THE DHARMA OF POETRY

—

By Mike Bovingdon

—

A song that waited in a quiet way for a word
Or a knowing to knock me backwards
A beginning waiting to happen; fresh; original
The energy of a smile; a dance; The Dance that has no dancer
Words that have no must attached
No uniform to sit inside or scheme or scan or rhyme
Or crystal frame of words that slowly snow truth under Dharma in what form it chooses
Words in loose formation like Spitfires
Beautifully crafted and flown in desperation
Dharma; the order that goes right across;
And we don’t see it because we must have edges
Three-piece music with no hiding place
Chords that ring true or it fails; no fudge
A quiet voice in a great symphony like a truth waiting to be born
Only the weight and energy of truth to carry it forward
Dharma not in the words but the space they wrap around
The tiger – spring; the gazelle – leap forward in joy of seeing
Knowing; telling it like it is
The bear – like stand on the line and saying I don’t retreat
The wolf- like gleam of an eye outside the camp circle
Outside the little ring of light where they thought they knew it all
A storm of thoughts and words that spins up and flies
In the energy of the soul
Your storm that they said was always for tomorrow
The glacier creeping on unstoppable embedded with chisels and gouges
The ice that started downhill when humans first came north
A glimpse through half closed eyes
And awareness pure and easy of the wholeness of it all
Reflections in each crystal piece
Of all the others reflecting then coming back
And knowing it can be like that on main street but you really have to mean it
Finding that gravity is bigger than politeness; more honest
That moment when you’re listening or watching or reading

When it all goes down the rabbit hole
And you see it’s forever only a beginning
The dance for joy from before joy itself
Where words and worlds already fit from before they were
The Periodic Table of all the souls and planets
Order that leaves surprises, like al –chemy
The Gas Laws of what we think it’s really like
Order with deviation because all the tiny bits really are there, hard
The Laws of nature that seem to say we apparently like hard journeys
That we have to pick and scratch until it bleeds
And, oh; humanity has bled and always the same colour
Those times when it changes so fast and the gyroscope is nudged
And has to wobble; gyroscope of our little world
Those times when the thinkers put on Saint Michael’s robe of light
Upset their followers by changing trains at the last minute
Hey you; I have bad news, you’re going to have to pack right now
Chuck away your old maps; this is like no trip you ever had
You were looking for order in yesterday’s truth in dry black ink
And it’s not like that and it never was
Dharma; the rippling order of the universe
The underlying fabric; the flag with all known prayers and equations
Forever being recited and rewritten
All the unpronounceable names of god or gods
The proofs of prime numbers that there is not time to write out longhand
The thing that does not fill all time and space
They fill it, nearly
The thing that casts shadows over what’s slower darker, cooler, denser
Like love or truth in the space that time and space can only point to
Yet we know it’s there; can point to the space between the notes
The space within the wrapping skein of words
It’s the thing that calls softly that we should look and see for once
See beyond the signboards, the little circle at the camp fire
Beyond the slight radiance of prophets and presidents
It’s the page it all gets written on; the utterings of sages and seers
The declarations of divine right and eternal piety
That our version is best – honestly
The order of the universe
And then, the words; just marks; expulsions of air
To describe what has already happened; already gone
That dizziness that comes when you try to say what
cannot be said
And know you must be here, now, because it’s all there is
Dharma; the order of the universe; uncaptured
Lightly brushed with the fingertip of the love of the soul
Singing like electricity; springing in the moment that’s
already past
That was, is and ever shall be; world without end
And on the edge of the great blue tapestry, there we are
Tiny light flecks of dust shining in the light
Of the love of life and love and brighter than stars
Temporary; up-tempo; tiny sparkles to burn bright and
brief and only once
And try to tell it like it is

© Mike Bovingdon, 2007
Senior Technician, Pharmacology Department (involved in
undergraduate and medical student practical teaching)