

Estimado familia de oraciones

Dear family of prayers

I crossed the desert singing gratitude for my undoing in California-- necessary in its brutality. I went directly to the neonatal intensive care in Las Cruces, New Mexico, where I decided to stay alive when I was a baby -- a staph infection in my navel. My father was a DJ so all of Las Cruces was praying for little Michael.

Again I go to sleep in a bed of prayers and wake up in a bed of prayers and so I say THANK YOU. I seem to be shaving away and giving over this round of secondary progressive multiple sclerosis, which has been with me for over a year .

I offer now a few poems with commentary on this cycle of healing.

The poems of this cycle are about reweaving a viable life -- and a healthy body.

I sit now on my grandfather's land in the mountains near Santa Fe, adjacent to his grave and where my mother and I buried my little brother Paul.

Paul -- a psychotic, ecstatic Mormon -- had disappeared four years before we finally had his skull and a thigh bone.

Here I will be largely until light fulfills itself June 20 at 10:04 pm -- solstice.. Here my primary spiritual practice is sitting still and receiving your prayers. Offering the multiple sclerosis at the crossroads -- the bleeding bouquet of flowers.

I have never been more alive.

It is customary in one of the African traditions I trained a little in -- Ifa' of the Yoruba -- is to invite the trickster Eshu before entering any serious ritual activity.

So I begin with some humorous poems -- and then an appreciation of you the prayers called "Seek the light and praise it"

When you are alone for a few days or months nothing is more painful or boring than complaint.

So this poem is called

Quit your bitchin

Wisdom is merciless

suffer it with a smile on your face
and a song in your heart

and halleluyah on your lips

but suffer the light for real

You volunteered so quit your bitchin'

An incurable neuromuscular disease?

It gets a lot worse
and you KNOW it

Quit you bitchin' and get to work

A new diagnosis

I m pioneering pre-senile dementia
Boning up for the real thing

I think in bumperstickers

THINGS ARE THE WAY THEY ARE ARENT THEY?

Signed Dogen Zenji

Or was it old Al Einstein?

Or Doris Day?

We practitioners of pre-senile dementia
let slip small details like that

Things are like they are.

What?

You want to challenge that?

Well you have always been
who you've always been

Gobs

"He was perplexed"
on gravestone

About what?

Gobs of suchness all over the place.

Have a drink and a spoonful of graveyard dust.

Having offered homage to the trickster. let me offer homage to the you, this
village of prayers, who have sustained me in such a time of uncertainty
And gratitude to the intimate stuff of healing.

This is the third draft of this essay.

Not incoherent, I hope, in trying to express the inexpressible.

Initially I wrote a longish -- rather epic -- dreadfully confessional tour of the
inner life of multiple sclerosis -- specifically through the scleroses of the
lesions spied by MRI --

heart chakra

throat chakra

third eye

corpus collosum

crown chakra

brain stem

and finally offering the matrix of it all -- the composite reality of MS.

which I will do again on the solstice.

I will only offer you the prayer I wrote when I offered over the sclerotic heart.

But first the pristine heart of compassion.

Seek the light and praise it

Happy ceramic cat

in rat shit

Front of virgen

bitsy baby Jesus

Found poetry

Zazen

Happy in rat shit
La virgen

Jesus loves being held
Jesus I love being held.

Zazen in Buddha field
Love in all directions
Jesus happy in rat shit

Cat ponders incarnation

Jesus born in rat shit.

Love in all directions
and every prayer
every flicker of candle
Every blessed intent
gathers now in my body
a wide and wild community of loved ones.

Seek the light and praise it

(One of the great gifts of MS is that she has made a born again Buddhist of me)

Sutra of the heart

Health must be lost and gained
health is not lost or gained

marriage never succeeds or fails

Enlightenment begins when gained nothing

No quanta of compassion possessed

No consciousness to be altered

Nothing is the pearl of great price

The heart of love forever receives another

Give it all over

Heart chakra sclerotic with ego.

As I "toured" the sclerotic domains of my MS body I found the Aries torque --
me born onto a "battlefield."

To see compassion as heroic is distortive -- and clearly distorted my
neurosystem and my spiritual practice.

The priest who gave me the last rites spared me eternity in limbo and
delivered me over to the hell of the twentieth and twenty first century:
apocalypse --

Still, life

Never cared for the twentieth century
Too much technology

Truth is my soul never arrived

Nagasaki and Auschwitz
Nixon flying to the moon

But twenty-first?

Forget it
Capitalists and pet lemmings

Consumers as pet lemmings

Collective ecstasy of cliff
Sudden enlightenment
head bashed on stone

Bleak?

Cant be bleak enough

Yet still, life
Ashes, anguish, sing praise

We temporarily alive
Sing praise for life left to live

Full and abundant
Can't hold back

Sing praise
for such a planet
this ant
this starry night
spider in orb
and you, radiantly vulnerable
knowing this moment of breath
will not last
flash of lightning

KA-BOOM!

then silence

silence

Sclerotic Heart

Repeats stories
where compassion was called for

Meeting the moment heroically
substantiating to myself and everyone

HE IS A DEEP DUDE

Spirituality expunged of solitude

Give it all over

Whenever I make an offering of a sclerotic loci I wait two days then check out
if the
offering was received
"What is the reweaving of the heart chakra"

This is the first poem written as I was folding into your prayers --

First Day of Spring 2013
(Love poem to MS)

Within cauldron of prayer
Broth of MS
dissolved and sipped

elixir

Does she step forth blazing?
naked?

Or still yet moving
far interior burn through
pores and shit

You to whom I was passionately wed

We part so long
So very long
Before death

You and I part before beginnings,
symptoms, diagnosis, heartbreak and vision

Inseparable until separation
Chosen by MS to be husband

Ten years now

Longer than mother of daughter

and perhaps more intimate

A young mans longing for intimacy
is a painful thing

He hasn't yet the soul for it
Suffers his fear and knowledge

But intimacy with spirit of MS?
We know each other well

May it not be til death do us part

God's Intent is to Heal

These lesions
These neurons
Conversing with myelin sheaths
and wild roses

Singing to one another

Field of nameless lovingkindness
of prayers that I might be healed
Healing is previous to diagnosis
outside of any prognosis

Origin of healing
not of the body

Any healing that does not heal or soothe
the wound between inner and outer

is superficial

And the real "hero" of the story is Spider Woman -- who my tribe in Africa (the Shona) call Ambuya Bwebwe and the Navajo call Adzani Na'ash jee'ii

She is the one who weaves.
She is Midzimu -- the ancestors beyond the ancestors.

This is the heart of the medicine I practice -- human beings cannot heal -- to give oneself to the invisible ones.

Adzani Na'ash jeeiii

Other Side of Blue

Stars pulling upstream seeds

Cerebral spinal fluid in daylight
Twisting earth pulls stars upstream
across other side of blue

Dark of sun
light of sun

Sa'ah nagai

bik'eh

Hozho

Spider pulling stars and seeds
day and night
in body

Cats cradle

reconfiguring

Love you all

I ll leave it to you to read between the lines.

Remember the solstice (June 20, 2013 at 10:04 pm)

After offering the lesions of each sacred loci I d wait a couple of days the inquire of Stephen Karchers' I Ching of how my fate was rewoven. After giving over the heart chakra scleroses I cast hexagram 38 -- DIVERGING with 61 CENTERING/ OPEN HEART the relating hexagram.

DIVERGING -- changing line in the heart of the exterior life -- "Your ancestors are biting through the obstacles to confer their blessing. Forget glory, achievement now. Help and nourish others. Consider yourself blessed by

these difficulties. Give open handedly and do not impose yourself. You are returned to the Way like an animal led on a leash. Be decisive and part from the past Step out and meet the new destiny."

Life is temporary
That is the measure of its beauty

Fragile?
Aliveness of its beauty

Vulnerable?

Pun of venerability
Fountain of compassion
Source of humor

Fuel of survival

dark night
namelessness invoked

Who is like God?

Yielding illness as gift
bouquet of years