

HALLOWEEN SESSHIN

—for Rebecca

*"Where souls do couch on flowers we'll hand in hand
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze..."*
(Will Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 4.14.52-3)

*"look at a crab with **mushin** (no mind) eyes; ignore the wicked,
as, sooner or later, they will meet their own fate" (Old Bubishi proverb)*

As if still born,
some lotus petals
wave like fish-fins,
turgid in the middle currents...

So too humans—
sometimes, wander
the *realm of hungry ghosts*...
bellies protuberant over spindly legs,

arms hanging like pipe elbow fittings
(forearms at 90-degree angles from upper arms,
dangling like *chicken wings*).
The flesh shrunken

yet the veins bulge—
just like the eyes—
puffy hands, too,
fingers curling in chemical spasms...

I measure my gait
just as carefully as they do, here

in the zendo—though
my fist resides within my palm,

the meditation is the same...
Yet not much in common
with these allege'd practitioners—
none reaching with the sole of the foot,

awaiting that lotus of white suchness
to spring from Mother Earth,
alighting upon the arch
touching the polished hardwood

gentle as a cat's paw...
Instead the heel thuds
as if the mind at the other end
has no clue as to the distance;

the *shlumped-over* form plods along,
dutifully, ritually,
yet utterly without meaning—
with such an attitude

one could perambulate Mt. Meru
10,000 times
and merit
absolutely *nothing*...

*Dogen's 10 samsaric directions
never generating
into an iridescent
pearl...*

For meditation break
the speaker—face all
goofy-bright with falseness,
but the eyes beady as a ferret's—

warps his mouth
into something about *chopping*
off attachment at the root...
In days once gone a sermon as his

only meriting an Old Master's
stick—perhaps
one cut from a hazel tree,
uprooted by storm...

The sweet
honeysuckle blossoms
entwined about the trunk
by the *symbiosis* of God

having *given up the ghost*, too...

—the “honeysuckle and hazel” allusion from an olde
Celtic tale,
Tristan and Isuelt, as told by Marie de France, *Lais*

—Note: Buddha once said that the only way
to build a Buddha-Nation
is by one Buddha after another (think footsteps)
that pearl transcendently realizing
other jewels--all asparkle
in that ancient Net of Indra

connected by *that which is*
(the *paradigm* thus liberated)...
There is no other way...

(Or, as Ken Kesey said, "Too often *collectivism* is just a dodge
for not pulling one's own **weeds**")...

written Samhain (Oct. 31, Nov. 16 1998)
Tamo Noonan
