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TITLE: Hungry Complete Fullness Sesshin, Easter, 1993
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SOURCE: Mind Moon Circle quartely, Winter 1993, pp.30-31
NOTES: Australian Sesshin Poems and other Poems by Members and Visitors
of/to
the Sydney Zen Center. This poem is dedicated to John Tarrant, Roshi

i

A strong alchemy it was
the dark joy
rising to radiance
inside the third that is not given:
the third is never given
but is found
ah
there!
beneath the river
of the heart
prised open by sesshin

ii

Sitting turned out at the prow by the great doors of the world
old friends all but unseen
but not unfeared
strung like stars across the
dark of my body
hardly raising my eyes

each glimpse
a leaping into being
of trees, mist, moon, dog
verandah thump
surging so far in like a wave

it took the breath
to tears
the sacred salt of sesshin
its hard sharp flavour
sparkling on our bodies

iii

Rising to kinhin I wobble
and see
through dark glass
bodies of my friends
the coloured wet shuddering jewels
of most intimate organs

juddering gently every step
we take along the

cliffedge
a sudden seeing fierce as
the lion who looked into me
the rocks themselves must flow

iv
the pattern of the days
hooked on exacting needles
by numbered supper-cook menus
secretly slipping off
into the sense
of the only time there is:

no resistance, but
a hedging start
the time-killer skulking round
with a new offer:
having to do things well
it's called

its image
dry cicada shell
clinging to bushes and grasses
the green cicada
having shrilled off into elsewhere
eons ago

this was
irritant enough
to tickle some real effort
from the depths
(oh, billowing there)
and then a strange new thing
back pain like a lodged sword

v
Calls up a new geography of effort
its hard sharp flavour
it's called
squeezing round the corner
right against the heart
until it blazes

into grief to melt the bones
my own? the body's oldest grief
is never done
but always colours joy
and yet it partly seemed

another weeping woman's
her upright back before me
pierced by a death
I want to hold her
and to rock her

vi
But the great slow blaze takes
even that away
into its terrible
delight that leaves

so little of me
I can weep (at last) for joy

vii

The pattern finds its form and name
days later
half-moon in great wide circle
new hexagram,
black-cliff-framed:
Hungry Complete Fullness.

Susan Murphy
April, 1993

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