

addressing the trees

being as you are,
forms,
all things,
help me, please!
to be this

for Maurine Freedgood Roshi,

**Mother of Dharma
Gives Life**

before the mountain
and by grace of nature
I was allowed to realize "Oh!
I am only a child!"
and for a while, tendered
by spruce and birds, saw
without my usual defenses
and endless thinking I know
anything or everything coming
between me
and all creation

by that same
grace in this zendo
you so caringly
teach and encourage
allow one to feel and accept
your living tissue
Dharma now
not afraid to be
a child in this
great wilderness I am able
to ask will you help me
learn to give
this life as given

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love poem

what was it before
water before kelp
before sea birds before
even you?

Lassie saves the day

*When Timmy saved Bessie from the
slaughterhouse
(they thought she was going dry but it was just
the neighbor kid stealing milk for his
baby sister after their cow had died and they
had no money to buy another one what with the
new baby and all)*

*when Timmy saved Bessie from the
slaughterhouse
did the other cows rejoice?
Did their spirits rise
that one of their own had beaten
the system, Lassie stopping the butcher just
as he was leading Bessie away his apron
immaculate (she would have been the
first to go) mommy's truck
pulling up in the
nick of time?*

*Now it's the next cow's turn but the camera's
gone on already to the story's happy ending.
Sorry, cow.*

*Timmy Timmy one cow
just one cow in this sea of cows bleating
for deliverance
(okay I know she's **your** cow whatever
that means but still)
just what exactly has been accomplished
And Bessie never knowing
acquiescent
such a good cow
did she think
this was an interesting
Saturday outing? Does she look forward
to a repeal performance some other time?*

ga! cold

poem, I ask
you, how
can you be
written so
everyone can
hear? I'm
asking you

my body opens
to the great night
of space and I
am infinite
in wonder the beauty
of the stars I
breathe

cell to cell
what is me and
what is kelp? in
this lavish bed
of ocean life
so rich I nourish
all creation

time bends
because God is
so awkward or is
it the other
way around time
bends God
to tides
fluctuations days
and years good
and bad this
and that every
range of fruit
blossom piquancy
calls and the myriad
arachnids?

1/12/86

Dharma Teacher Linda Parker established the Cape Ann Zen Group in Gloucester, MA in 1983. Author of three volumes of poetry, she recently completed a 100 day solo meditation retreat. She operates a seaweed-collecting business.

bee medicine

she was confused
lost her way then she
looked at the sun
and was home

more bees

look
at the sun! look
at the sun! we are
already at home
being as you are
trees birds stones
salamanders rain
so purely such otters
moss diatoms flax
and beetles please!
help me
be real

when I speak
to the fire the fire
burns

great mother move
through us
as you do
inspite of every
obstacle resistance
we present we
are
human help us
learn
to move
as you we
are

not to pose
a mystery but only appreciation
of tender life particularity I wonder
where do these fish come
from who leap skyward
from high mountain ponds?
did fisher birds' colons transport undigested
caviars or did Pogy Pond
stocked water rise right
with Katahdin's volcanic urgency
from a oneness
with other water other
fish to the loft
and isolation that makes me
so peacefully curious
today and the kingfisher
en route again, these fish
may have been salmon-kind
swimmers up streams
we can't see
anymore. clearly enough
this is their home
even if they are going
somewhere
on their way to the
sky stream now in my mind
or by kind nature the light
of the trout's mind I understand
the answer to my question more
than I could imagine: gorgeous
trout came to this high pond
as a life
gift so naturally
rendered by the rain
bow and as far as one
lets that gift extend
we are and this
all begins

From a rural calendar

*"Most black-tailed deer fawns
born around now."*

*You hide behind a log
watching for deer. Remember
huge bright feathered dinosaurs
(why not? you know better?)
around here
wasn't so far back*

*cockroaches in the walls who
like human babies
have no particular
birth season.*

*Don't forget last year's
deer crop
already harvested*

*stars whose seasons
we don't know:
the exact moment they're born
or die*

*and my first son born two months early
dead five months later.*

*Our planet rolled
through great crustal disturbances
of the early Mesozoic
through the emergence of dinosaurs
their primacy in the Jurassic
rolled through the Pleistocene*

*the emergence of mammals
and of men and women in the
late Cenozoic era.*

*Our planet is moving to its
completion
life bound to it
bound to leave it
one way or another*

*This redwood forest
waiting for the birth of fawns
right now is turning to desert.
Krakatoa erupts
Mt. St. Helens dissolves
as in a movie how can you know
exactly when to leave?*

*How can you know
the time of each fawn's birth
and if you knew
where would it get you
gangly boy with hands
as large as the universe
trapped in the perceptions
of the Holocene*

*a time known only
to your species here on earth?*

Senior Dharma Teacher Judith Roitman, a Professor of Mathematics at the University of Kansas, has had poetry published in numerous journals. A student of Zen Master Seung Sahn since 1975, she established (with her husband, Stanley Lombardo, who has an article elsewhere in this issue) the Kansas Zen Center in Lawrence in 1978.

New leaves

*New leaves
on an old tree.
What fills our minds
to make such comparisons?*