My daily activities are not unusual, I'm just naturally in harmony with them. Grasping nothing, discarding nothing... Supernatural power and marvelous activity - Drawing water and carrying firewood.

- Layman Pang-yun (740-808)

The wind has settled, the blossoms have fallen; Birds sing, the mountains grow dark -- This is the wondrous power of Buddhism.

- Ryokan, (1758-1831)
  *Dewdrops on a Lotus Leaf*
  Translated by John Stevens

The mind of the past is ungraspable; the mind of the future is ungraspable; the mind of the present is ungraspable.

- *Diamond Sutra*
Nothing in the cry
of cicadas suggests they
are about to die

- Basho

Unfettered at last, a traveling monk,
I pass the old Zen barrier.
Mine is a traceless stream-and-cloud life,
Of these mountains, which shall be my home?

- Manan (1591-1654)
The Penguin Book of Zen Poetry
Translated by Lucien Stryk and Takashi Ikemoto

My legacy -
What will it be?
Flowers in spring,
The cuckoo in summer,
And the crimson maples
Of autumn ... 

- Ryokan (1758-1831)
Dewdrops on a Lotus Leaf, p.143
Translated by John Stevens
The Five Precepts of Buddhism

Finally out of reach -
No bondage, no dependency.
How calm the ocean,
Towering the void.

- Tessho's death poem

How boundless the cleared sky of Samadhi!
How transparent the perfect moonlight of the Fourfold Wisdom!

At this moment what more need we seek?
As the Truth eternally reveals itself,
This very place is the Lotus Land of Purity,
This very body is the Body of the Buddha.

- Song of Meditation, Hakuin Ekaku Zenji

It is too clear and so it is hard to see.
A dunce once searched for a fire with a
lighted lantern.
Had he known what fire was,
He could have cooked his rice much sooner.

- Joshu Washes the Bowl, The Gateless Gate #7
Zen Flesh, Zen Bones, p. 176
Translated by Paul Reps and Nyogen Senzaki
Opening bell
    echoes from the canyon walls --
    raindrops on the river.

    The sounds of rocks bouncing off rocks;
    the shadows of trees traced on trees.

    I sit, still.
    The canyon river chants,
    moving mountains.

    The sermon spun on the still point:
    dropping off eternity, picking up time;
    letting go of self, awakened to Mind.

    - Michael P. Garofalo, *Above the Fog*

To what shall I compare this life of ours?
Even before I can say
it is like a lightning flash or a dewdrop
it is no more.

    - Sengai

A haiku is not a poem, it is not literature; it is a hand becoming,
a door half-opened, a mirror wiped clean. It is a way of returning
to nature, to our moon nature, our cherry blossom nature, our
falling leaf nature, in short, to our Buddha nature. It is a way in
which the cold winter rain, the swallows of evening, even the very
day in its hotness, and the length of the night, become truly
alive, share in our humanity, speak their own silent
and expressive language.

    Translations and commentary by Reginald H. Blyth
Loving old priceless things,
I've scorned those seeking
Truth outside themselves:
Here, on the tip of the nose.

- Layman Makusho

Reciting a small portion of the scriptures,
But putting it diligently into practice;
Letting go of passion, aggression, and confusion:
Revering the truth with a clear mind;
And not clinging to anything, here or hereafter;
Brings the harvest of the holy life.

- Dhammapada
  Translated by Balangoda Ananda Maitreya
  Found in Entering the Stream, 1993, p. 69
  Edited by Samuel Bercholz and Sherab Chodzin Kohn

In this way and that I have tried to save
the old pail
Since the bamboo strip was weakening and
about to break
Until at last the bottom fell out.
No more water in the pail!
No more moon in the water!

- Chiyono's enlightenment poem,
  Zen Flesh. Zen Bones, 1957, p. 31
  Translated by Paul Reps and Nyogen Zenzaki
This is what should be done
By one who is skilled in goodness,
And who knows the path of peace:
Let them be able and upright,
Straightforward and gentle in speech.
Humble and not conceited,
Contented and easily satisfied.
Unburdened with duties and frugal in their ways.
Peaceful and calm, and wise and skillful,
Not proud and demanding in nature.
Let them not do the slightest thing
That the wise would later reprove.

- The Buddha's Words on Kindness (Metta Sutta)

Before I had studied Zen for thirty years, I saw mountains as mountains,
and waters as waters.
When I arrived at a more intimate knowledge, I came to the point
where I saw that mountains are not mountains,
and waters are not waters.
But now that I have got its very substance I am at rest.
For it's just that I see mountains once again as mountains,
and waters once again as waters.

- Ching-yuan

Well versed in the Buddha Way,
I go the non-Way
Without abandoning my
Ordinary person's affairs.
The conditioned and
Name-and-Form,
All are flowers in the sky.
Nameless and formless,
I leave birth-and-death.

- Pang Yun, Two Zen Classics, p.263
Shariputra,
Form does not differ from emptiness;
Emptiness does not differ from form.
Form itself is emptiness;
Emptiness itself is form.
So too are feeling, cognition, formation, and consciousness.

- *Heart Sutra*

As flowing waters disappear into the mist
We lose all track of their passage.
Every heart is its own Buddha.
Ease off... become immortal.

Wake up! The world's a mote of dust.
Behold heaven's round mirror.
Turn loose! Slip past shape and shadow,
Sit side by side with nothing, save Tao.

- Shih-shu, 1703
*Stones and Trees; The Poetry of Shih-Shu*
Translation by James H. Sanford
The Japanese Haiku Masters

Everything
just as it is,
as it is,
as is.
Flowers in bloom.
Nothing to add.

- Robert Aitken, Roshi, As it Is

Fathomed at last!
Ocean's dried. Void burst.
Without an obstacle in sight,
It's everywhere!

- Joho, 12th Century
Zen Poems of China and Japan, 1973, p. 15
Translated by Lucien Stryk, Takashi Ikemoto and Taigan Takayama

The body is the tree of enlightenment,
The mind like a clear mirror stand;
Time and gain wipe it diligently,
Don't let it gather dust.

- Shenxiu

Enlightenment is basically not a tree,
And the clear mirror is not a stand.
Fundamentally there is not a single thing -
Where can dust collect.

- Huineng, Sixth Zen Patriarch in China, 638-713
Transmission of Light, Thomas Cleary, p. 140
Chanting the sutras,  
I receive the rice;  
The shrikes sing.

- Santoka Taneda (1882-1940)  
Mountain Tasting, John  
Stevens, p. 90

Zen Poetry: Selected Quotations III

There I was, hunched over office desk,  
Mind an unruffled pool.  
A thunderbolt! My middle eye  
Shot wide, revealing - my ordinary self.

- Layman Seiken, 11th Century  
Zen Poems of China and Japan, 1973, p. 14  
Translated by Lucien Stryk, Takashi Ikemoto and Taigan Takayama

An explosive shout cracks the great empty sky.  
Immediately clear self-understanding.  
Swallow up buddhas and ancestors of the past.  
Without following others, realize complete penetration.

- Dogen, 1200 - 1253  
Moon in a Dewdrop, p. 218  
Translated by Kazuaki Tanahashi
Two come about because of One,  
but don’t cling to the One either!  
So long as the mind does not stir,  
the ten thousand things stay blameless;  
no blame, no phenomena,  
no stirring, no mind.

The viewer disappears along with the scene,  
the scene follows the viewer into oblivion,  
for scene becomes scene only through the viewer,  
viewer becomes viewer because of the scene.

- Seng-ts'ae'an, 600  
  *Hsin-Hsin-Ming: Inscription on Trust in the Mind*  
  Translated by Burton Watson  
  Found in Entering the Stream, p. 149  
  Edited by Samuel Bercholz and Sherab Chodzin Kohn

Shame on you Shakyamuni for setting  
the precedent  
of leaving home.  
Did you think it was not there--  
in your wife's lovely face  
in your baby's laughter?  
Did you think you had to go elsewhere  
to find it?

- Judyth Collin  
  *The Layman's Lament*  
  Edited by Gary Gach

Direct your eye right inward, and you'll find  
A thousand regions of your mind  
Yet undiscovered. Travel them and be  
Expert in home-cosmography.

- Henry David Thoreau  
  *Walden*
Cloud Hands: Taijiquan and Qigong

Step out onto the Planet.
Draw a circle a hundred feet round.
Inside the circle are
300 things nobody understands, and maybe
nobody's ever seen.
How many can you find?

- Lew Welch
  Edited by Gary Gach

The Three Thousand Worlds
that step forward
with the light snow,
and the light snow that falls
in those Three Thousand Worlds.

- Ryokan, 1758-1851
  Ryokan: Zen Monk - Poet of Japan, 1977, p. 103
  Translated by Burton Watson
Gone, and a million things leave no trace
Loosed, and it flows through the galaxies
A fountain of light, into the very mind--
Not a thing, and yet it appears before me:
Now I know the pearl of the Buddha-nature
Know its use: a boundless perfect sphere.

- Han-Shan, circa 630
  *The Enlightened Heart*, edited by Stephen Mitchell, p. 30

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**Cold Mountain Buddhas: Han Shan**

Manjusri, a bodhisattva should regard all living beings as a wise man
Regards the reflection of the moon in water,
As magicians regard men created by magic.
As being like a face in a mirror,
like the water of a mirage;
like the sound of an echo;
like a mass of clouds in the sky;
like the appearance and disappearance of a bubble of water;
like the core of a plantain tree;
like a flash of lightning;
like the appearance of matter in an immaterial realm;
like a sprout from a rotten seed;
like tortoise-hair coat;
like the fun of games for one who wishes to die...

- *Vimalakirti Nirdesa Sutra*

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Spring has its hundred flowers,
Autumn its moon,
Summer has its cooling breezes,
Winter its snow.
If you allow no idle concerns
To weight on your heart,
Your whole life will be one
Perennial good season.

- *The Golden Age of Zen*, p. 286
Compiled by Michael P. Garofalo
Potety Notebook III of Michael P. Garofalo
Zen Poetry: Selected Quotations I
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