name
and birthday match up
they are satisfied.

Day in and day out
very few people
I interact with
actually recognize me.
They think they know
who I am
based on rather superficial characteristics,
and that seems to be enough.

Now and then
I come upon someone
who looks deeper.
When that happens
I am encouraged to look
at them in that same way.

When we look deeply into one another
there is a possibility
that our true identify
will be revealed.
If so,
in that moment
we recognize each other
as being
the same,
not one, not two.

Mountain Drum
14November2021

Separation

We traveled on and on
through a landscape
of thick stagnant air
and littered debris.

At last we came
to a large sign
on a thick post.
There were two large arrows
on the sign,
each pointing in the opposite direction.
Under one arrow was the word "This".
Under the other arrow was the word "That".

Looking beyond the sign
we saw lush meadows
gently rising to meet
magnificent mountains
of steep rock
decorated with gleaming ice and snow.

Ducking under the sign,
we walked through the meadow
admiring the colorful wildflowers
and feeling a fresh breeze of delight
on our faces.

Looking back the way we had come,
past the sign,
there was blue sky,
neatly groomed gardens
and stately homes
as far
as mind could see.

Mountain Drum
17November2021

Poems November 2021

Sister (for Ginny)

I have lost my sister.
We met when we were barely twenty
and our lives have been Intertwined ever since.
She married my best friend.
They introduced me to our Root Guru.

Childhood,
for her as the daughter of a clergyman,
provided her with a rich palate
of psychological challenges,
as childhood does for us all.

She did not let those challenges
deter her from fully living
the life of a contemplative household practitioner.

Many of us enjoy expounding on the Dharma.
She could do that, but in my experience,
she seemed to prefer humbly manifesting
Inseparable wisdom and compassion,
with an infectious laugh and a wry spontaneous
sense of humour.

She skillfully cared for her family,
and others who were ill,
maintained an indestructible bond with her husband,
and nurtured organizational efforts
to support Tibetans in need.

She was fully engaged with the Buddhadharma
and with life.

I have lost my sister.
We have lost our sister.
May our memories of her
undeniable manifestation of
Basic Goodness
Inspire us to emulate
her authentic presence.

Mountain Drum (David Whitehorn).
25November2021

Monkey spat on the streetcar line

Monkey spat on the streetcar line.
I was drinking rum and coke with a splash of lime.
Wouldn't it be great if we could turn back the hands of time.
But who do we think we're kidding?

I remember a women in a purple dress.
I fell in love with her, I confess.
But if it had gone any further it would have been a mess.
And who did I think I was kidding.

Mountains are solid but they don't last,
In this cosmic game that reminds me ol craps.
You place your bets as time spins past.
Who the hell do we think we're kidding.

When he played the trombone I could feel it slide,
A universe of thoughts locked up inside.
Strange that it's the truth that we try to hide.
Who do we think we're kidding.

So I suggest a long walk with a trustworthy friend,
Out to where the land meets the sky and comes to an end.
From there you can almost see around time's bend.
But who do we think we're kidding.

Monkey spat on the streetcar line.
Life is a poem that always rhymes,
If you take the time to stop and read the signs,
It becomes clear that it's us that we are kidding.

Mountain Drum
30November2021