

ZEN INKLINGS



Satish 

Zen of stillness in movement / SATISH GUPTA



© 2019, ZAZEN / SATISH GUPTA

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN XXX-81-12345-XX-A

Designed by Rajeev Gupta / Spirit Designs
Printed at Ajanta Offset

FULL CIRCLE BOOKS

Address

Address

Phone

Website

ZEN INKLINGS

SATISH GUPTA

includes a dialogue with Roger Connah



Praise for ZEN INKLINGS

**Visionary, meditative and lyrical
as always. Flashes of dream and
glimpses of heaven.**

COME CARPENTIER DE GOURDON

*Author and convener of the editorial board of
World Affairs Journal*

**Experiencing the artistry of
Satish, and the evocative images
of stillness in the midst of action
— is an inspiration and path to
practice Zen/ Dhyana.**

SHANTUM SETH

*A Buddhist practitioner and an ordained teacher
(Dharmacharya) in the Zen tradition of Vietnamese
Master Thich Nhat Hahn*

**The use of ink in Satish
Gupta's works – a precious
commodity of the East
– becomes an almost
supernatural process,
it allows an aesthetic
conditioning which in
turn leads to spiritual
illumination of each living
being, to the purification of
the soul and body.**

ASTRID NARGUET

Curator based in Rome and China

Satish Gupta has a way of imbuing his Haikus and brush-strokes with inner landscapes and insights. They chain react in burst full of thought-pearls. Just a few words, but like sutras, they are able to conjure a whole wisdom and revelation which scatter within our minds in thousand delightful understandings.

RAMLI IBRAHIM

Malaysia-based Odissi exponent and a cultural icon

Maestro Satish Gupta in his “Zen Inklings” emphasises rigorous self-control, meditation-practise and insight into the nature of things. It is his personal expression of this insight in daily life, especially for the benefit of others. It favours direct understanding through spiritual practise.

RALF EPLAK MENCIN

Chair ICOM/ICME (International Committee of Museums of Ethnography); Curator of Asia, Australia and Oceania Slovene Ethnographic Museum

A meditative and cosmic aura reverberates through these exquisite Inklings, Zen and Haiku creations authored by globally celebrated artist Satish Gupta.

The deep-rooted aesthetics of his work be it in terms of its concept or mode, matter and manifestation, create a magic that touches one’s heart and mind alike.

SUSHMA K. BAHL

Independent arts advisor, writer and curator; formerly, Head, Arts & Culture, British Council India





Dance of the brush / Satish Gupta

Zen of stillness in movement

These Zen Inklings which manifested themselves on my canvas over four decades in different parts of the world, are about epiphany – special moments when I am blessed to experience the magnificence of life on a deeper level.

In these troubled times, when we are confronted with climate change, hatred, fear, violence and division, when there seems to be no hope, that it's important to think deeply about our place in the universe and about the preciousness of life. About there being no duality and the Oneness of it all.

Perhaps we have stopped looking inwards and are too distracted and occupied with the mundane to take the time to reflect on what is of value for the spirit.

And when we do, it's often too late. For our sanity and world peace it is essential that we are at peace with ourselves first – only then can we bring transformative change and survive as a species.

With this awareness, I started on a journey into the beyond with my pen, brush & ink noting down fleeting thoughts – sudden insights that arise in my mind, noting them on sketchbooks or on scraps of paper that were at hand, sometimes while flying, on my boarding card, sometimes on a napkin, sometimes even on the sand on a beach or with my finger on a frosted mirror.

The style of the drawings is inspired by what the Japanese call Zenga, where the form is only suggested and the idea is completed in the viewer's mind, thus leading to many open ended interpretations.

When I give these ink-lings visual form with a few gestural strokes in ink, is when I am deeply in touch with my inner self and with the Divine. Spontaneous calligraphy is tremendously liberating. When painting the sky, I become the sky, while painting the sea, I become the sea, while painting emptiness,

I am emptiness. That's when I feel completely free of any bondage, my heart beats faster, my pulse races as my brush dances in wild abandon. I don't think of anything else at that moment but of just being in touch with life and the sheer joy of being alive!

Quite often the creative process is reversed.

The forms that take birth – while I am deeply immersed in meditative music, and painting – themselves evoke the words.

It is most satisfying when the image and the words arise together and merge into each other.





ZENGA



A dialogue with Roger Connah

ZENGA

Roger Connah / Satish Gupta

When stillness cannot
hide its movement,
when movement cannot deny flow,
I seem to breathe lighter...

*There is no going
there is no coming —
flow river, flow*

Let us continue our exchanges in the middle of something else. If we take brevity to invite something deeper, even the frailty of existence, how do we also enjoy the paradox of brevity? The ecstasy of no further communication is not a paradox beyond us. Perhaps it never was. It's not so much that I have an image in my head, which by this stage in Zen terms is headless, it is the bliss I feel when writing the following words to begin a very slender book of poems over 30 years ago. "You must not think you have me in so many words."

My Zen journey began more than thirty years back and I started jotting my thoughts down, writing haikus, making drawings, calligraphing images which captured their essence. After several years I wanted to compile them in a book and I gave the manuscript along with the drawings to a friend to edit. She took a long, long time doing so... I got a bit apprehensive about losing the manuscript and requested her to return it to me for a day to photocopy, after which I promised to return the leather bag in which they were packed back to her. She got into a taxi the next afternoon for my home but just when she got into the car she got a call that her grandmother had died in Kolkata.

She stopped on the way to give the news to her cousin, got off the taxi after paying the fare and let it

go with the leather bag still in it. I searched and searched for the taxi, contacted taxi companies, had a reward for the return of the bag advertised in the newspapers...to no avail. The taxi driver perhaps threw my manuscript and just saved the leather bag. The only thing of value he found.

I was very sad about losing years and years of work, till a wise friend asked me why I had given the manuscript to my friend. For editing, I replied. Well, he said, be happy, it's been edited. Whatever was of value is saved in your mind, whatever was worthless you will forget. So slowly the words, the images keep visiting me like ghosts from the past and have manifested themselves into ZEN INKLINGS.

Ghosts from the past! Sometimes we feel we don't speak enough

which – paradoxically – might be why we cannot speak any longer. The epiphany lies in wait. As does erasure. I don't think I can talk of the 'true' ecstasy of words. But what is this journey that frees us of any communication?

Yes, words are needed for communication but it's important to be aware of the delete button...I think there is a necessity for erasure, just like in my story about the manuscript above where there was an erasure which cleaned everything from the past, erasure is healthy. It is vital to be able to erase something from our memory... from our consciousness, what if we couldn't?

If we couldn't erase, what then of those are temples, deserts, oceans into which we might have gone together. By not erasing, do we reach a depth we cannot measure by troubled times?

That's possible. On a recent trip to Hampi (the great city in ruins) I noticed how the massive rocks were polished through eons

by the wind, erasing what was unnecessary, just leaving us the seeds, the jewels to treasure.

Does the sea ever get thirsty? We might ask. I have an insatiable thirst, to discover the hidden temples of knowledge, to go beyond the known. Talking of deserts, I remember spending a freezing night on the Thar sand dunes, lighting a small fire with camel dung to keep warm and gazing at the astounding sky above.

I had just gone through a major Surgery and was very charged emotionally. I was drawing by starlight and to help me see better, my guide, the camel man lit a lantern and these words came to my mind:

*Each time
my lantern flickers
I look up at
the flickering stars*

Suddenly there was a connection with the immediate present and its transient nature- the flickering

of the flame - and the vast eternal time, and yet its transient nature too - the flickering of the stars and the cosmos. I forgot my worries and preoccupations and was ecstatic with the Awareness of this reality.

Here the ecstatic invites us to speak of ambiguity and paradox. Neither should startle us today.

No, this is not startling. We cannot experience ecstasy if we are secretive, if we are always hiding, hiding from life, hiding from ourselves... taking shelter behind words...

*The moment we reveal ourselves
without hesitation,
we merge with the divine
– Mongolia*

A haiku is traditionally a Japanese poem; three short lines that do not necessarily rhyme. But isn't that rhyming somewhere within?

*Water flowing
no time to pass judgment
on uneven boulders*

There is no rhyming in my haikus, but yes there is an inner rhythm, a space in the mind where the words and their essence resonate. Being a painter I take this further merging words, image and calligraphy as in a Zenga.

In Zenga, yes, both calligraphy and image are used within the same piece. Space is always an element of the 'true' path. Which is reassuringly ambiguous. Where ambiguity is precise.

Reassuringly, the use of words, calligraphy and image in Zenga reinforce each other. There is an intense dialogue between them, but it is the ambiguity of space which makes us wonder, which intrigues us ... Isn't all Art ultimately about Space? How the space is entered, divided, experienced- specially the negative space, the empty space... the silence. Even with my little understanding of quantum mechanics I know that

most of the universe is just empty space. I delve a lot into that...

*Nothingness comes
from Nothingness
what else is there?
Enjoy!*

Buddha's first sermon where he just twirled a flower without speaking a word, Is a deeply profound parable. His twirling of the Lotus was only understood by Mahakashyapa who just smiled - there was a silent communication between the two and he became the disciple to whom Buddha transferred all his wisdom. The value of silence cannot be overstated.

If the brush stroke is a painting, and the painting is characteristically simple. Is the simplicity bold, is the boldness abstract, is the abstract pure? Bliss?

*My offering
to the Wind Gods
a line sketched
across the sky
Like mist,*

*bliss is all pervading —
it's up to you to experience it*

An old silent pond...
A frog jumps into the pond,
splash! Silence again. (Basho)

Where does the haiku leave
the silent reader, jumping into
pond of Zen Inklings?

*Supposing the frog
jumped into the ancient pond
and there was no sound.
What would I hear?*

Perhaps hearing the shape of
water, ecstasy is completed
in our own minds?

*Does the wave
before dissolving
on the shore
question its destiny?*

If we trace the haiku back to
the 9th Century, can we ask
Rumi to offer some response
from the 12th century? More
than poetry, more than...

I am a man's shadow,

I am his measure.
How much is his stature?
That much am I. (Rumi)

As an homage to Rumi I wrote this haiku when I visited Konya and had the most exhilarating experience watching the whirling dervishes.

*Be still mind
let the Dervishes whirl!*

All of us, Buddhas within,
speculating on our own existence...

All of us are Bodhisattvas
(enlightened beings) but we are not
aware of it. We just have to awaken
our compassion and we are on the
way.

Frailty enters, before the age of 10.
Something to die for?

I have had first-hand experience
when I lost my father in a plane
crash when I was only four and a
half. I was left to my own devices
as there was very little money
and my mother was preoccupied
with taking care of the finances
and my siblings. To cope with

the tragedy and find an anchor I
started painting and won a prize at
five. I guess this experience made
me sensitive to things around me
and I started observing things more
deeply to make some sense out of
my shattered world...

Are there moments when if held,
would have tainted the body
and spilled onto the canvas?

*Blood in the
flowers vein
spilling on the
white, white snow,
the blazing sun
– Cincinnati*

And our contemporary deception?

The biggest contemporary
deception is that 'Truth is a lie',
'Ugliness is Beauty' – we are back
to the future...Orwell's 1984.

*If everybody
agrees upon
what is beautiful,
how ugly the world
would be
–Tiananmen Square*

What I see all around me in Art,
Music, film, literature is that the
uglier the expression, the more
seriously it is taken, which is just
the opposite the Zen concept of
Wabi and Sabi, where beauty is
found in the mundane, the simplest
things in life.

Even our most traumatic
encounters can be expressed in an
aesthetic way. The idea is to absorb
the intensity, distill it and only then
express it. My sculpture 'The
Buddhas Within' took eight years
to find expression after I escaped
from being washed away by the
Tsunami in Sri Lanka.

*After an intense
experience,
one must rid one's self
of any residue;
anything that creates ripples
in the still water of the mind,
till just the essence
- pure pain
or pure joy remains and
not the smoke, not the ash*

Undirected thinking is not thinking
without any destination. First to

sanity is a race we didn't consider last century. Now hope takes its own journey. How can we speak about generosity today?

*These iron bars
cannot
imprison
my wandering
thoughts
– Robben island*

Generosity is not only about giving away money or material things. It is about being generous with our time, it is about empathy and it is also about giving hope to a person in need, in whatever little way we can. It is also about receiving.

*It is easy to give
receiving gracefully
Is much more difficult*

In keeping with our individual paths towards enlightenment, can any subject matter lend itself to Zenga? Everything from a dog to a fluorescent tube, to a wedding procession, to Mt Fuji or Mt Nanda Devi?

Absolutely! One of my earliest haikus is about a snail.

*Noon,
shadow of a warm pebble
a snail hiding*

And the bliss of the incomplete?

*My unopened library,
the silverfish have eaten all
the wisdom*

Completion is death! There is great beauty in the process... the process is never complete, it is the ongoing interaction in this floating world, in this interdependent world – that interests me.

The dance of the brush stains on the page the un-erased...

I created a 1.6-kilometre-long calligraphy while dancing with the brush on the Tarmac road next to the sea in Pondicherry. For this I used Sumi ink. The strokes were created with a very large brush on the canvas which was rolled out over the entire length. At places

the ink seeped through the canvas. I discovered amazing images on the tarmac the next day when I rolled back the canvas. They were like beings from another world speaking in a language which I could barely understand. But somehow these images were very liberating ... perhaps released from my subconscious...

The incomprehensible – between Zenga and stroke, between word and calligraphy...

Incomprehensible by the logical mind perhaps, yes but if you drop logic and trust your intuitive mind, things become crystal clear.

*Autumn moonlight-
a worm digs silently
into the chestnut. (Basho)*

As the inner self sits nestled in the Divine?

Talking of inner self, there is group of five sculptures which I created where there is a play of the five elements enveloping a meditating figure — the eternal

self, contemplating its own divinity. The Meditator is the consciousness in touch with the universe and offering a spiritual potential. They are about our silent Mind-Space being the most precious thing... I treasure mine.

It is the transient nature of life which makes it so precious and beautiful. We just have to keep doing our Karma. I was in my mountain home in the Himalayas, gazing at a bird's nest surrounded by swaying bamboos when there was a huge thunderstorm, I rushed indoors but worried about the nest...

*Swaying
bamboos
in the storm,
straw by straw
the sparrow
keeps building
her nest*

A running dialogue with memory?

An artist or writer is the consciousness of the times, and as such, has tremendous

responsibility to keep the dialogue with memory alive.

Immersion – where image becomes word, and word saturates image?

It is an extraordinary feeling of Oneness with the universe and all life, when the words and the images merge, when there is no hesitation...it is the space where the in-breath and out-breath transform into each other. I recall Zeami, the Zen aesthete's poem:

*Pure air
nothing left
of the Cicada's song,
transformation upon
transformation,
I do not know
of a thousand years,
rather
let this moment
last forever*

The stroke of the brush, then expanding the death before us as it erases...

It is our search for immortality that prevents us from enjoying life in the

present, it is like wanting to hold our breath forever... I would like to summarise my life in just one stroke of the brush... one stroke that gives life to the empty Zen circle or the Shunya.

"All wisdom" Thomas Merton wrote, "seeks to collect and manifest itself at that blind sweet point." Where is that blind sweet point for you?

Listening to a child's laughter. As you grow older you, realise that you know very little, in fact, you know nothing at all, and if you know that you know everything that there is to know.

Water recalls itself, wave upon wave, offering a transformation... more than memory?

*A sum of my memories
— is it all that I am?*

In the sculpture, The Cosmic Wave, I tried to do just that... to slice a liquid, to shape it into slices of reality to be savoured at leisure.

What is without value?

More value that we need to re-
discover, More than our memory?

According to Sozan the Zen
Master, it is a dead cat's head,
simply because no one can name
its price.

Words can defeat us, but
in no ordinary way.

*Each person's
silence is unique
— just like their voice*

Separating ash from ash, the
briefest moment. That blind sweet
point, separating life from death?

*This road of destiny,
does it lead you somewhere?
Or does it take you
wherever to will it to go?*

After we cremated my mother, we
went to collect the ashes to be
immersed into the Ganges. It was
midnight, I was bare chested due
to the heat, my brothers and I were
sieving the bones from the ashes
by pouring milk over them, pouring
from one container to the other

as we didn't want to leave even a
little particle of my mother behind.
Many of these specks clung to
my body like the Milky Way above
me, before life and death merged
into a continuum, there was no
separation...

In the twilight rain
these brilliant-hued hibiscus -
A lovely sunset. (Basho)

I would only like to add:

*Dusk,
a lone hibiscus
burning with fire
- the scarlet sea*

Can you say something about the
use of Red in this book...the red
thread which binds the pages?

The Zengas are mostly in Black
and White, so to balance that I
put the text of the Haiku / poems
in white on red pages, and the
Red thread of passion which
runs through them, which links
beautifully with Ikkyu, the Japanese
monk's sect.

Red Thread Zen? From
Ikkyu the wanderer monk
from the 15th century?

Yes, red thread stands for passion
and non-duality. Passion can be
a road to enlightenment. The Red
Thread Zen resonates with my
life intimately, probably closest to
my philosophy. I feel that a lot of
people act holier than thou, just
follow rituals without understanding
what they mean, just burning
incense in front of a Buddha image
and chanting mantras mindlessly
is not going to get you anywhere,
certainly not achieve Satori!

Ikkyu was a rebel and he didn't
want to preach to the monks in
a monastery because they had
become focused on hierarchy and
lost their soul. He walked out and
preached on the streets and in
brothels, to prostitutes, criminals
and to laymen, as they needed it
most. Also because he believed
that enlightenment was with us
already and we could realise it
anywhere, not only in a monastery.

Is this where lived experience not

lifestyle provides the enlightenment?
Is this a sacred ordinariness?
From the street to the brothel?

Yes, I heard the story of another monk called Bobo Roshi when I visited Japan many years ago. Enlightenment was attained when he made love to a prostitute after being unable to experience Satori in the monastery over many years. During the ecstasy of orgasm, he was totally aware of each instant which normally does not happen... when you are in that state you lose yourself completely. There is a temple dedicated to him with a lingam which in Japanese is Bobo.

The key here is passion, beyond renunciation? What sort of monk was Ikkyu and how does his own life and thinking resonate with yours?

His story is a lesson to us all. The way he challenged authority. It all links together, wisdom, compassion, the sacred and the profane... There no difference between the sacred and the profane, if we live each moment of our life mindfully.

Is it the creeping rigidity within Buddhism that we should try and avoid, that Ikkyu loosens?

Buddhism to me is all inclusive, it encompasses the teachings of the whole world, rather being divided into different sects and dogmas. We all have a Buddha nature, so enlightenment cannot be confined to those who live in monasteries, but I am aware of the need for daily practice and being mindful of every action we take...

Dharma for all then? The rest is all duality, back and forth? Bad actions with good intentions. More sacred than the other way around?

Yes, the main thing is intention, each situation can turn into its opposite. Love, adulterous, passion, lust. The terrorist and the martyr.

The core of Buddhism is having compassion, but if there is no passion in compassion it is sterile, then we are practising either out of fear, duty, habit or blindly. Life is about living and living fully...



SCOTT NORMAND

ROGER CONNAH

Associate Professor

Azrieli School of Architecture & Urbanism, Carleton University, Canada

Visiting Professor

Guangdong University of Technology, Guangzhou, China

International Chair

Sushant School of Art and Architecture, Ansal University, Gurgaon

ASCEND : DESEND / EXPAND : CONTRACT / **INHALE**
: **EXHALE** / SUPERNOVA : BLACK HOLE / STILL :
FLOWING / CHAOS : ORDER / DREAM : REALITY
/ HIDDEN : REVEALED / BIG : SMALL / PRISTINE :
ERODED / HARD : SOFT / ETERNAL : TRANSIENT /
DARK : LIGHT / CREATE : DESTROY / EMPTY : FULL /
DEATH : BREATH /

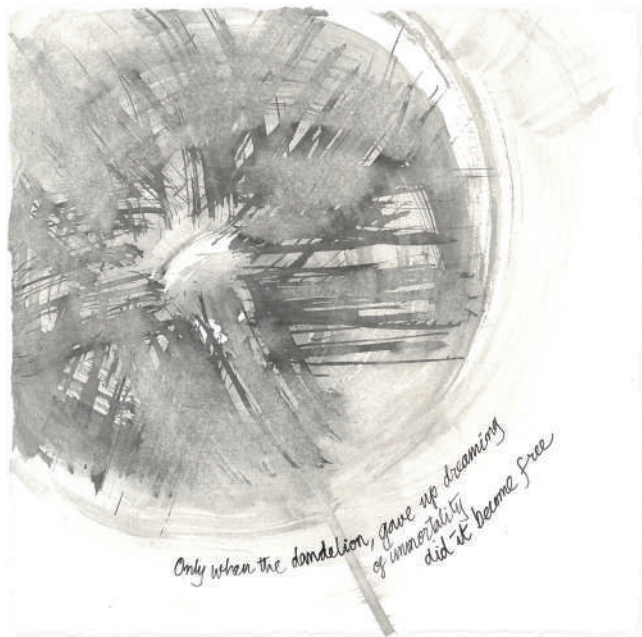
ONE. ONE. ONE!

INHALE

EXHALE

EXHALE

INHALE





*The Moon does not possess any light of its own, yet it shines & glows
because it gives back, the abundance it receives*

SARISH CHOPRA

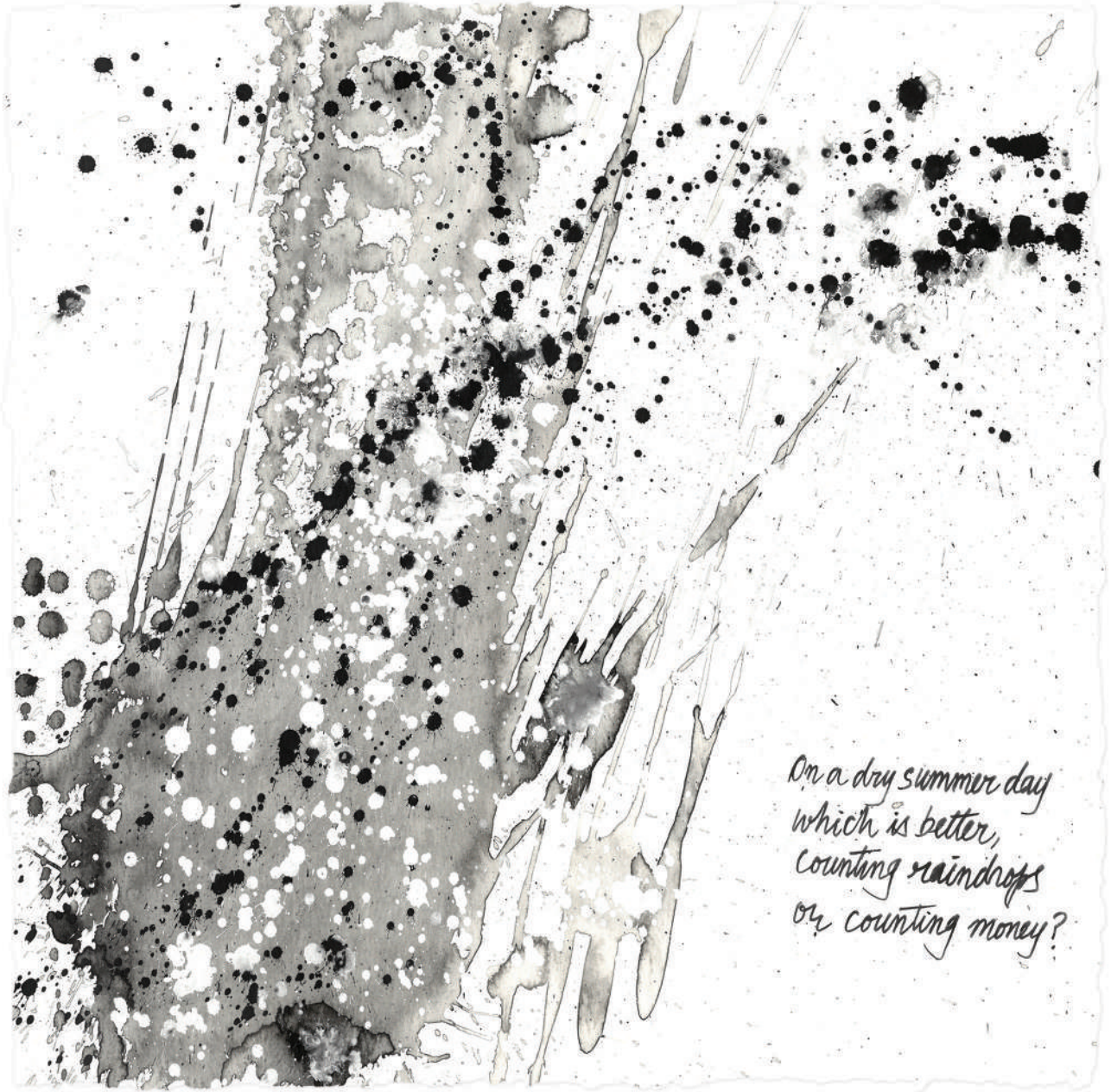
Zen Forest underbush, monk in deep meditation — restrained power of a tiger





*Our precious dreams,
just castles in the air
- but what treasures
within*





On a dry summer day
which is better,
counting raindrops
or counting money?



Like mist, bliss is all pervading - it's up to us to experience it.

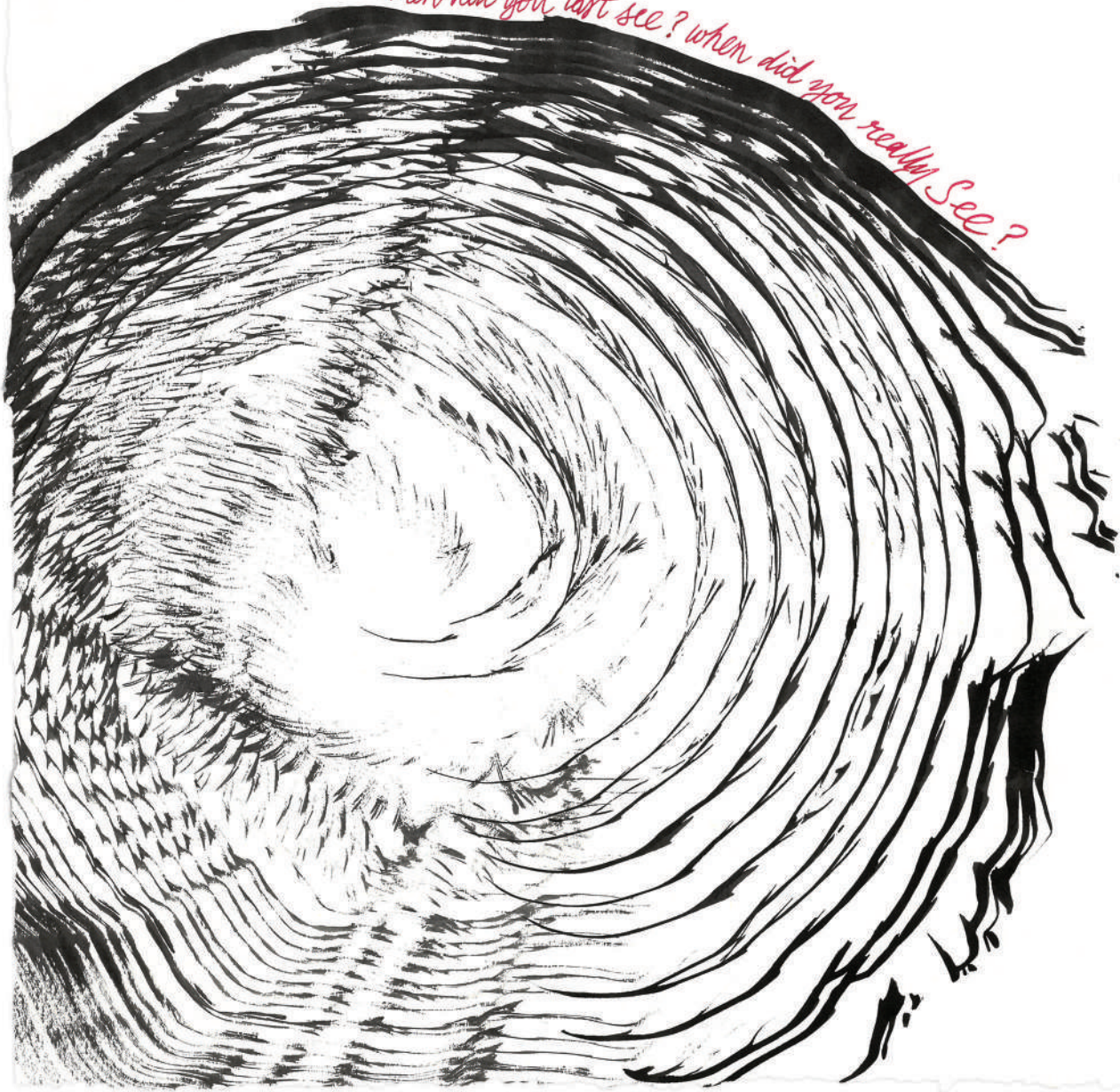
*is life just a meeting of
beautiful elements at random,*

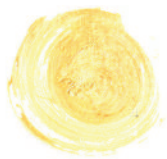
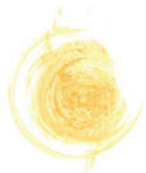
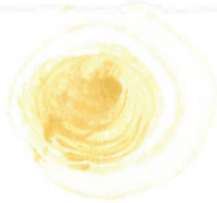
or is there an order in this apparent chaos?



At every turn there is a choice - choose wisely

when did you last see? when did you really see?





It's not easy
to give up something
that does not belong
to you



What we seek, we may find, what we don't seek - we will find




*Seeing wildfires
all around me,
I count my blessings
- the fire is
only in my
hearth*



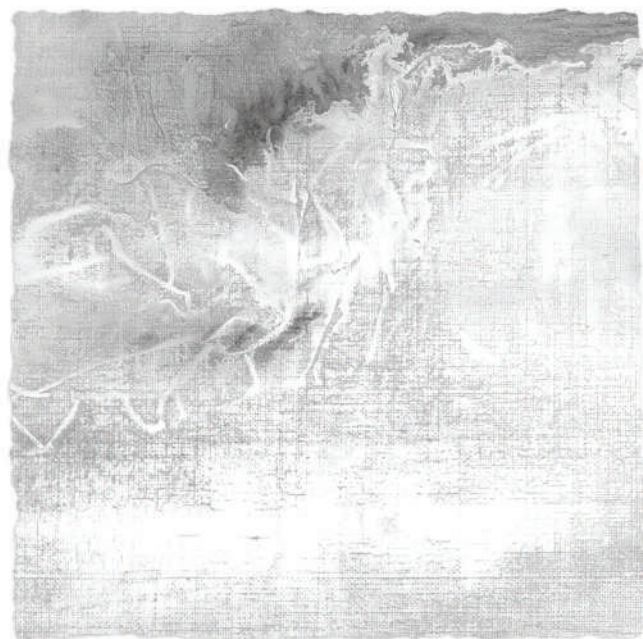
*Unbind
The slave
- to free yourself*



Bamboo grove,
my life
is an open secret
- just listen
to the gossiping birds!

An abstract artwork on a piece of torn, aged paper. The composition is dominated by sweeping, expressive brushstrokes. On the left, there are vertical, slightly wavy strokes in shades of yellow and light brown. On the right, there are more dynamic, curved strokes in black and white, creating a sense of movement and depth. The background is a mix of these colors, with some areas appearing more saturated than others. The overall effect is one of organic, naturalistic energy.

*Like wild grass, just sway with the wind to experience a great liberation
— a silent communion with the Divine*





And all the master
said in his last
sermon was
'One'





My mountain abode, fallen Rhododendrons on the tarmac
- Red carpet welcome for my special guests



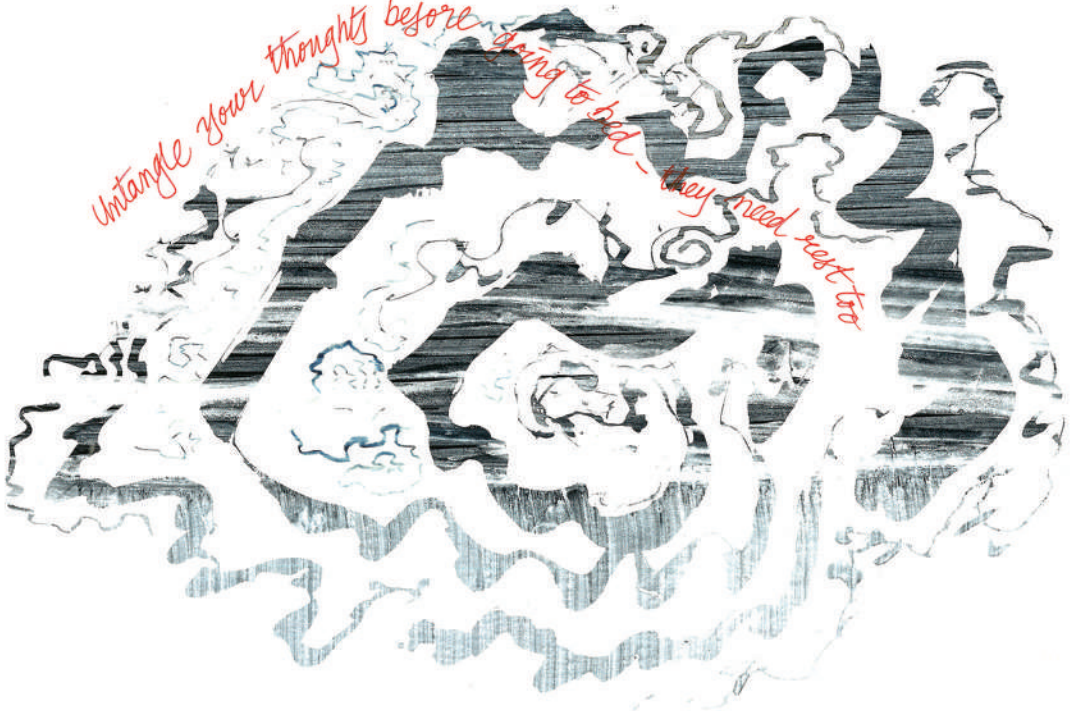
*White, white everywhere
rolling his first snowball
- my smiling son*



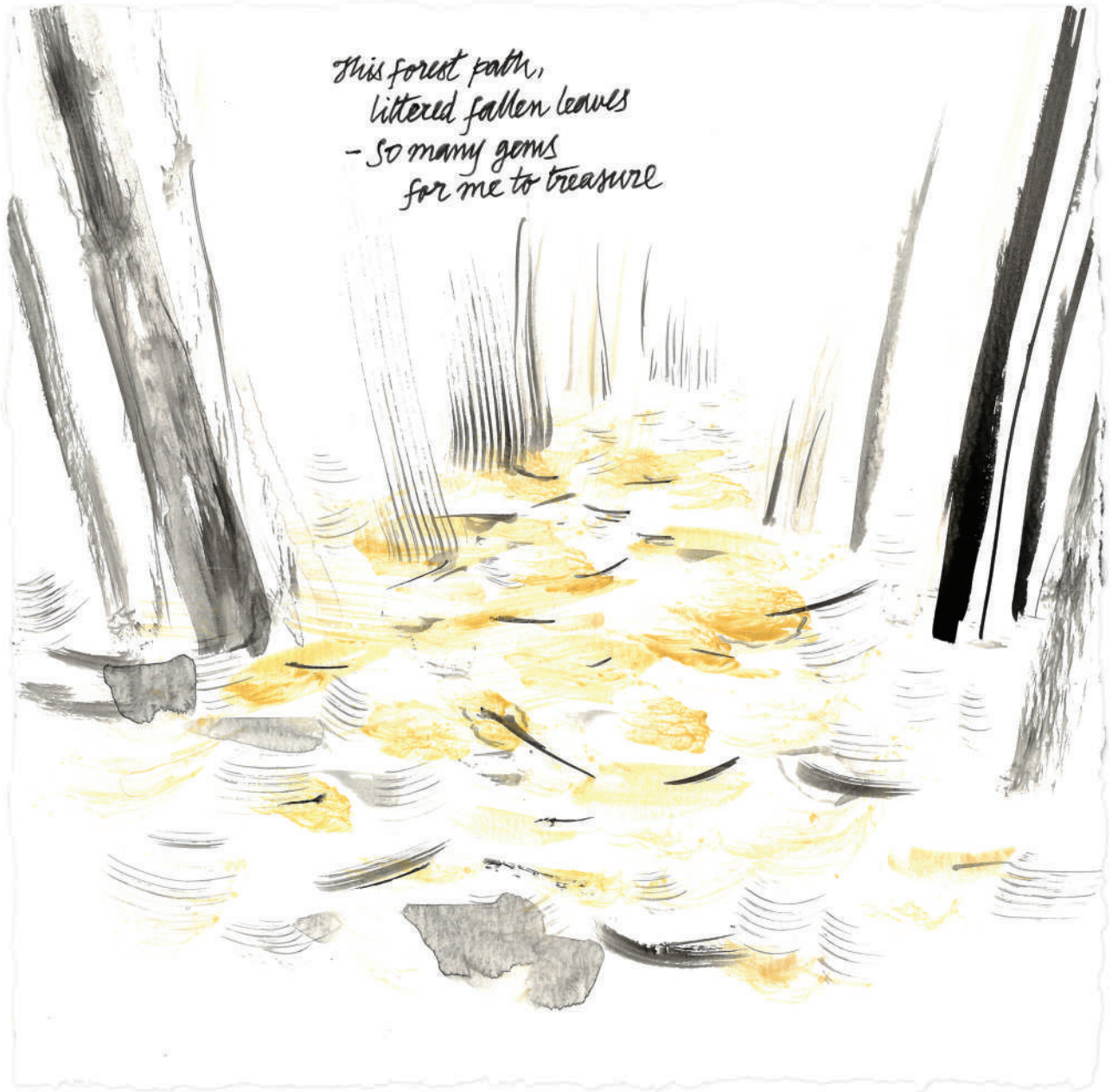


*In this cacophony
Some silent notes
- waiting to be heard*

*Untangle your thoughts before
going to bed - they need rest too*



*This forest path,
littered fallen leaves
- so many gems
for me to treasure*



A piece of white paper with a deckled edge. A large, thick black brushstroke is painted across the page, forming a wide, irregular shape. In the center of this black shape, a white rectangular area has been cut out. The text is written in white cursive within this white area.

*Water hardens into ice
- a little warmth
and it melts!*




Ah! Swinging
on the tree,
Soaking in the Monsoon
- my lost childhood

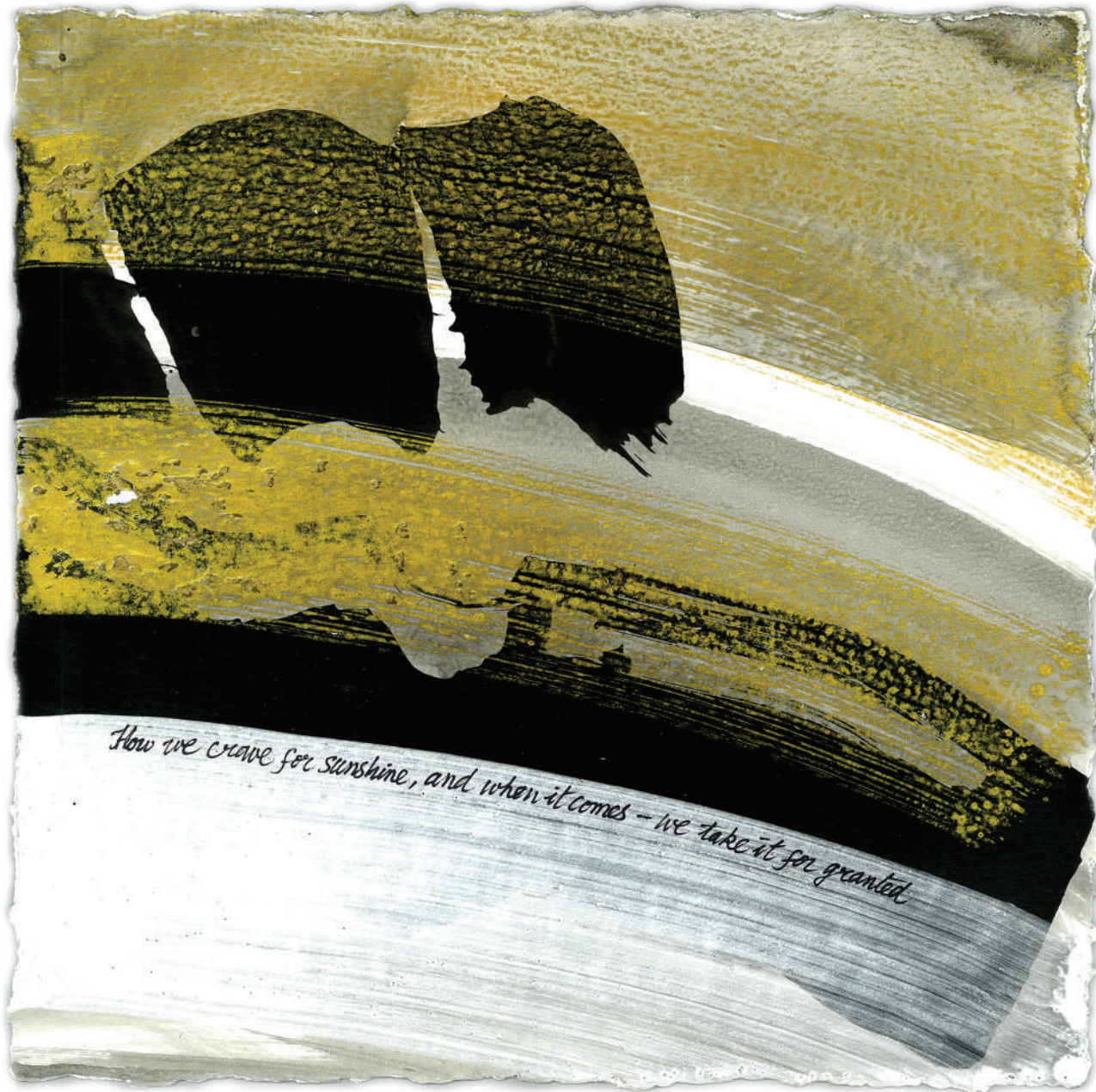




*Life is a Koan, a riddle which answers itself-
only if we let things Be*



*There must be a way
out of this maze
- the open sky!*



How we crave for sunshine, and when it comes - we take it for granted



Don't hold the precious Seed
in your fist -
plant it and let a whole
forest be!

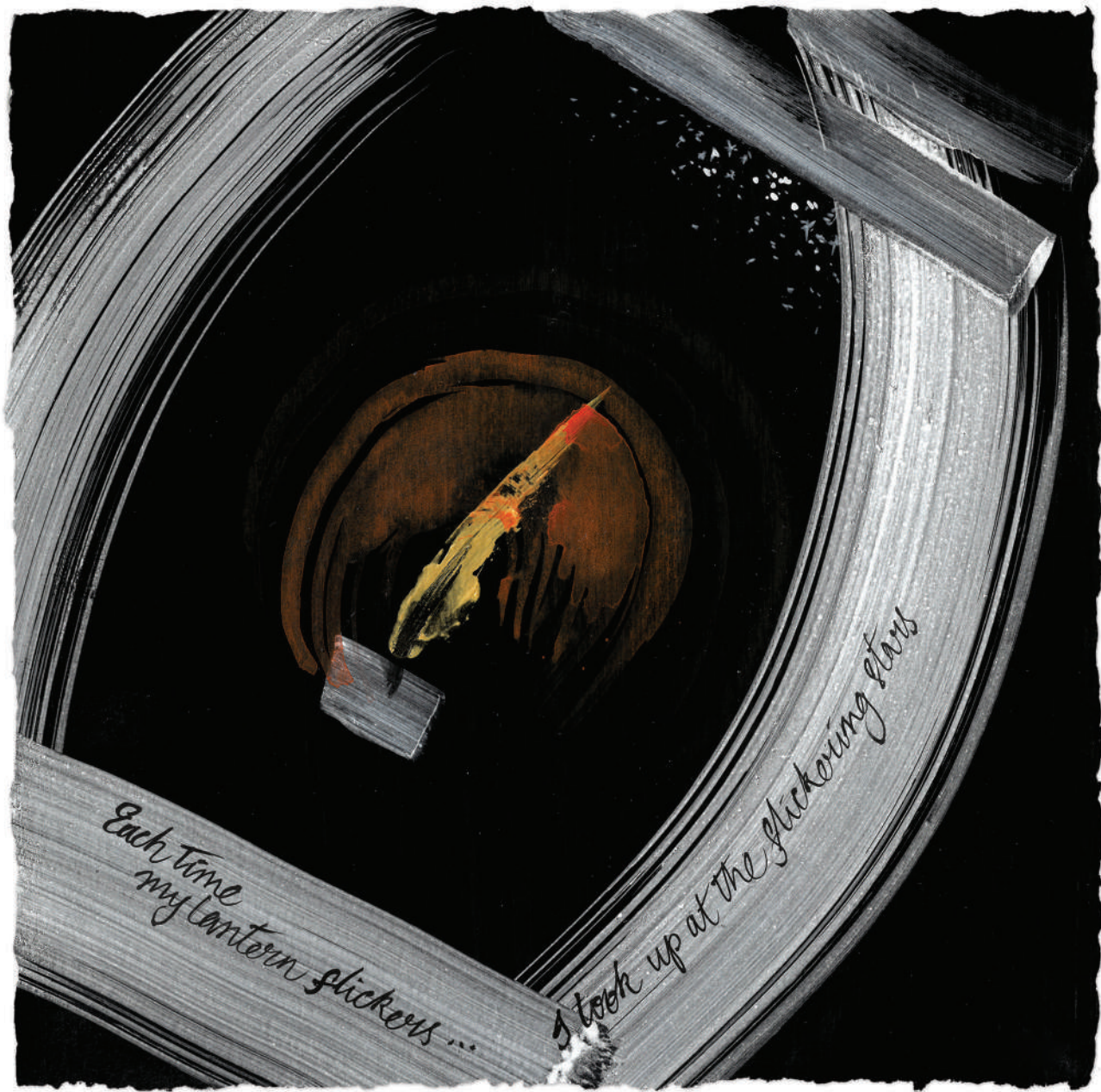


Pure, pure dewdrops,
will they reincarnate?
The holy water
- the vast sea?



*Found at last, my lost pen!
So many poems
clogging the ink*





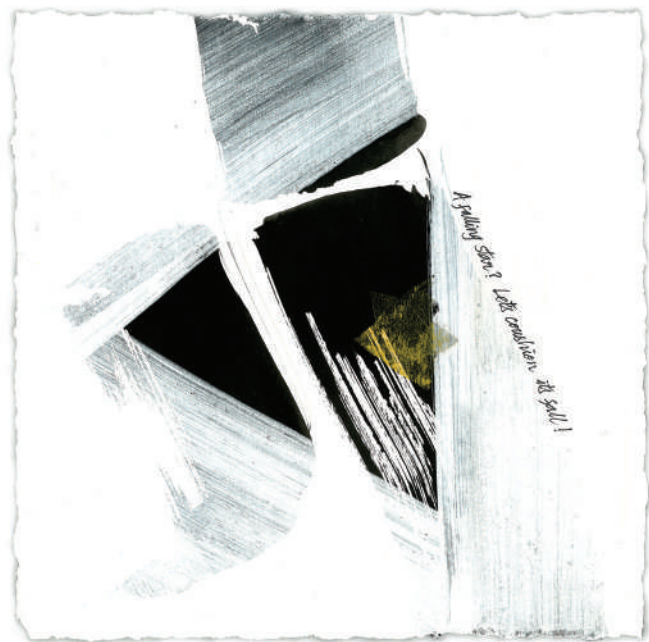
Each time
my lantern flickers...

I look up at the flickering stars





*Evidence
carved in stone
- a lovers Cry!*





Black tunnel, white snow - how they enter each other!

ASCEND : DESEND / EXPAND : CONTRACT /
INHALE : EXHALE / SUPERNOVA : BLACK HOLE
/ **STILL : FLOWING** / CHAOS : ORDER / DREAM
: REALITY / HIDDEN : REVEALED / BIG : SMALL /
PRISTINE : ERODED / HARD : SOFT / ETERNAL :
TRANSIENT / DARK : LIGHT / CREATE : DESTROY /
EMPTY : FULL / DEATH : BREATH /

ONE. ONE. ONE!

STILL

FLOWING

FLOWING

STILL



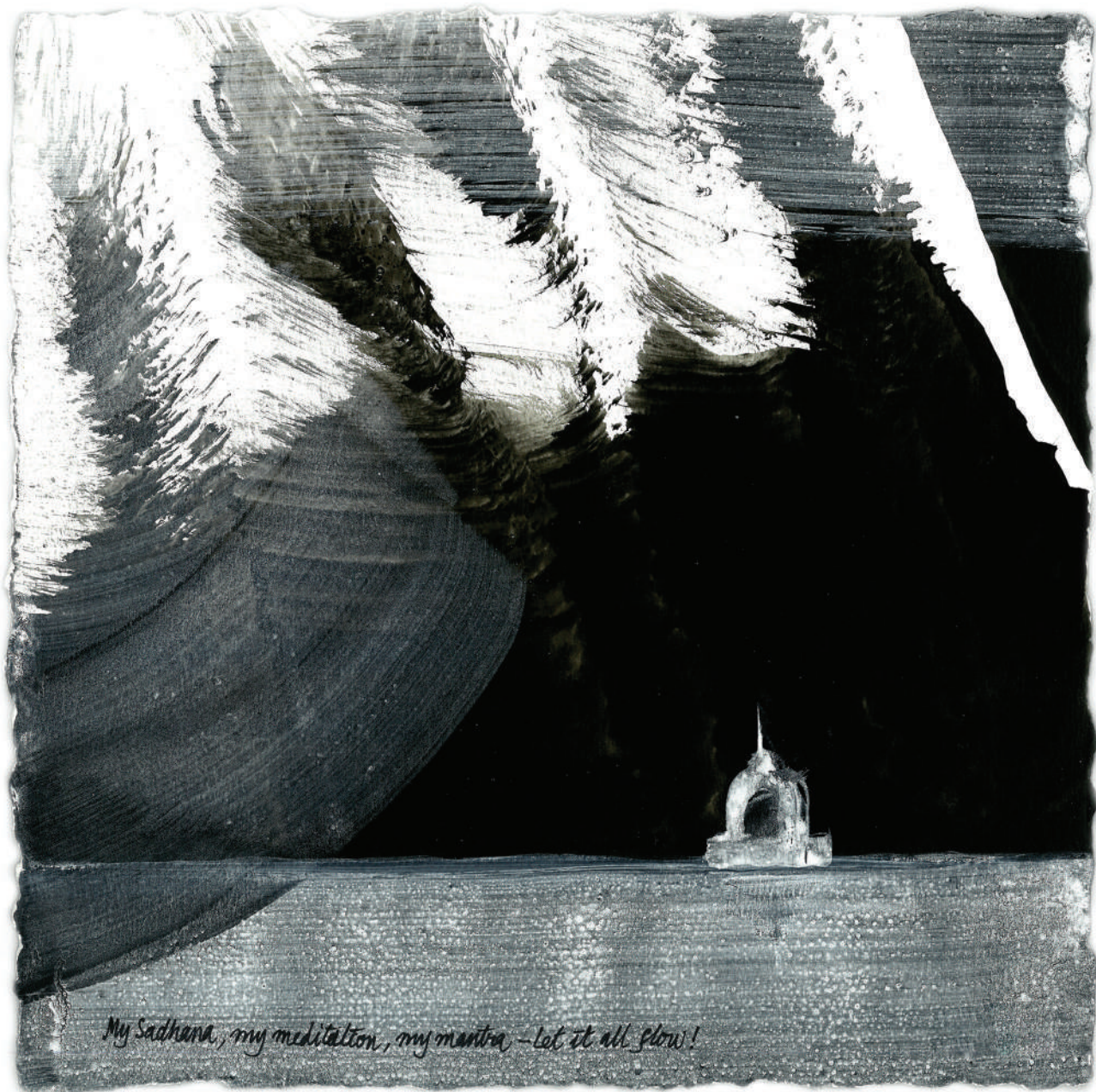


Flowing with the current? Sometimes you have to pause and resist

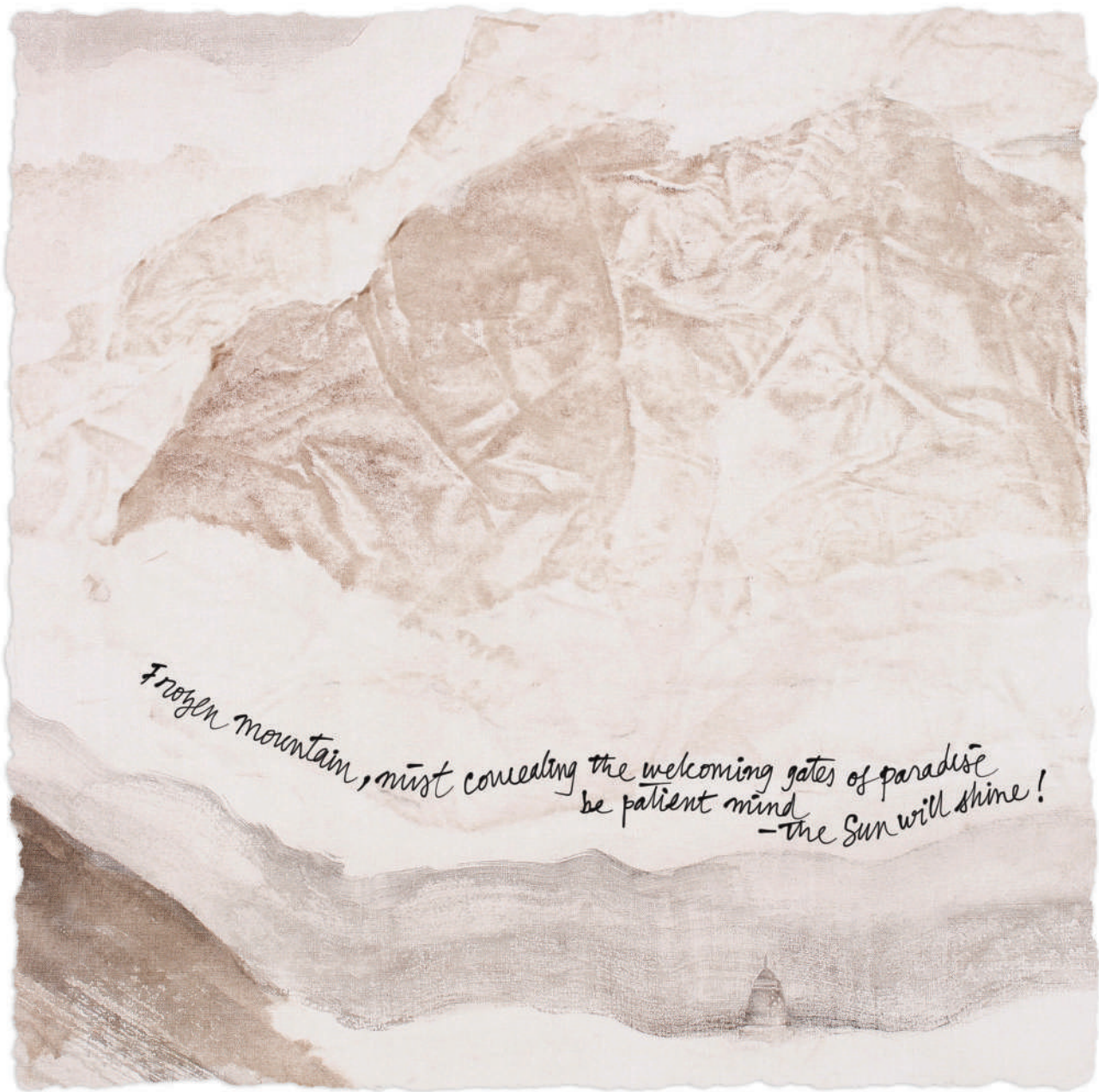


Damp prayer room
Ancient texts, wrapped in silk
- contemplating eternity

SATISH CH



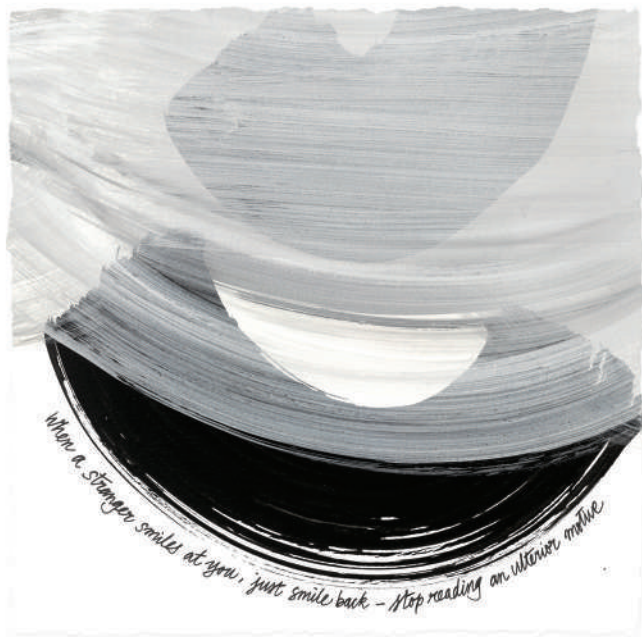
My Sadhana, my meditation, my mantra - let it all flow!



Frozen mountain, must conceal the welcoming gates of paradise
be patient mind
-the Sun will shine!



*Mist-clad valley,
Sound of a bell ringing
- The monks cannot
hide their presence*





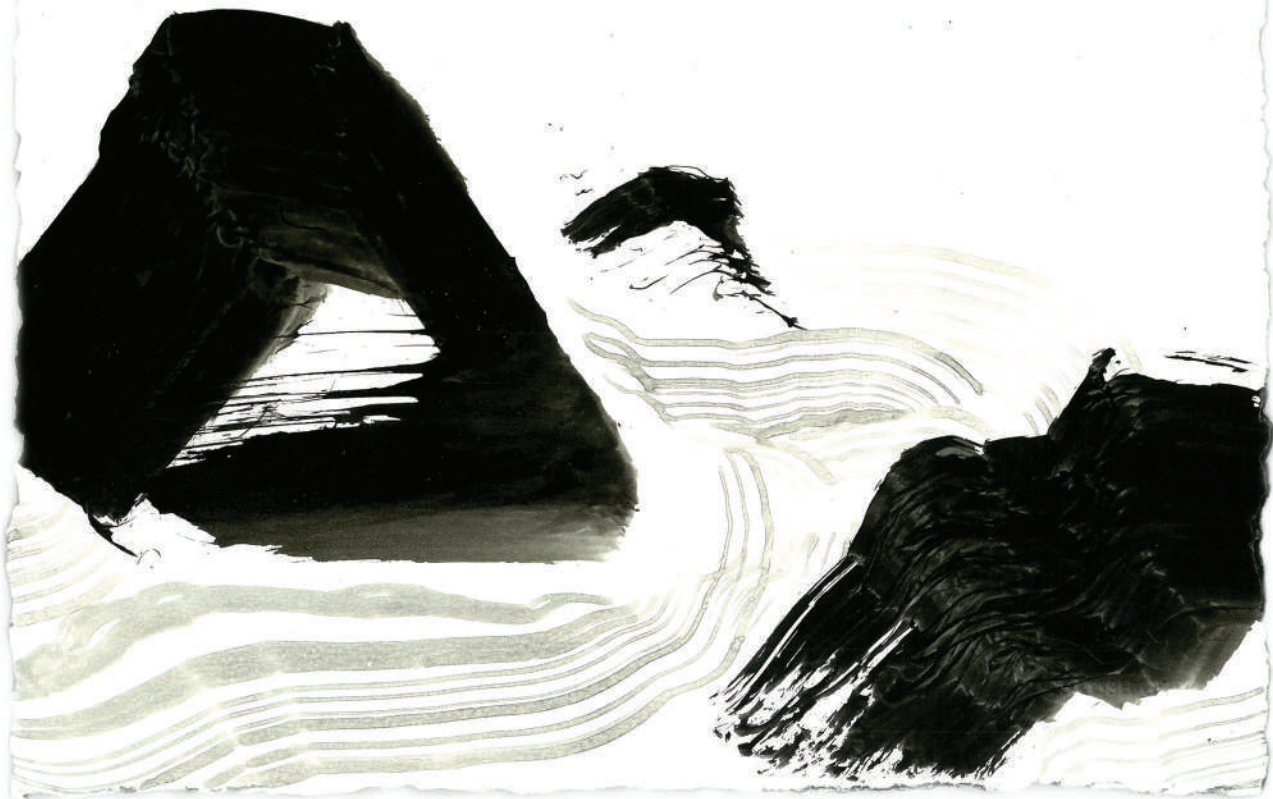



We met like two birds in mid flight, I to sunset - you to sunrise



Each moment is a new dawn
- Awaken
the Buddha mind

There is no coming
there is no going
slow river,
flow





Heavenly music is raining,
throw away your
umbrellas

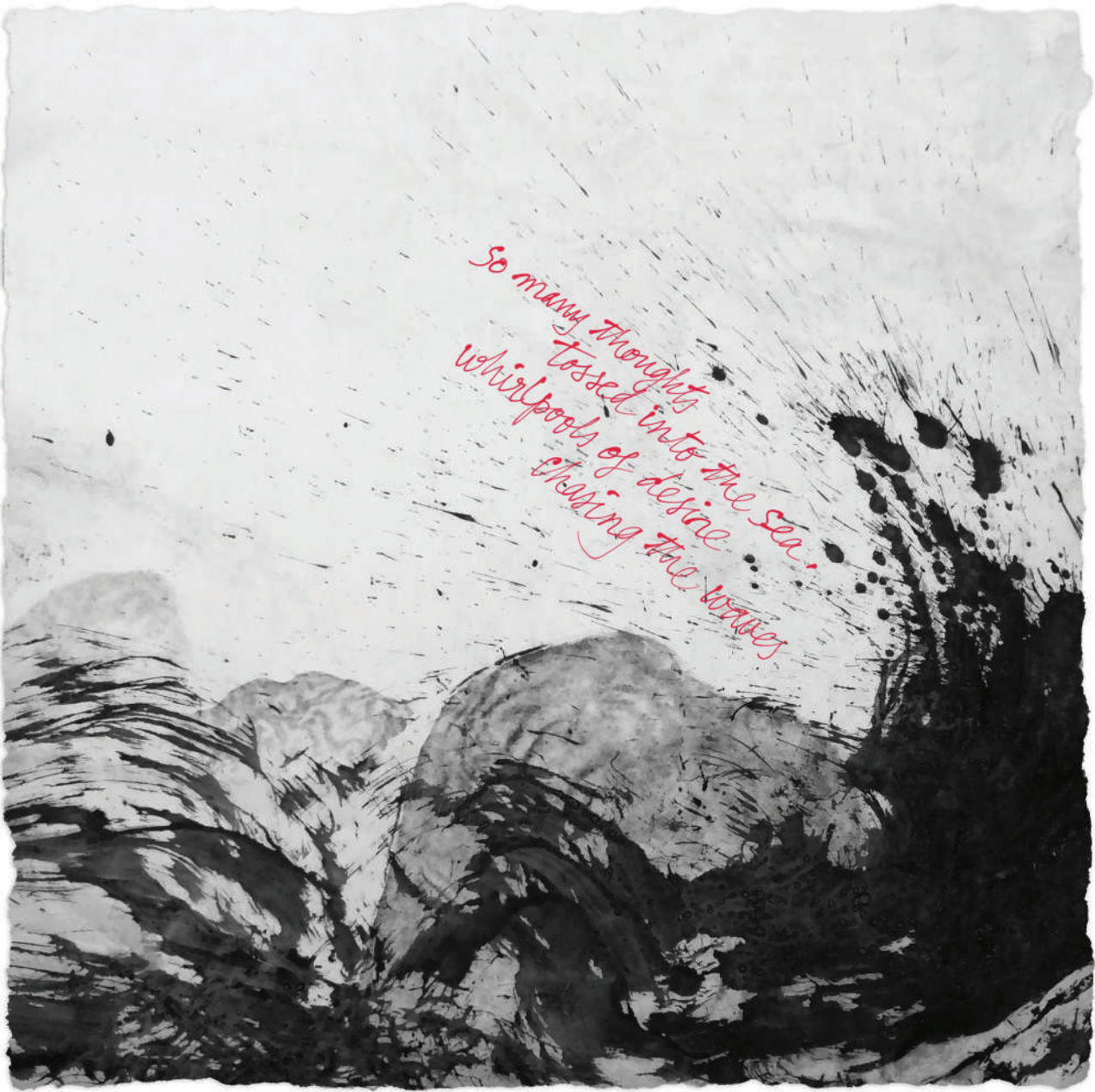


Roaring Sea
wave upon wave crashing
the monk in meditation
stills the waves



Life is about how intensely and fully we can live it
and when the moment arrives,
how beautifully we can let it go!



A black and white ink wash painting of a seascape. The foreground shows dark, swirling waves with fine, radiating lines. In the middle ground, there are large, rounded rocks or islands rendered with soft ink washes. The background is a light, misty sky with scattered dark ink splatters and fine lines, suggesting rain or falling leaves. A quote is written in red cursive across the upper right portion of the painting.

*So many thoughts
tossed into the sea,
whirlpools of desire
chasing the waves*




When you can just flow like a river
there is no need
to build bridges



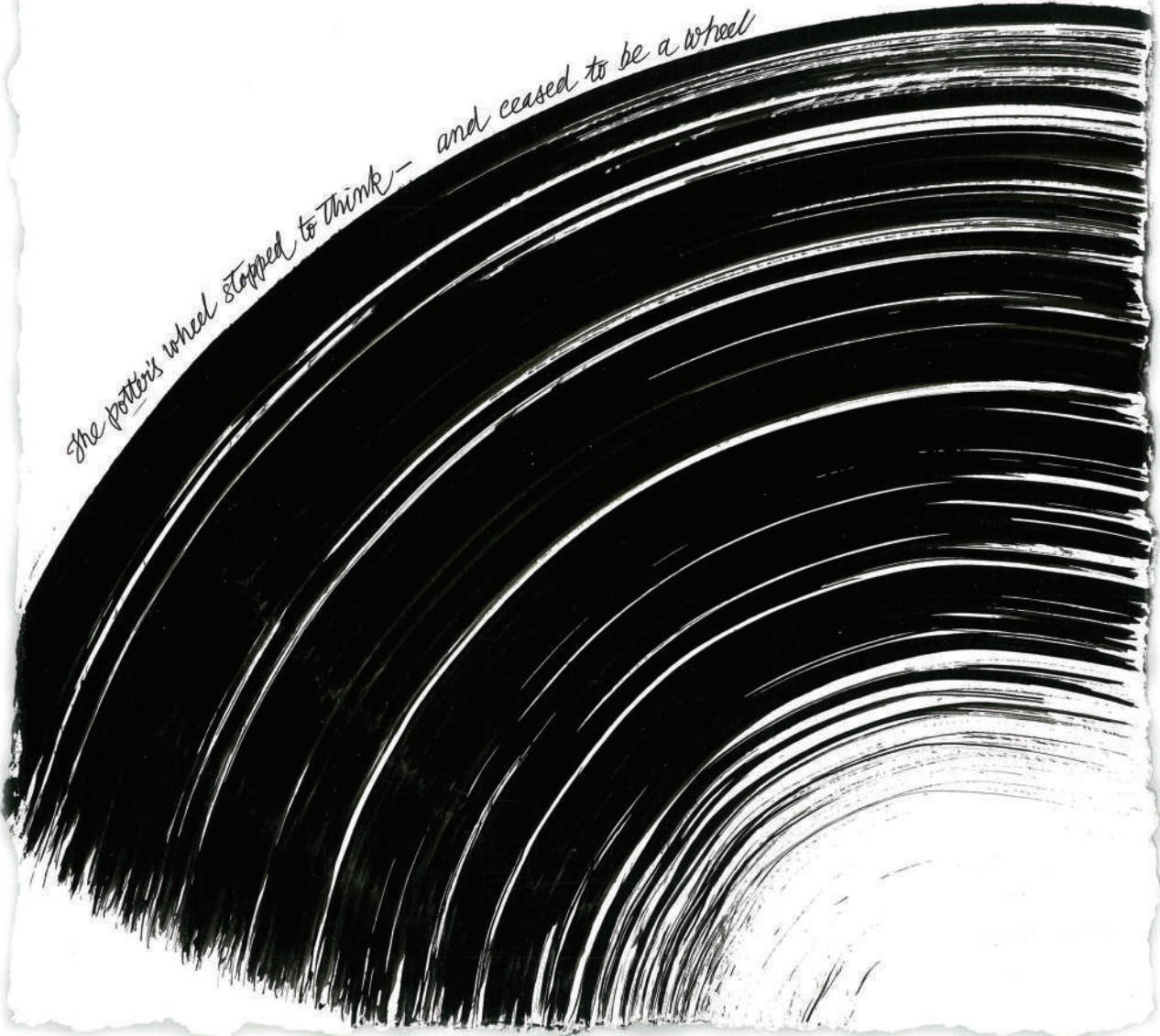
Landslide, mind sliding down
passes for a drink -

cool, cool
watersfall



*You can only reflect with a calm mind,
with a turbulent one —
everything downs*

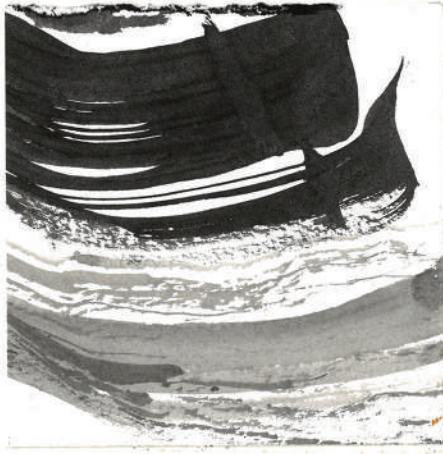
the potter's wheel stopped to think - and ceased to be a wheel





*Excavating
the stupa
after the earthquake
- escaped prayers engulf me*

*Eyes of dusk
gathering memories of the day - till another dawn*





Drink
don't hesitate
this water is pure
- I asked the waterfall



Thunder shower
Monsoon puddles
sailing the seven
seas.
- my paper boat

ASCEND : DESEND / EXPAND : CONTRACT /
INHALE : EXHALE / SUPERNOVA : BLACK HOLE
/ STILL : FLOWING / CHAOS : ORDER / DREAM :
REALITY / **HIDDEN : REVEALED** / BIG : SMALL /
PRISTINE : ERODED / HARD : SOFT / ETERNAL :
TRANSIENT / DARK : LIGHT / CREATE : DESTROY /
EMPTY : FULL / DEATH : BREATH /

ONE. ONE. ONE!

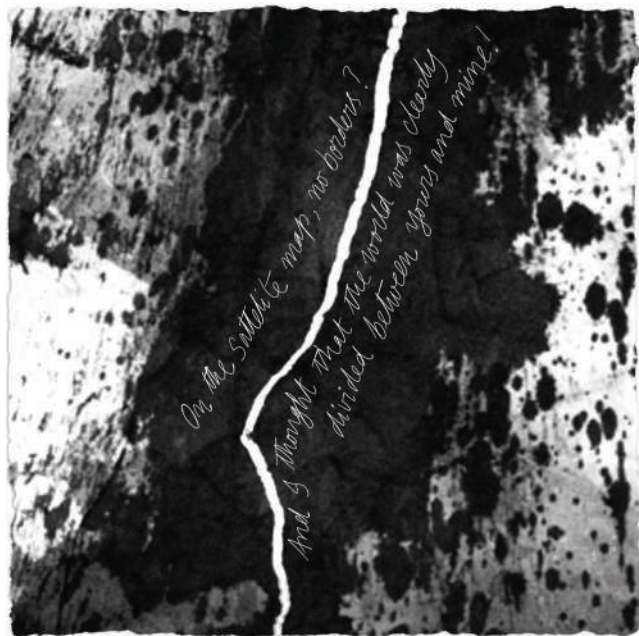
HIDDEN -
REVEALED
REVEALED
- HIDDEN



Monk
Contemplating his own divinity
days on end - grain by grain
sand trickles in the hourglass

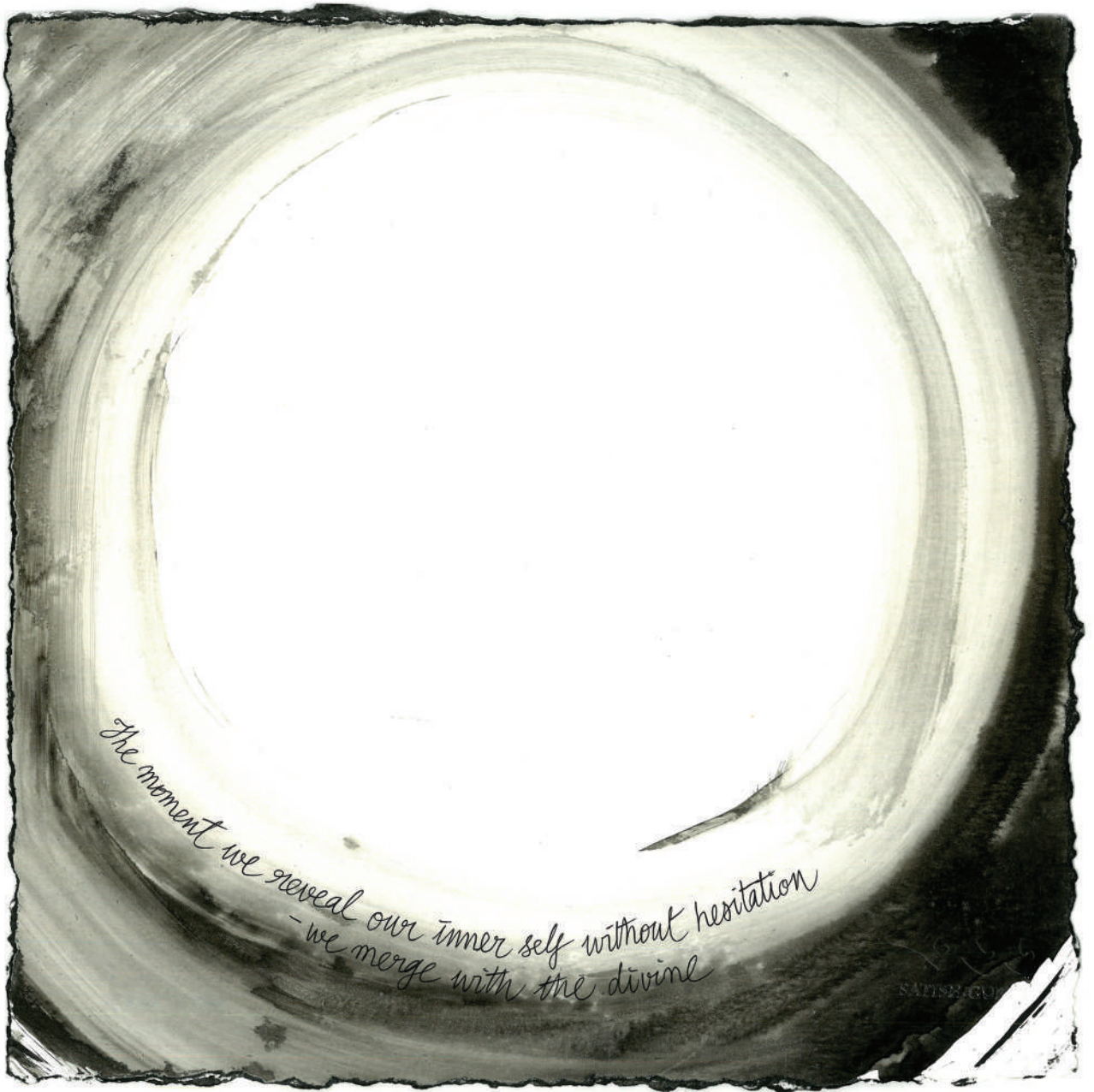


*Even a little
Spark of awareness
in this dark universe
can spread a luminous light*



On the satellite map, no borders?

And I thought that the world was clearly
divided between yours and mine!

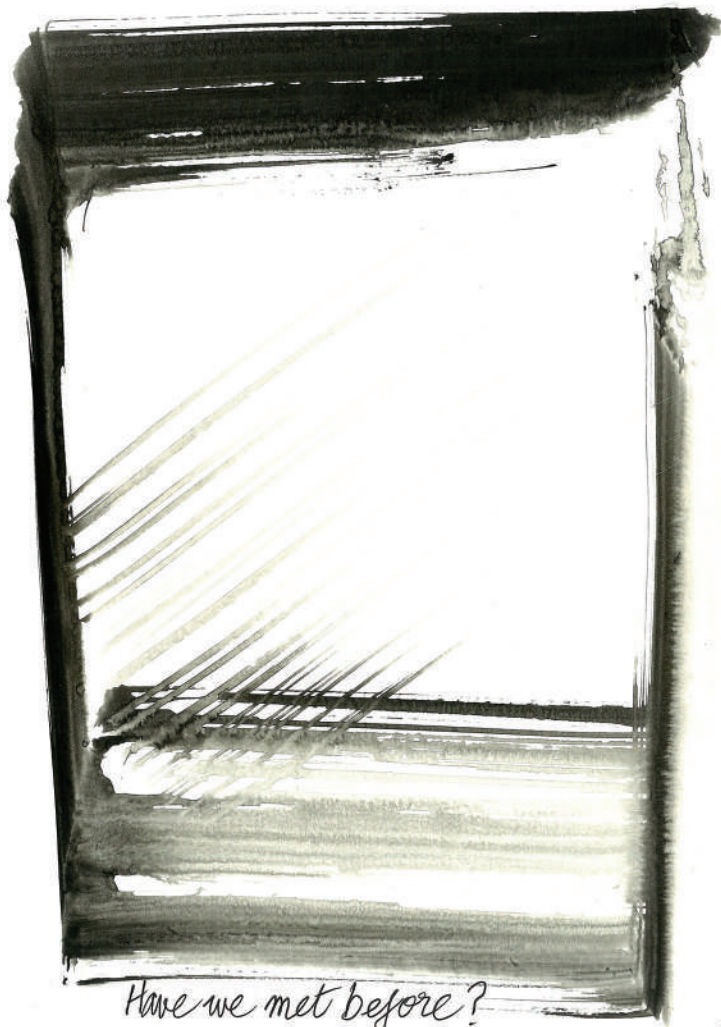


*The moment we reveal our inner self without hesitation
- we merge with the divine*

SATISH GUPTA



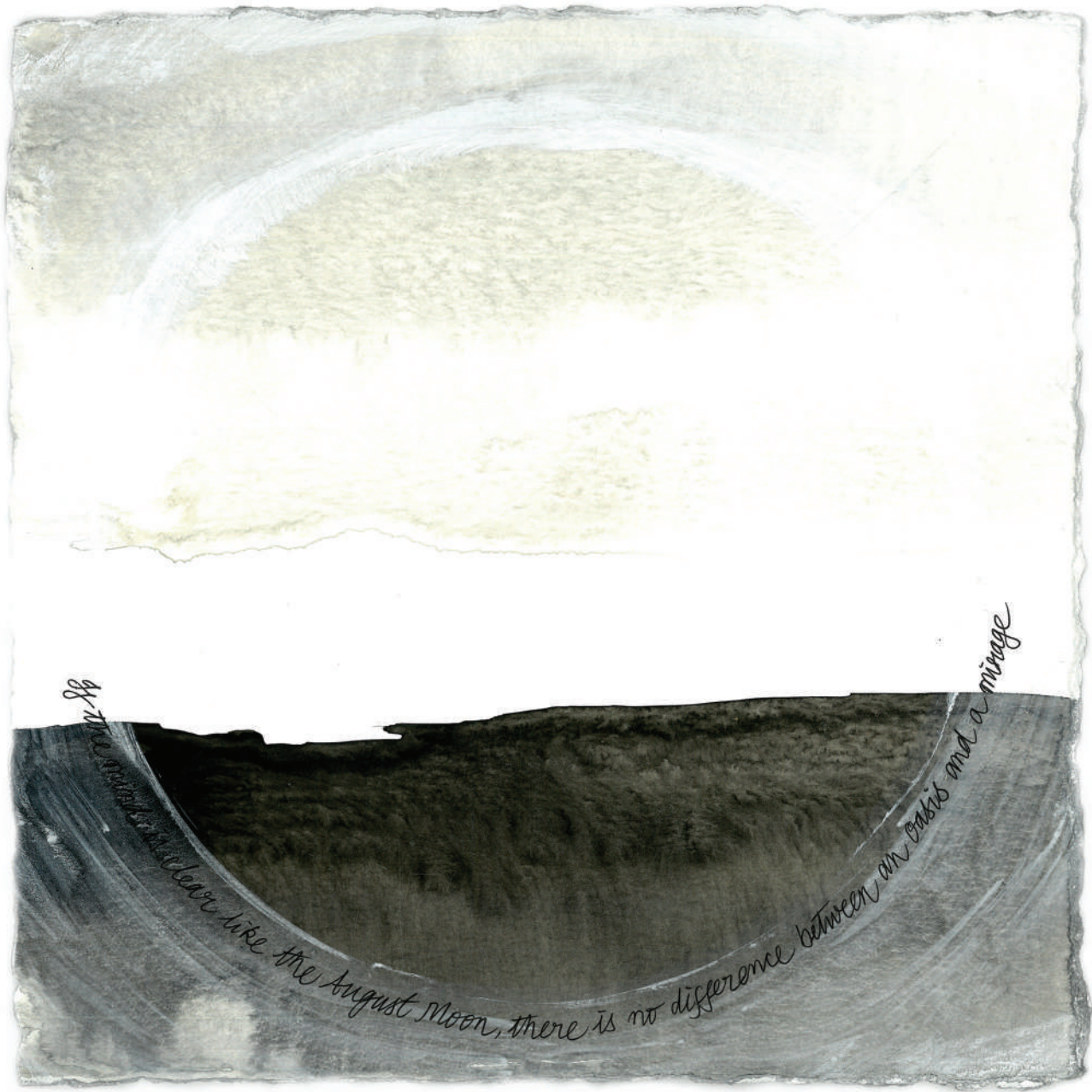
*Burn the leaves! Burn the books of wisdom!!
immerse in the purity of an
uncluttered mind*



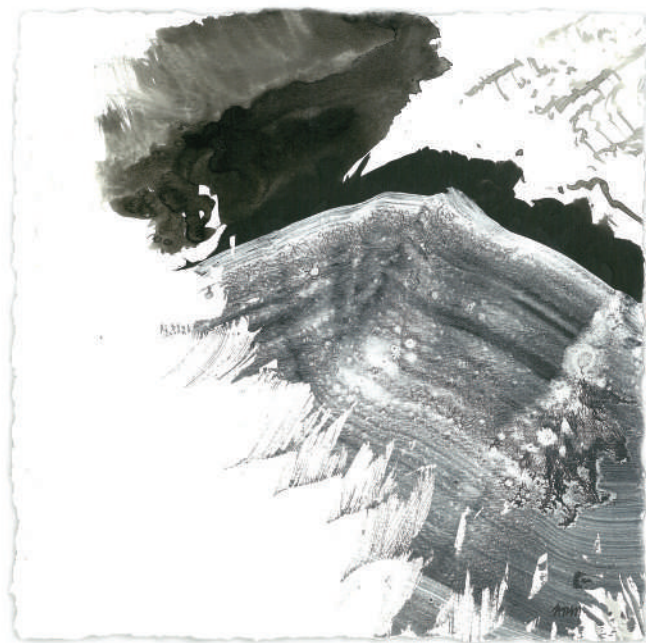
Have we met before?
How do I recognise myself in a thousand faces

*If you can face yourself in the mirror every night,
you would have passed the honesty test.*






As the sun sets like the August Moon, there is no difference between an oasis and a mirage






If my wings could fly on their own, will they know where to go?



Sometimes it is better to leave the code undeciphered - you may not like the secret it reveals

Lost my way at dusk,
little boy says left
old man says right
- I drive through the
rainy fields



*There is enough holy
water for everyone,
but we have to empty
our vessels first*



*in a fort you either self-secrete,
or imprisoned*

*We don't have to
prove the truth
— it proves itself*



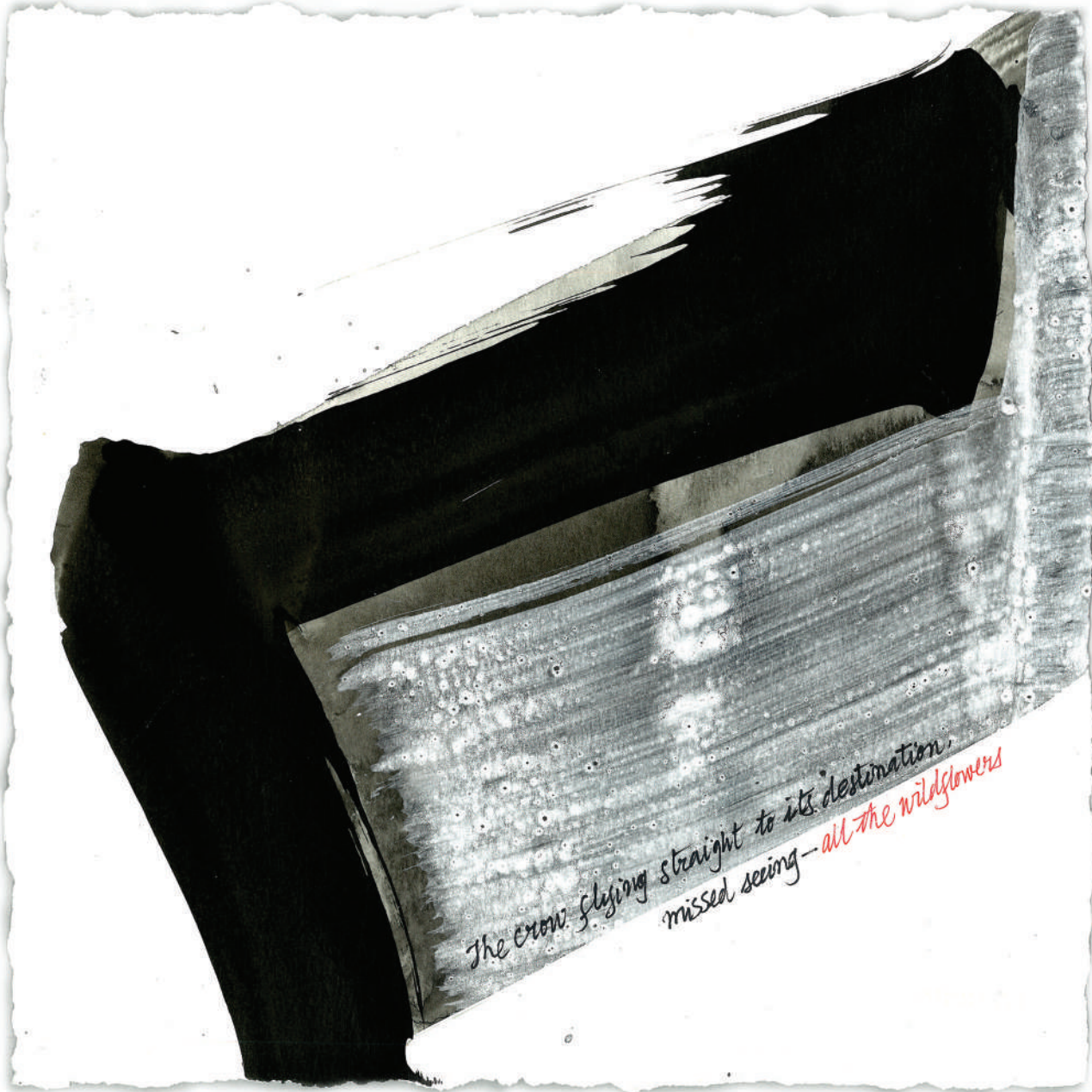
*Dusting the cobwebs of my past,
I came across a few gems*





There are no dead ends, before going up don't forget to look around

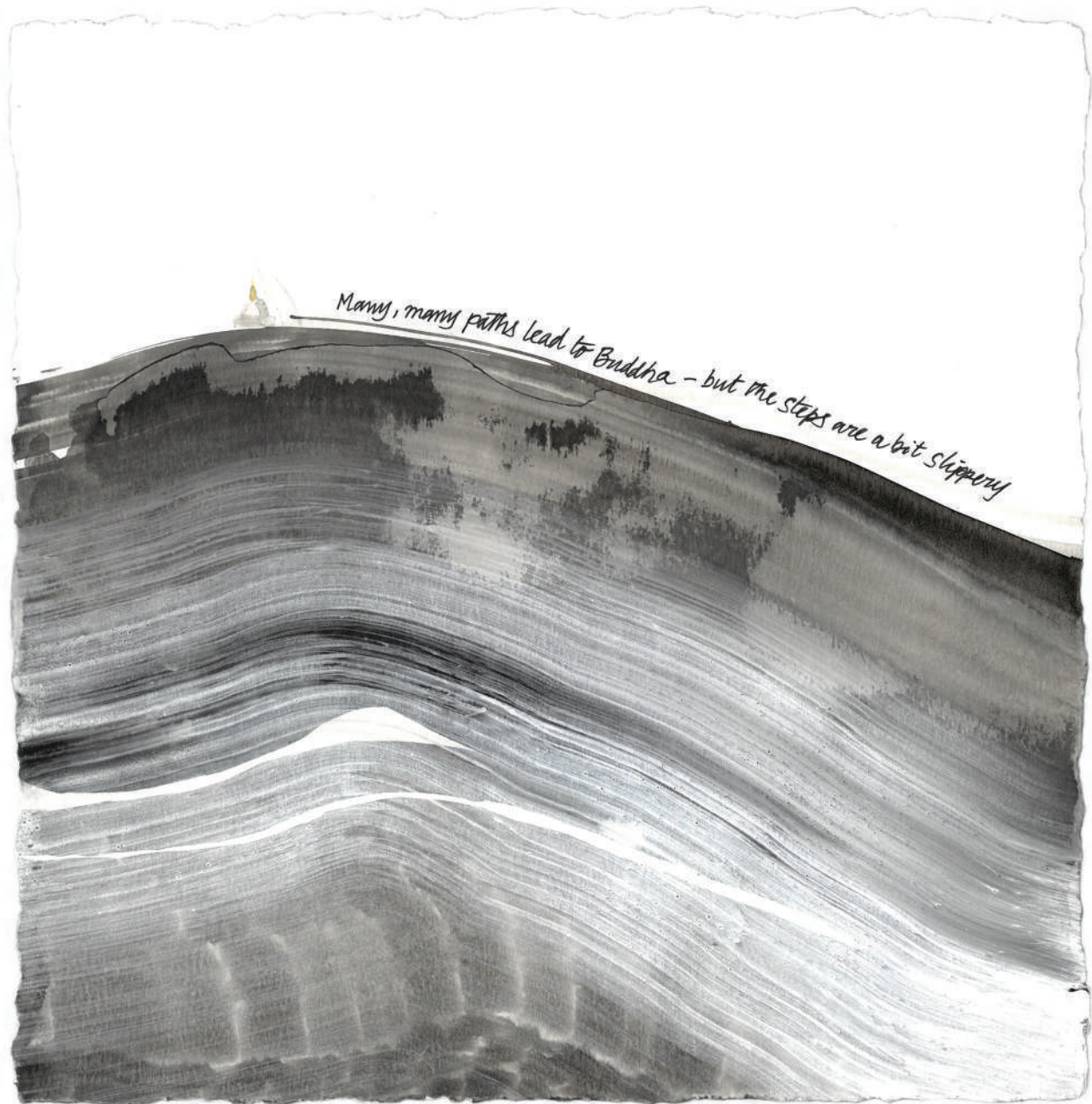
The corner

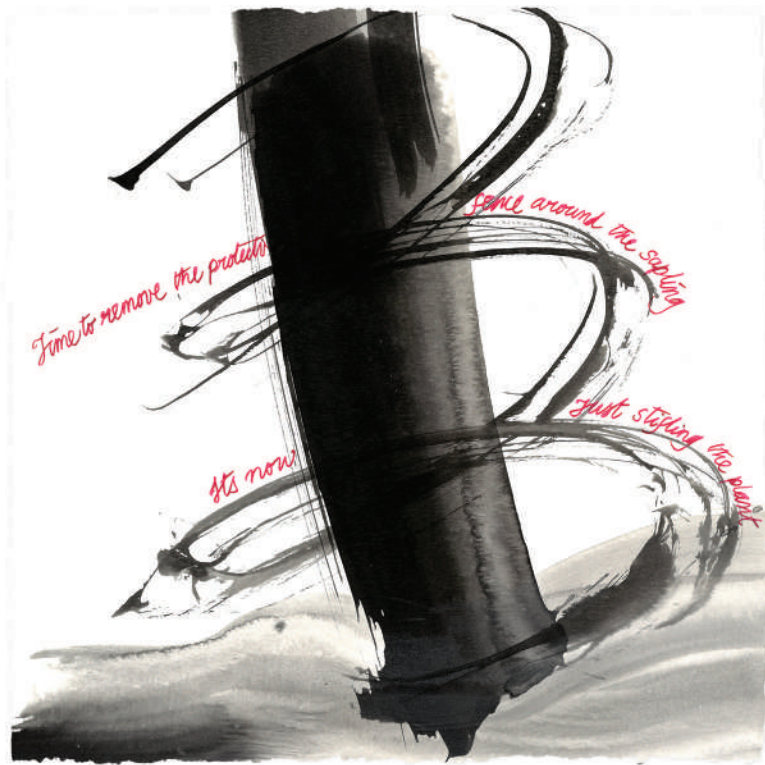


The crow flying straight to its destination,
missed seeing - all the wildflowers



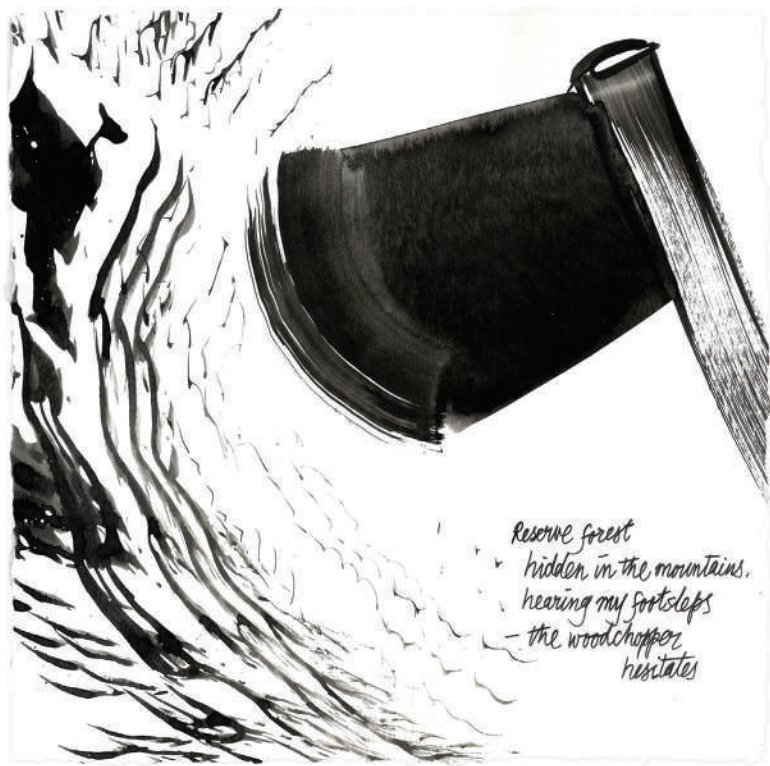
Between far and near, there is only  one space - You!





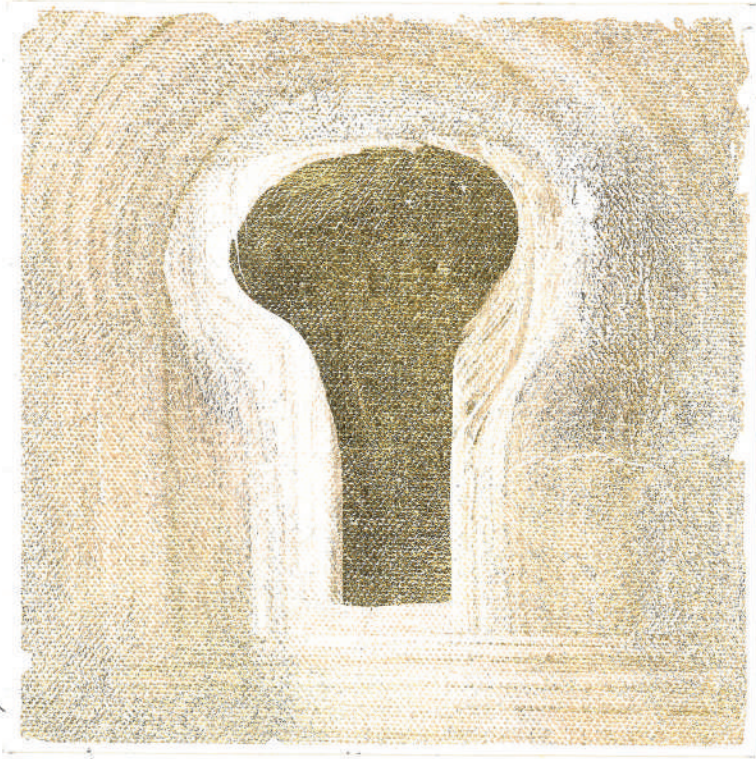
Naya hut
chilly night
amidst smokey fire,
Scared warrior
recounts tales
of valour
-her eyes
open wide!





Reserve forest
hidden in the mountains,
hearing my footsteps
- the woodchopper
hesitates

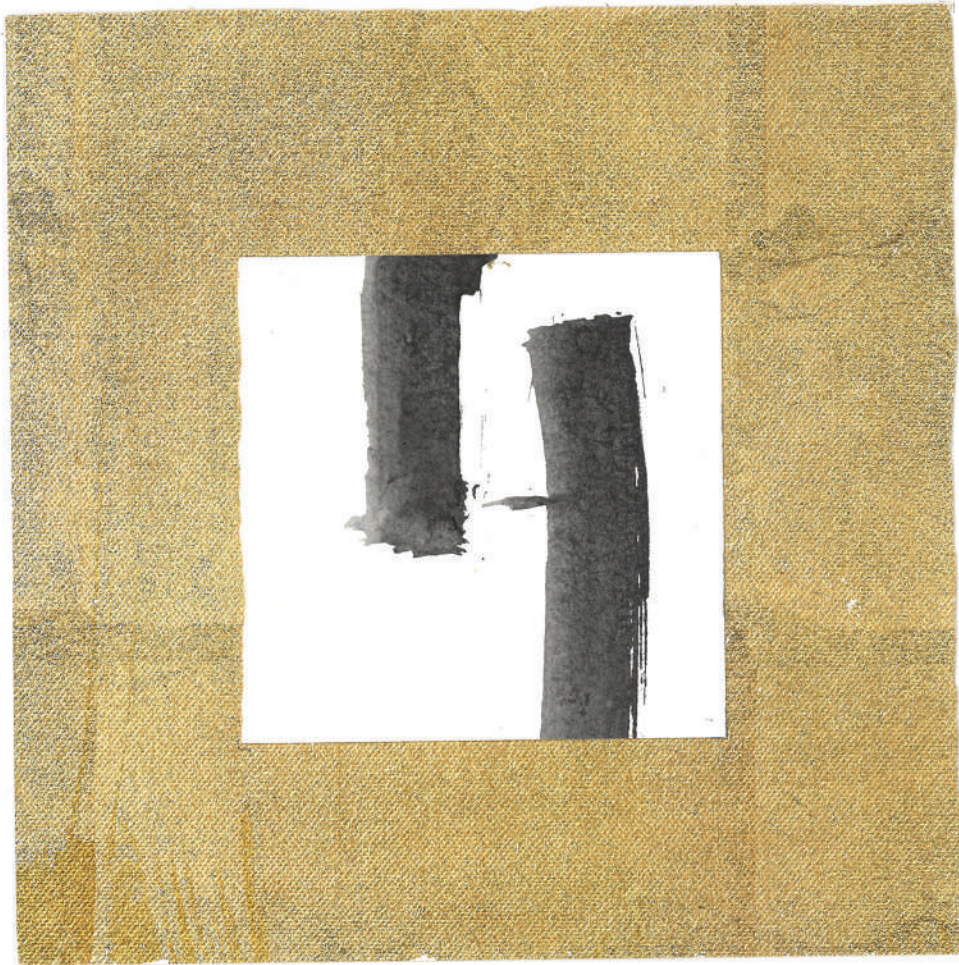
Our Fortune is with us all the time, but



often we lose the key



*While asking God, to grant your wishes
don't be greedy*

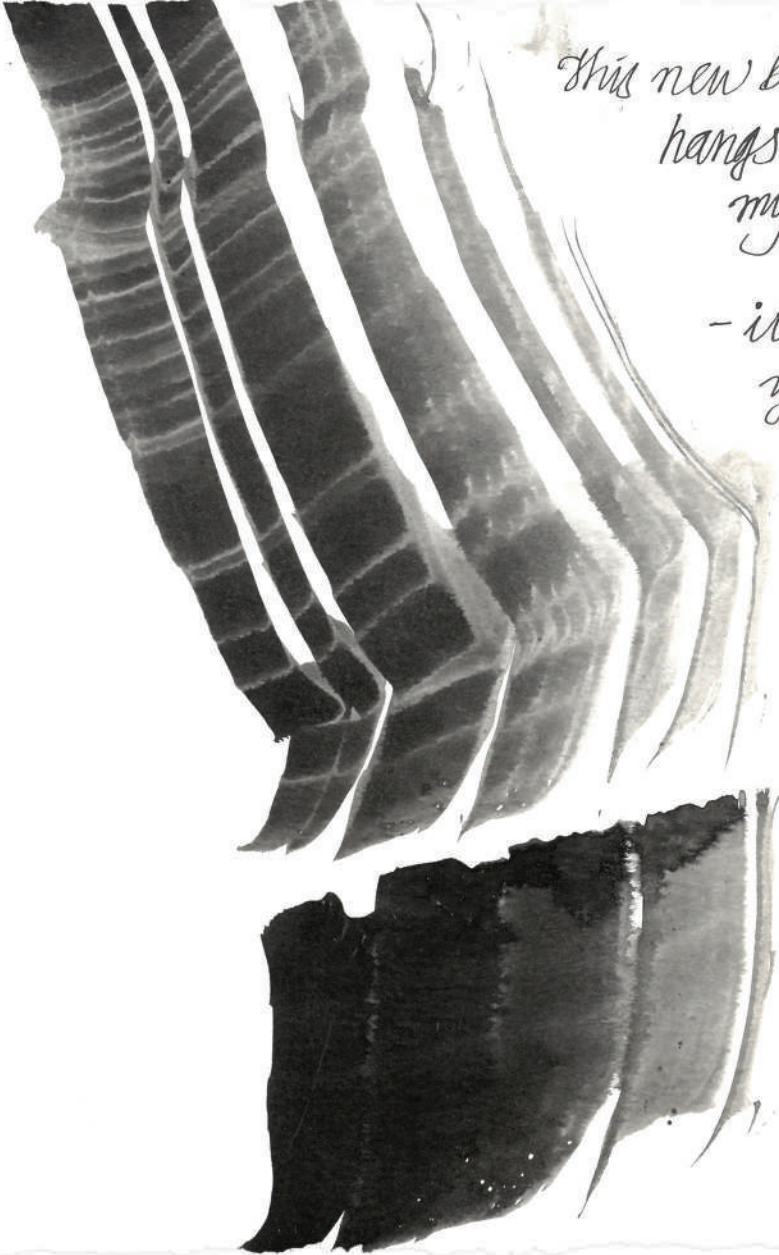


these iron bars, cannot imprison my wandering thoughts

After praying to Buddha for protection,



they locked him away behind iron bars



*this new bamboo shoot
hangs over
my neighbour's
wall
- it hasn't
yet learned
about
boundaries*




Supposing you pinched me -

Will my reality vanish?







*Fluttering in the breeze
today's washing and
my unanswered
questions*



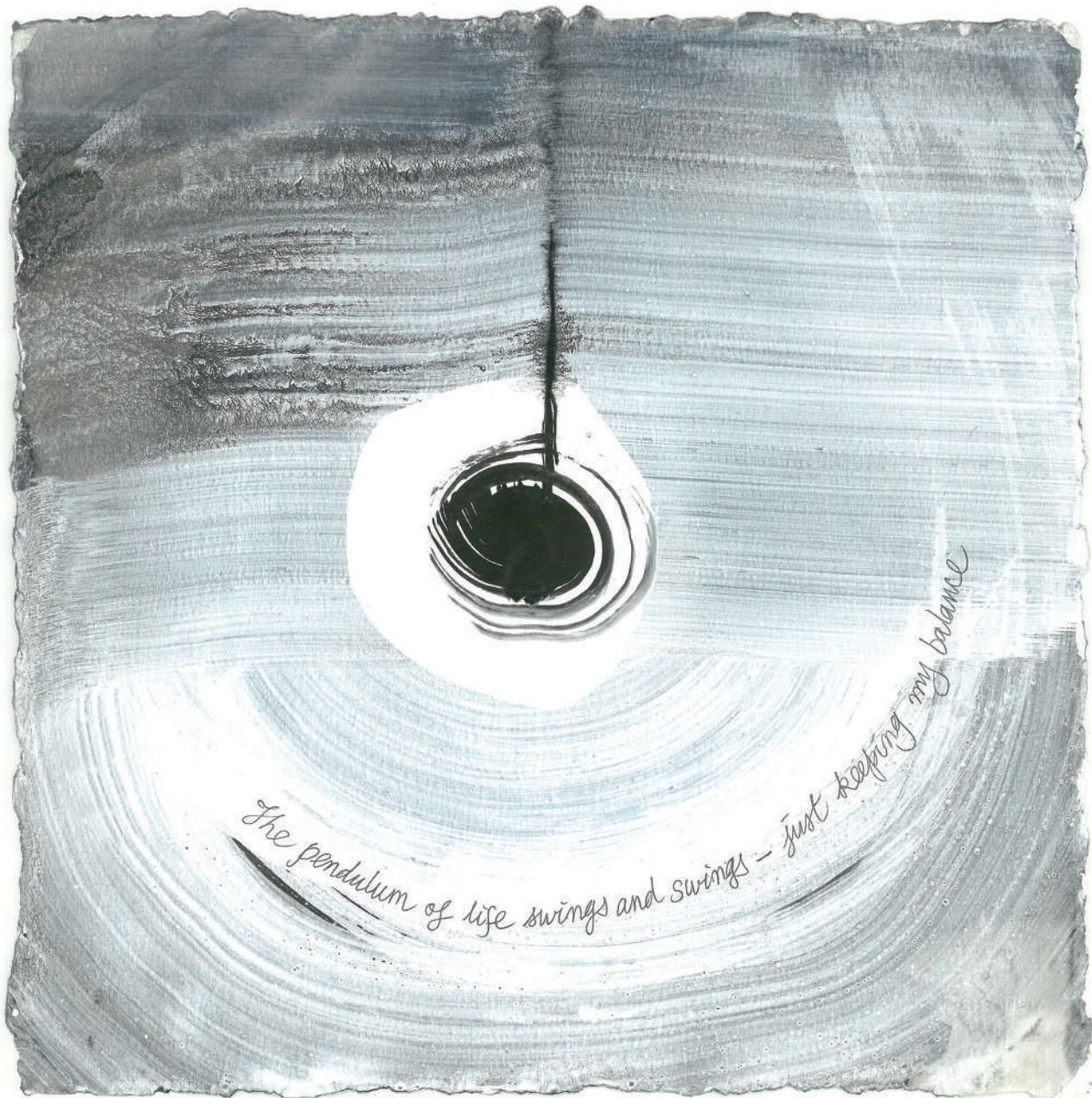
*White, white everywhere
rolling his first snowball
- my smiling son*

ASCEND : DESEND / EXPAND : CONTRACT /
INHALE : EXHALE / SUPERNOVA : BLACK HOLE
/ STILL : FLOWING / CHAOS : ORDER / DREAM
: REALITY / HIDDEN : REVEALED / BIG : SMALL /
PRISTINE : ERODED / HARD : SOFT / **ETERNAL :**
TRANSIENT / DARK : LIGHT / CREATE : DESTROY /
EMPTY : FULL / DEATH : BREATH /
ONE. ONE. ONE!


ETERNAL -
TRANS - EN -
TRANS I EN
ETERNAL -



Blinding light obscures many untruths - shadows reveal them one by one



The pendulum of life swings and swings - just keeping my balance



*Through the mist and fog, reflections of a
wandering cloud -
chasing my craft*




*Firewood
does not last all night
- the warmth of
shared love does.*



Money, Fame, Power?

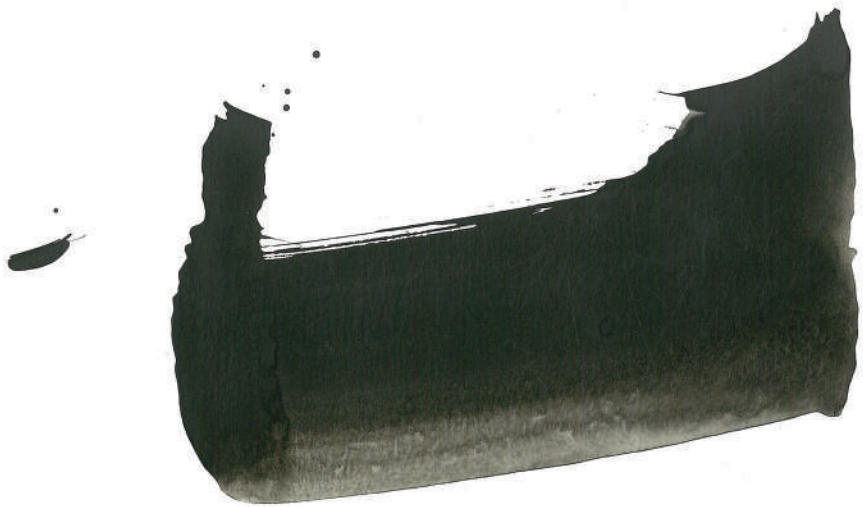
Just my silence within



*A gust of wind, erased
- my immortal footprints*



*If everyone agrees upon what is beautiful,
how ugly the world would be*



Tranquil sea, the fisherman just caught his prize catch - pure glistening water

Just like stale food
yesterdays Satori won't do,
it needs to be fresh
like dew
-each instant



storm clouds gathering on the horizon
— my sailboat nest



*the Crownness of the Crown,
the Nowness of the Now
- be Alive*



Would you mind if I trapped
Your energy Sun?
My Solar panels need recharging

RACHAN DUTTA




*After an intense experience, one must rid oneself
of any residue, anything that creates ripples in the
still waters of the mind, still just the essence, Pure Pain or
Pure joy remains and not the smoke, not the ash*



Refreshing mountain air, diesel fumes, dusty road ...

Yellow butterfly, flutters them away



*In an instant
I lost my hearing
amazing...
- how noisy the world was!*

ASCEND : DESEND / EXPAND : CONTRACT /
INHALE : EXHALE / SUPERNOVA : BLACK HOLE
/ STILL : FLOWING / CHAOS : ORDER / DREAM
: REALITY / HIDDEN : REVEALED / BIG : SMALL /
PRISTINE : ERODED / HARD : SOFT / ETERNAL :
TRANSIENT / DARK : LIGHT / CREATE : DESTROY /
EMPTY : FULL / **DEATH : BREATH /**

ONE. ONE. ONE!

DEATH -
BREATH
BREATHTH
- HTAETH

*Snowflakes
on a winter morning,
My life
floating*



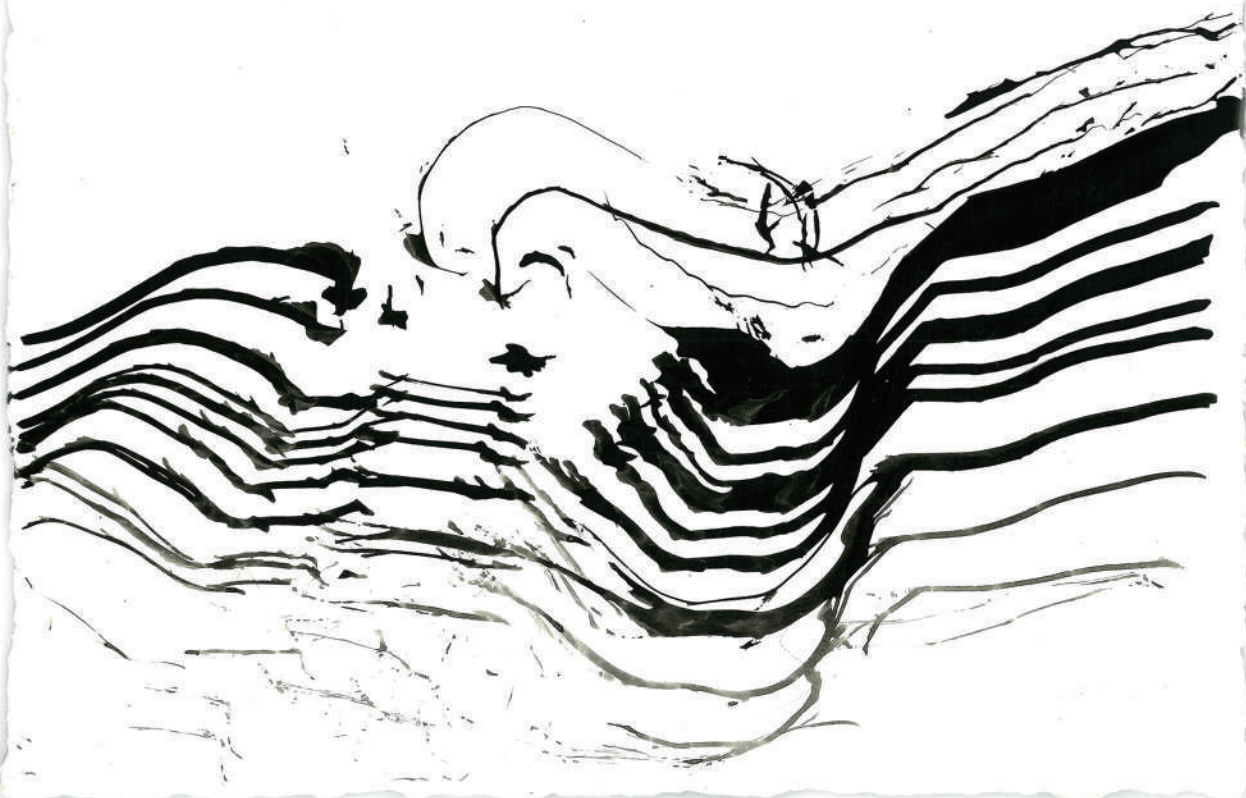







Falling leaf
withered with age,
dangling on the barbed wire
- let go fence!

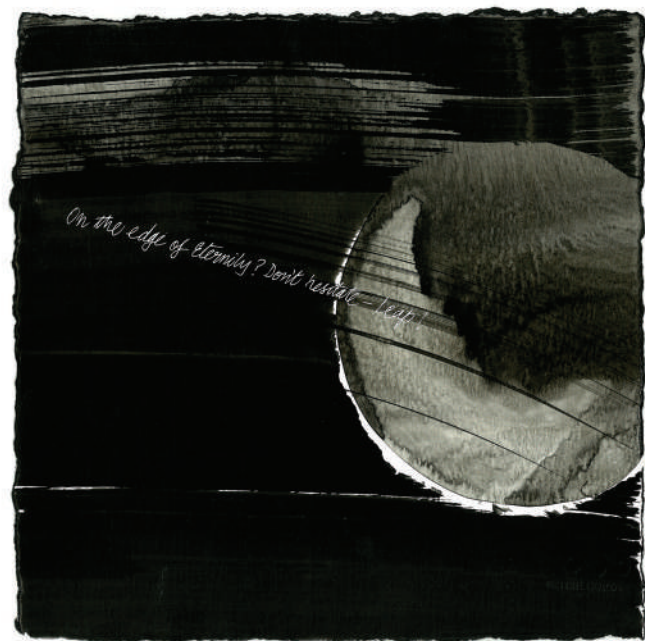
When you can think about life as just a wave in the cosmic ocean,
there is no fear of death — you know
that you will dissolve back into
being the vast ocean

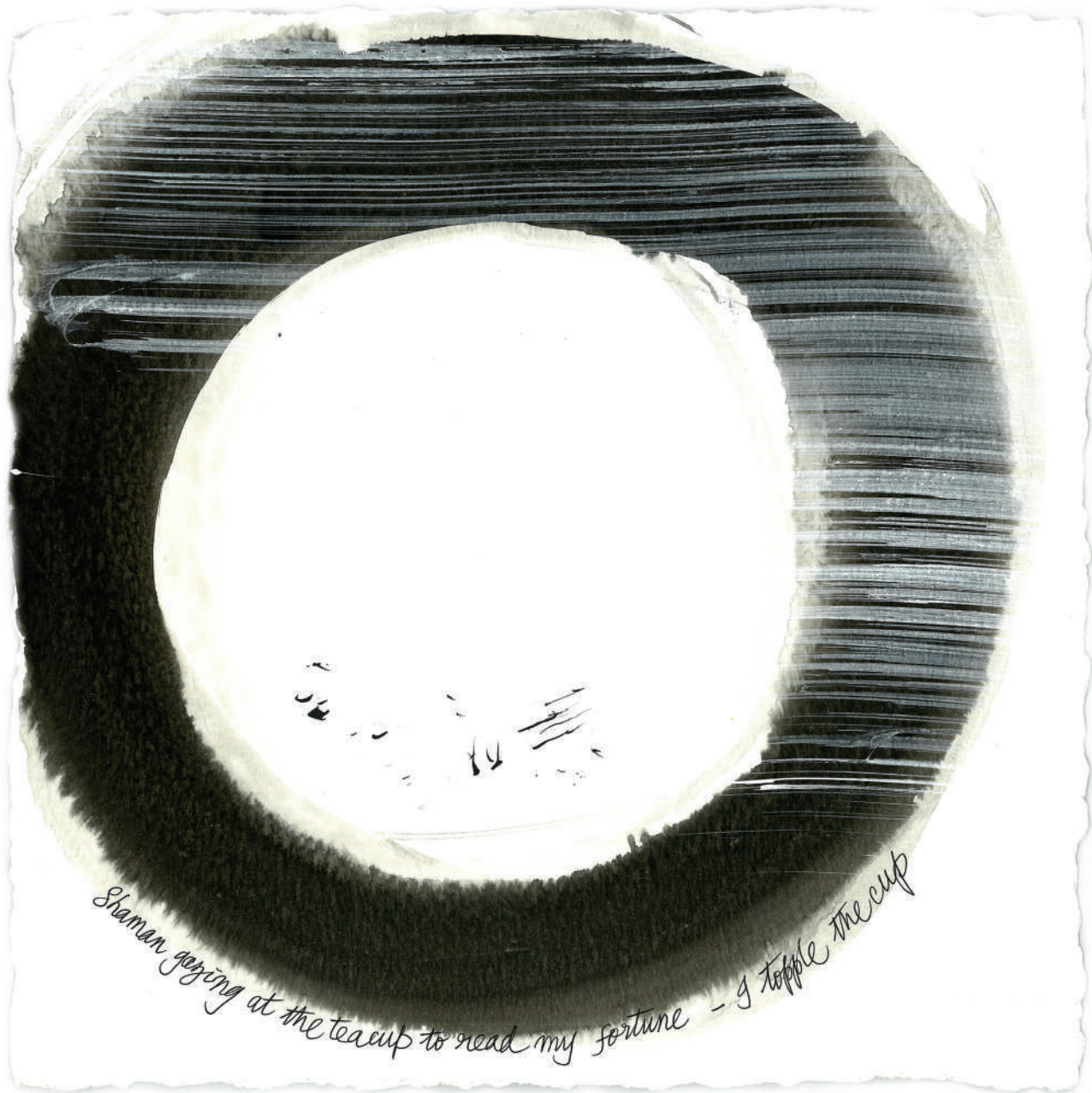




*If prayers for our
indulgent desires
are not answered,
that itself
is a blessing*

*- else we would become
arrogant*






Shaman gazing at the teacup to read my fortune - I topple the cup




Over the stormy Raven ocean, even the rainbow becomes monochrome
- and yet, and yet...



Does the wave, before dissolving
on the shore - question its destiny?



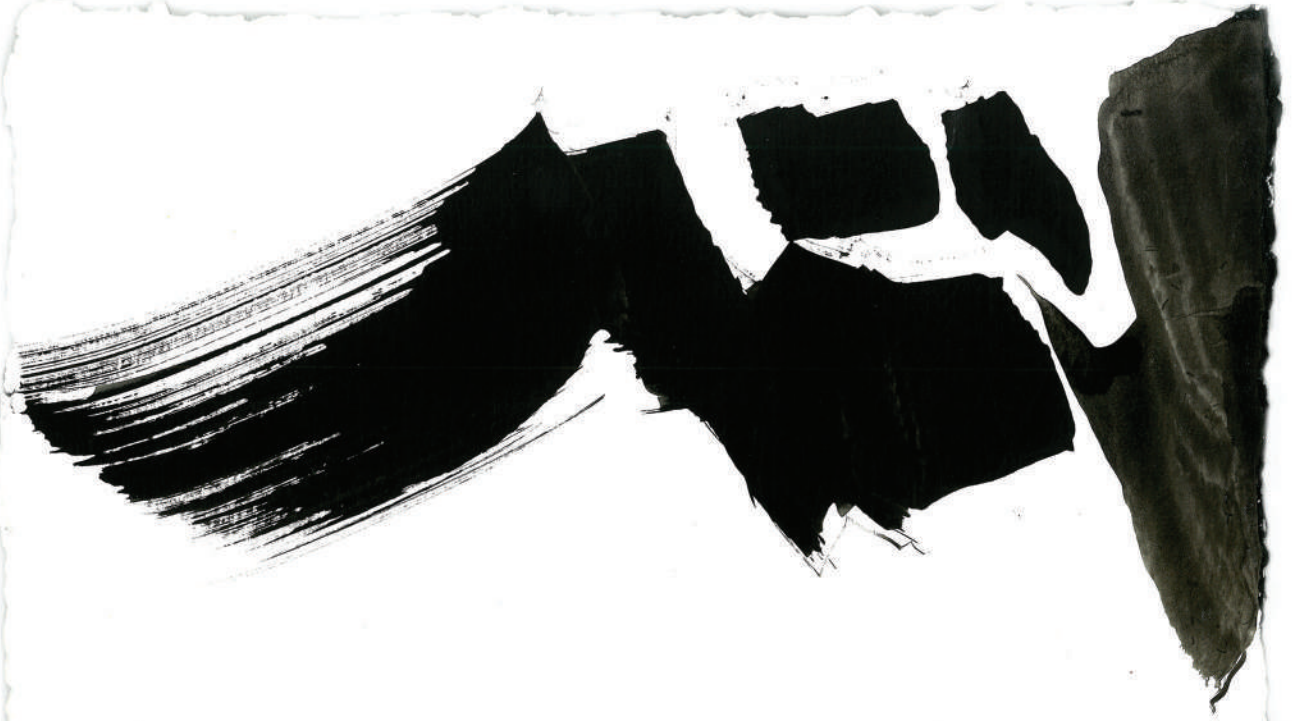
*Nothingness comes from Nothingness,
what more can we ask for?
Enjoy!*



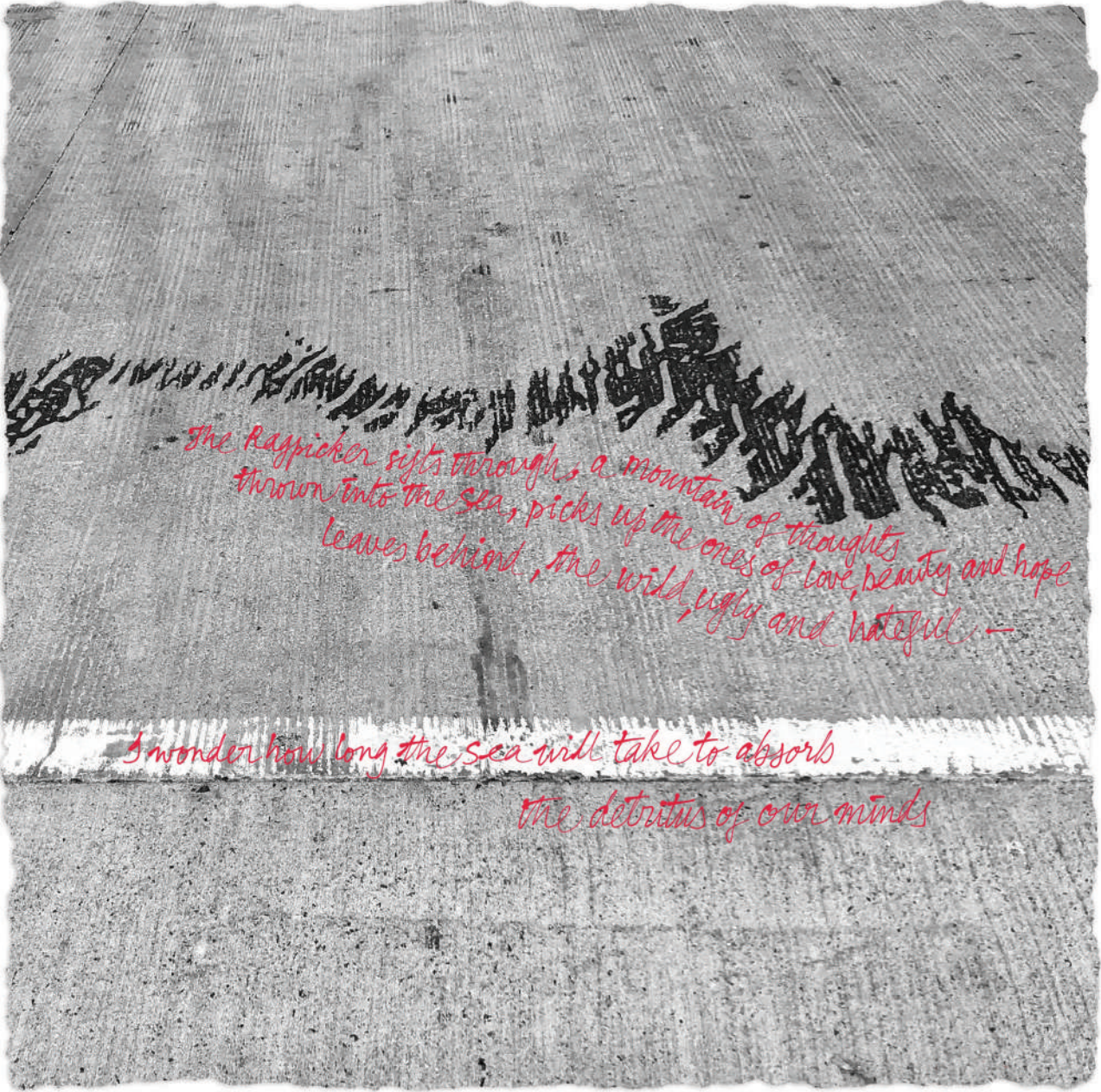
If everything dies, whom will death lie?

One by one, my dreams got stolen - left behind...

the shimmering light!



Secret cavern, dense light filtering through - flooding my mind space




The Raggicker sifts through, a mountain of thoughts
thrown into the sea, picks up the ones of love, beauty and hope
leaves behind, the wild, ugly and hateful. —

I wonder how long the sea will take to absorb
the detritus of our minds


caught in the entangling web of Samsara

we have even forgotten


how to dream a dream



*My Mendicant mind
traverses the treacherous path
for a few morsels of wisdom
Alas —
my empty
begging bowl*



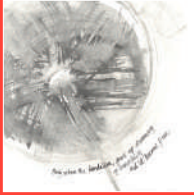
*Religion binds
- Spirituality
liberates!*



*Some part has no obligation
to justify its actions —
We seek causes and effects,
the butterfly just dreams,*

just dreams

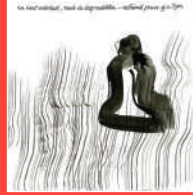
INKLINGS/ HAIKUS



01

Only when
the dandelion,
gave up dreaming
of its immortality
did it become free

Cheepa / India



03

Zen forest
underbrush,
monk in
deep meditation
— restrained
power of a Tiger

Bandhavgarh / India



05

Our precious dreams,
just castles in the air
— but what treasures
within

Prague / Czech Republic



02

The Moon
does not possess
any light of its own,
yet it shines and glows
because
it gives back,
the abundance it receives

Gris Gris / Mauritius



04

Don't stop
spider
— the world may
stop spinning

Altea / Spain



06

On a dry
summer day
which is better,
counting
raindrops
or counting
money?

Kolkata / India



07

Like mist,
bliss is all pervading
— its up to us to
experience it

Mukhteshwar / India



09

At every turn
there is a choice
— choose wisely

Khongar / Mongolia



11

It's not easy
to give up something
that does not belong
to you

Mumbai / India



08

Is life
just a meeting
of beautiful
elements at random,
or is there
an order in this
apparent chaos?

Karakoram / Mongolia



10

When did you last see?
Really see, even the person
closest to you?
Not the preformed image
sullied with time —
Life should be seen
with fresh eyes every day

Florence / Italy



12

What we seek
we may find
what we don't seek
— we will find

Alchi Monastery / Sikkim



13

Seeing wildfires
all around me,
I count my blessings
— the fire is only
in my hearth

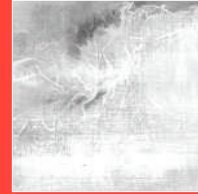
California / USA



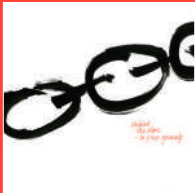
15

Bamboo grove,
my life is
an open secret
— just listen to
the gossiping birds

Lodhi Gardens / India



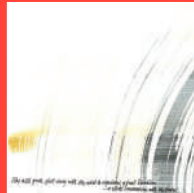
17



14

Unbind
the slave —
to free yourself

Bucharest / Hungary



16

Like wild grass
just sway
with the wind
to feel
a great liberation
— a silent communion
with the Divine

Sussex / UK



18

And all that
the Master
said in his last
sermon was
'One'

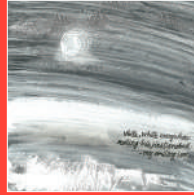
Rishikesh / India



19

Our love
solid as a rock
— but the stones
are cold

Florence / Italy



21

White,
white everywhere
rolling his first snowball
— my smiling son

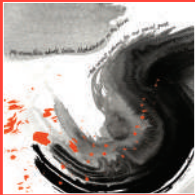
Zermatt / Switzerland



23

In this
cacophony
some silent notes
— waiting
to be heard

Budapest / Hungary



20

My mountain abode
fallen Rhododendrons
on the tarmac
— Red carpet welcome
for my special guests

Cheepa / India



22

For the tea
to make it
to your cup,
it took many hands
— savour each sip

Kohima / India



24

Untangle
your thoughts
before going
to bed —
they need rest too

Melbourne / Australia



25

This forest path,
littered with
fallen leaves
— so many gems
for me to treasure

Pashangarh / India



27

The wine
is finished
— drink more
of the sea

Point Reyes / USA



29

Life is a koan
a riddle
which
answers itself
— only
if you let things be

Kyoto / japan



26

Water
hardens
into ice —
a little warmth
and it melts

Delhi / India



28

Ah!
Swinging
on the tree,
soaking in
the Monsoon —
my lost childhood

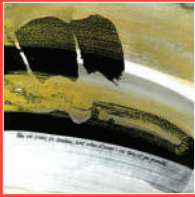
Delhi / India



30

There must
be a way
out of this maze
— the open sky!

Delphi / Greece



31

How we crave
for sunshine
and when it comes —
we take it for granted

Gothenburg / Sweden



33

Pure, pure
dew drops,
will they reincarnate?
The holy water
— the vast sea?

Srinagar / India



35

Facing the wall
in Zazen meditation,
a bird chirps
— my head turns,
doing No- thing
takes a lot of doing

Kyoto / japan



32

Don't hold the
precious seed
in your fist —
plant it and let
a whole forest be!

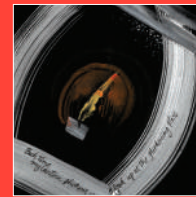
Ranthambore / India



34

Found at last,
my lost pen!
So many poems
clogging the ink

Zazen Studio / INDIA



36

Each time
my lantern flickers ...
I look up at
the flickering stars

Jaisalmer / India



37

Few things are
more precious
than
a child's laughter

Bhaktapur / Nepal



39

A falling star?
Let's
cushion its fall!

Taksang / Bhutan



41

Freezing
morning
prayer wheels
spinning,
silence in
Buddha's eyes
— my murmuring
heartbeats

Pemayangtse Monastery / Sikkim



38

Evidence
carved in stone
— a lover's
cry!

Lodhi Gardens / India



40

Black tunnel
White snow—
how they enter
each other!

Mont Blanc / France



42

Flowing
with the current?
Sometimes
you have to
stop and resist

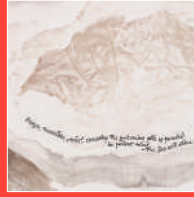
Pontresina / Switzerland



43

Damp
prayer room
ancient texts
wrapped in silk —
contemplating eternity

Bagan / Myanmar



45

Frozen mountain,
mist
concealing
the welcoming
gates of Paradise
be patient mind —
the Sun will shine!

Rohtang Pass / India



47

When a stranger
smiles at you,
Just smile back
— stop reading
an ulterior motive

Beijing / China



44

My Sadhana,
my Mantra,
my meditation
— let it all flow

Bagan / Myanmar



46

Mist-clad valley
sound of
a bell ringing
— the monks cannot
hide their presence

Bagan / Myanmar



48

This fleeting
cloud,
let me stitch it
into my quilt

Manali / India



49

We met like
two birds
in mid flight,
I to sunset —
you to sunrise

Rajasthan / India



51

There is
no coming
there is no going
flow river, flow

Bali / Indonesia



53

Roaring sea
wave
upon wave
crashing,
the monk
in meditation
stills the waves

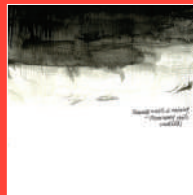
Normandy Beach / France



50

Each moment
is a new dawn
— awaken
the Buddha within

Ramtek Monastery / Sikkim



52

Heavenly music
is raining,
throw away
your umbrellas

Masai Mara / Kenya



54

Life is about
how intensely
and fully we can live it
and when
the moment arrives,
how beautifully
we can let it go

Ganganagar / India



55

Passion
does not
drown desire
— desire is
unsinkable

Delhi / India



57

When you can
just flow
like a river
there is no need
to build bridges

Budapest / Hungary



59

You can only reflect
with a calm mind,
with a turbulent one
— everything drowns

Geneva / Switzerland



56

So many
thoughts
tossed into the sea,
whirlpools
of desire
chasing the waves

Muir Beach / USA



58

Landslide,
mind sliding down
pauses for a drink,
cool,
cool waterfall

St Moritz / Switzerland



60

The potter's wheel
stopped to think —
and ceased to be
a wheel

Jaisalmer / India



61

Excavating
the Stupa
after the earthquake,
escaped prayers
— engulf me

Kathmandu / Nepal



63

Drink,
don't hesitate
this water is pure
— I asked
the waterfall

St Moritz / Switzerland



65

Monk
contemplating
his own divinity
days on end
— grain by grain
sand trickles
in the hourglass

Patola Palace / Tibet



62

Eyes of dusk
gathering memories
of the day —
till another dawn

Santorini / Greece



64

Thunder shower
Monsoon puddles,
sailing
the seven seas
— my paper boat

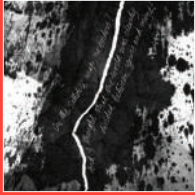
Delhi / India



66

Even a little spark
of awareness
In this dark universe
can spread
a luminous light

Bhopal / India



67

On the satellite map
no borders?
And I thought
that the world was
clearly divided
between yours and mine!

Wagah border / India



69

Burn the leaves!
Burn
the leaves of wisdom!!
Immerse in the purity
of an uncluttered mind

Alexandria / Egypt



71

If you can face yourself
in the mirror
every night,
you would have passed
the honesty test

Venice / Italy



68

The moment
we reveal ourselves
without hesitation —
we merge with the divine

Flaming Cliffs / Mongolia



70

Have we
met before?
How do I recognize
myself
in a thousand faces?

Luxor / Egypt



72

If the mind
is clear
like the
August moon,
there is
no difference
between an oasis
and a mirage

Tov / Mongolia



73

If the
wings could fly
on their own,
will they know
where to go?

Pashangarh / India



75

Sometimes
it is better
to leave the code
undeciphered
— you may not like
the secret it reveals

Cairo / Egypt



77

There is enough
holy water
for everyone,
but we have to empty
our vessels first

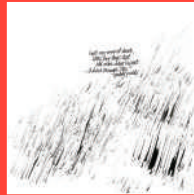
Rishikesh / India



74

If the
wings could fly
on their own,
will they know
where to go?

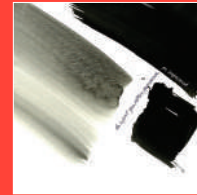
Pashangarh / India



76

Lost my way
at dusk,
little boy says left
old man says right
— I drive through
the paddy fields !

Nagaland / India



78

In a fort
you either feel secure,
or imprisoned

Ahilya Fort / India



79

We don't have to
prove the truth
— it proves itself

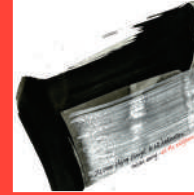
Sevagram / India



81

Blistering heat,
aggressive armies
guarding their borders
— running back and forth
between their legs,
the care-free squirrel

Wagah border / India



83

The crow flying
straight
to its destination
— missed seeing
all the wildflowers

Alexandria / Egypt



80

Dusting the
cobwebs
of my past,
I came across
a few gems

Zazen Studio / India



82

There are
no dead ends,
before giving up
don't forget
to look
around the corner

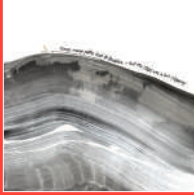
Mannheim / Germany



84

Between
far and near,
there is only
one space
— You!

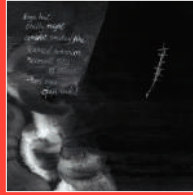
Halong Bay / Vietnam



85

Many, many paths
lead to Buddha —
but the steps are
a bit slippery

Kathmandu / Nepal



87

Naga hut
chilly night
amidst the smokey fire,
scarred warrior
recounts tales of valour
— her eyes open wide!

Nagaland / India



89

Our fortune
is with us
all the time,
but often
we loose the key

Zazen Studio / India



86

Time to remove
the protective fence
around the sapling,
it's now just
stifling the plant

Rome / Italy



88

Reserve forest
hidden
in the mountains,
hearing my footsteps
— the woodchopper
hesitates

Nagaland / India



90

While asking God,
to grant your wishes
don't be greedy

Pashupatinath / Nepal



91

These
iron bars
cannot
imprison
my wandering
thoughts

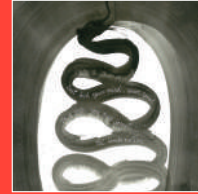
Johannesburg / South Africa



93

This new
bamboo shoot
hangs over my
neighbour's wall
— it hasn't yet learnt
about boundaries

Zazen Studio / India



95

Don't lock
your mind,
your spirit in a safe,
you may forget
the combination

Zurich / Switzerland



92

After praying
to Buddha for protection,
they locked him away
behind iron bars

Bhondsi / India



94

Supposing you
pinched me —
will my reality
disappear?

Lhasa / Tibet



96

Out of coma
after months and months...
she asks for an ice cream
— how delicious it tasted

Madurai / India



97

Flowing
in the breeze
today's washing
and my
unanswered
questions

Kochi / India



99

Blinding light
obscures
many untruths
— shadows reveal
them one by one

Hustai National Park / Mongolia



101

Through the
mist and fog,
reflections
of a white cloud
— chasing my raft

Yangtze River / China



98

White,
white everywhere
rolling his first snowball
— my smiling son

Zermatt /Switzerland



100

The pendulum
of life swings
and swings
— just keeping
my balance

Gobi Desert / Mongolia



102

Firewood
does not last
all night —
the warmth of
shared love does

Nagaland / India



103

Money,
fame, power?
Just
my silence within

Vientiane / Laos



105

If everyone
agrees upon
what is beautiful,
how ugly
the world would be

Tiananmen Square / China



107

Just like
stale food
yesterday's Satori
won't do,
it needs to be
fresh like dew
— each instant

Nara / Japan



104

A gust
of wind,
erased —
my immortal
footprints

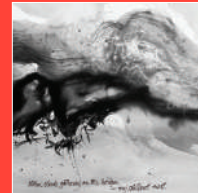
Goa / India



106

Tranquil sea,
the fisherman
just caught
his prize catch
— pure
glistening water

Goa /India



108

Storm clouds
gathering
on the horizon
— my sailboat nest

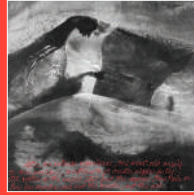
Virgin Gorda / Caribbean



109

The Crownness
of the Crow,
the Nownness of The Now
— be Alive

Pondicherry / India



111

After an intense experience
one must rid oneself of any
residue, anything that creates ripples
in the still waters
of the mind, till just the essence, pure
pain or pure joy remains
and not the smoke, not the ash

Chidambaran / India



113

Refreshing
mountain air,
diesel fumes,
dusty road...
Yellow butterfly
flutters them away

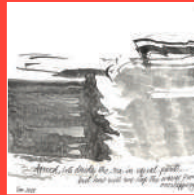
Nagaland / India



110

Would you mind
if I trapped your energy
Sun ?
My solar panels
need recharging

Ulan Batar / Mongolia



112

Agreed, let's divide the sea
in equal parts...
but how will we stop
the waves from overlapping?

Arabian Sea



114

In an instant
I lost my hearing
amazing...
how noisy
the world was!

Delhi / India



115

Snowflakes
on a winter morning,
my life floating

Cincinnati / USA



117

Mother
passes away,
dew slowly
evaporates,
cherry blossoms
wilt
— the fragrance
lingers on

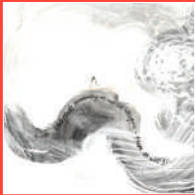
Dumbarton Oakes / USA



119

When you can think of life
as just a wave in the ocean
there is no fear of death,
you know that you will
dissolve back into being
the vast ocean

Normandy / France



116

White clouds
surrounding me,
melt into nothingness
— I hope so will I !

In flight / Himalayas



118

Falling leaf
wizened with age,
dangling
on the barbed wire

— let go fence !

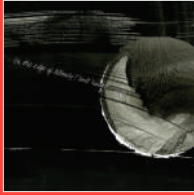
Nagaland / India



120

If prayers for our
indulgent desires
are not answered,
that itself is a blessing
— else we would
become arrogant

Auroville / India



121

On the edge
of Eternity ?
Don't hesitate
— leap!

Pemayagtse Monastery / Sikkim



123

On the stormy
Raven ocean,
even the rainbow
becomes monochrome
— and yet, and yet...

Pompeii / Italy



125

Nothingness
comes
from
Nothingness,
What more
can we ask for?
Enjoy!

Gangasagar / India



122

Shaman
gazing at the teacup
o read my fortune
— I topple the cup

Paro / Bhutan



124

Does the wave,
before dissolving
on the shore —
question its destiny?

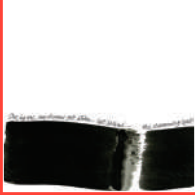
Point Reyes / USA



126

If everything
dies,
when will
death die?

Varanasi / India



127

One by one,
my dreams got stolen
— left behind...
the shimmering light

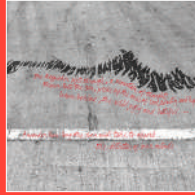
Pondicherry / India



128

Secret cavern,
dense light
filtering through
— flooding
my mind space

Lascaux / France



129

The Raggpicker sifts through
a mountain of thoughts
thrown into the sea,
picks up the ones of love,
beauty and hope
leaves behind, the wild,
ugly and hateful—

I wonder how long the sea
will take to absorb
the detritus of our minds

Pondicherry / India



130

Caught in the
entangling
web of Samsara,
we have
even forgotten
how to dream
a dream

Varanasi / India



131

My mendicant mind
traverses
the treacherous path
for a few morsels
of wisdom
Alas —
my empty begging bowl

Sarnath / India



132

Religion binds
— Spirituality liberates !

Takshang / Bhutan



133

Time past
has no obligation
to justify
its actions —
we seek causes
and effects,
the butterfly just dreams,
just dreams

Ubud, Bali / Indonesia



ROBERT NIELAND

Resumé / Satish Gupta

Satish Gupta is a painter, sculptor, poet, writer, printmaker, skilled draftsman, muralist, designer, and calligrapher.

His works have a deep engagement with mysticism and Zen spirit.

His works were exhibited at the Venice Biennale and Art Laguna, Arsenal and at The Deborah Colton Gallery in Houston in 2017.

They have been exhibited in over 36 solo shows at important art galleries and museums internationally including Shanghai museum of Modern Art and The Museum of Sacred Arts, Brussels and The National Museum in Slovenia.

Satish is known for his monumental copper sculptures. Some of the major ones are in the private collections Nita Ambani, Kumarmangalam Birla and Art Ichol in India.

He has created a 3.35 meter high sculpture of Surya at the T3 at Delhi airport, the Devi at The Leela palace hotel in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, Zen Forest in Ritz Carlton in Bangalore and a ten meter mural at the International Airport.

He sculpted the Utsav Murti of 'Ling Bhairavi' for Sadhguru's Isha Ashram in Coimbatore.

Satish's 7 meter monumental sculpture 'The Buddhas Within' is in the permanent collection of The Prince of Wales Museum (CVSM) in Mumbai.

His book 'Zen Whispers' was released at the Jaipur Literature Festival in 2018.

He has participated in many international poetry conferences. His writings have been published in English, Spanish and Catalan

His sculpture "Wings of Eternity" was the centre of the event around which there was an interactive dance performance by Isha Sharvani and gestural live calligraphy by the artist at The Royal Opera House in Mumbai.

Satish created a 1.6 Kilometre (one mile) long calligraphic canvas "MA" to bring awareness about global warming along the beach in Pondicherry. This is perhaps the longest canvas in the world.

"Roaring Sea — Still Mind" an exhibition of his large sculptures, paintings and calligraphic works was displayed at The Visual Arts Gallery at The Indian Habitat Centre, Delhi in 2019.

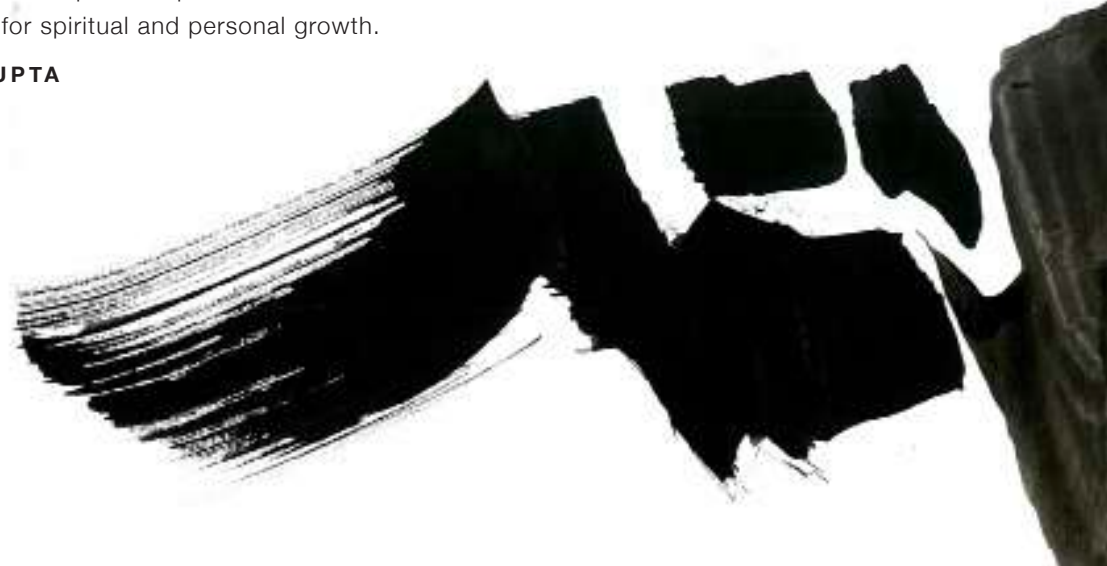




What we seek, we may find; what we don't, we will find

A little treasure of Zen thoughts that can be carried with oneself, kept on the desk or by the bedside – a source of inspiration and a tool to help take a pause to reflect on what is of true value for spiritual and personal growth.

 **SATISH GUPTA**



“A meditative and cosmic aura reverberates through these exquisite Inklings, Zen and Haiku creations authored by globally celebrated artist Satish Gupta. The deep-rooted aesthetics of his work create a magic that touches one’s heart & mind alike.”

SUSHMA K. BAHL

“Experiencing the artistry of Satish, and the evocative images of stillness in the midst of action — is an inspiration and path to practice Zen/ Dhyana. ”

SHANTUM SETH

www.fullcirclebooks.in

