

## **Do you mind?**

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When it's hard to find a teacher, we lament:  
"When will I find a teacher to teach me?"  
When there is no true teacher, the false guru lurks  
like a shadow in the light:  
the brighter the light, the darker the shadow.  
What a beautiful shadow, we think, and run after it.  
We keep running, but the light is always behind us.

When it's hard to find the Dhamma, we lament:  
"When will I find the true teaching?"  
Where there is no true teaching, false teachings abound  
like weeds in a vast field in the sunlight:  
the sun and the rain feed the tall rich weeds.  
What beautiful weeds, we think, tall and green.  
We run into it, play in it, it cuts and stings and itches.

When it's hard to find books on the Dhamma, we lament:  
"Where can I find a good book on the true teaching?"  
All we find are false words on glossy paper, nice covers,  
tantalizing, seductive to the unseeing eye.  
What beautiful books, must be by a great writer!  
We believe all its falsehood and self-teachings.

When Dhamma books are freely there for us, we lament:  
"Oh, so many books! I don't like clutter!"  
The truth is more messy: too lazy, too proud, to read.  
We want instant fixes for eternal questions,  
disposable teachings easily learned, easily forgotten.  
Our disposable lives, hollow as our empty book-shelves.

We don't need books, you say: it's all in the heart?  
What you mean is: Stop thinking, listen to me!  
Better than books is to practise, you say?  
What are you practising? What are you learning?  
So it's you who have been burning the books:  
ignorance is a fire that blinds with lust and hate.

When Dhamma teachers who love Dhamma abound:  
"Oh, these teachers are so difficult! I like simple!"  
The truth is simple enough: we are simple-minded,  
a rich field left fallow, a nest for vermin and worms,  
flooded when it rains, cracked when it suns.  
Our fields are rich, we hunger in the midst of plenty.

Now there are Dhamma teachers, there are Dhamma books.  
We only need to listen deep; we only need to read at will.  
We have living teachers for living answers to true happiness.  
All we need to do is ask and learn, hear and know,  
we only need to be truly still and light our hearts.  
For, that is how wisdom grows: in living light,  
and living right, then we will grow, we will rise,  
rooted in deep mud, through dark waters, into the light.

Do you mind? Use our mind, open our heart.  
Let eyes and ears be our teachers; they are patient learners:  
The stiller they are, the wiser we be.  
Even as we sit in silence, the words of wisdom are clearly heard;  
the Dhamma-vision clearer, nearer to us—our feet on the path.

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[an occasional re-look at the Buddha's Example and Teachings]

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