**Back Principles (1) : you have my back**

You have my back,

will teach me

buddhist principles

for non-fretting

If you *have* my

back, nothing

to fret

about

(non?)

But seriously,

even backs

have a learn

ing curve

−−none has

been bent to

break point

till now

You can heal it …?

I am astonished

−−& begin

to believe you

( …yes)

**Back Principles (2) : fret no more**

You cover my back

with your hands,

probing, caressing,

easing, not just

fascia but life’s

hard wear

& tear

You promise your

buddha love

will teach me

fret no

more

I will fall into

this feeling,

you will

catch me

−−pls

let me do

likewise &

not think

about it

No mind—

two hearts

two souls

Invisible spine

holds them

in correct

purposeful

line

**Back Principles (3) : thru walls**

I back into you

sorry it was on

purpose one of

those little

moments

desire compels

I would back into

you again & again

until you reach

out for me—

then never stop

backing up

I would back thru

long walls with

you, in fact

maybe we’re

already doing

so …?

**Back Principles (4) : in healthful tune**

Your back is to

me & I hold

you, hold

onto you

& hear your

body say

yes, this is

the right

way

You have yet

to say ‘maybe’

to me, nor

I you

We go from

somewhat

fretful

‘yes’

(for god

buddha sake)

to simple

(outrageous)

‘yes pls’

fretless

musician-

speak,

this is in

healthful

tune

**Back Principles (5) : naked air / stunned emptiness**

You teach me more

than all that is

behind my back

(years, decades

since)

I have learned

*nothing* till you

came into my

charred world

(burn the spine-

bound books,

their fraught

lives)

I learn to lean

back simply

into naked air,

all that holds

me up

You have opened

this stunned

emptiness,

this air that

tests my

back

**Back Principles (6) : I am still afraid**

I am still afraid

of losing you

dying with-

out you

Now we *have*

our backs it

is horror to

free-fall

alone into

our last

journeys

You say you

will teach me

letting go is

buddha love

−−can anyone

be so certain

or so strong

I know you

are here for

life’s edge

I will lean

against air,

but a void …?

There is no

back word

here, no

backbone

This is a path

we all struggle

on (a back-

road?)

−−no

“I found its”

on the way,

no instant

grass-i-ass

Just endless

wrestling

in the mud

with angels

Of whom you

would be

cleanly mine,

surely

**Back Principles (7) : be blessed for that**

I will *try* to learn

what you teach me

… difficult student

Confused, full

of doubt

(all sides,

paths)

Guilt is *not*

the issue

It is the holy desire

to believe (say

it was heysus

of nazareth)

on the back

side of

liturgy,

built on

lies (& its

history)

Is your buddha

different?

Your strength

lies somewhere

(beyond any

doubt)

Let it have

my back, &

be blessed

for that

**Back Principles (8) : it must live in us**

You *have* my back

Let that be blessing

enough

(More than I

am worth …)

Let me be worthy

to have yours

There is nothing

else we can do

You know more

than I, which is

little enough

Hold each other

−−front-word &

back-word,

now till

eternity

This is the

blessing,

yours &

mine

It must live

in us

No-where else

to go

**Back Principles (9) : back to back**

No-where else

at all likely

to go

Back to

back …

How else to

travel

And with whom

It can only

be done this

way

Get ready

**Back Principles (10) : forward / gone**

Do not fret, she

goes with you

That is the way

forward, when

all else has

stumbled

hopelessly

sideways

Too much, too

many times

never looking

careful enough

ahead, ground,

guidelines

(or guides)

She alone has

your back

(ever)

−−trust

& rejoice you

fickle, duped

stumblebum

your days are

gloriously

(outrageously)

numbered

now

One, two,

three

gone

**Back Principles (11) : fretless music**

She gives you

the buddha

you hold the

christ

Fretless music

Back to back

Do *not* prosthletize

evangelize

(ticky-tacky)

The brain learns

heart, needs

no washing

**Back Principles (12) : doesn’t speak words**

You follow her call

down this path

No-one has ever said

follow me

Tired of leading

nowhere …

Trust is the

option left

The footing will

be *where*

*it is*

My guide is

my wisdom

−−& she

doesn’t speak

words

**Back Principles (13) : doesn’t mouth words**

She doesn’t mouth

words either

She looks in

my eyes …

**Back Principles (14) : Keats & Rilke coming up again (& damned Spicer, too)**

Who sees into me

… has mine heart?

Too easily tossed

(on a heap, on

a mound)

This inning is

future time

(grace time …?)

I would take

a pitcher

of you

Drink it, bat it

out of here

−−whatever

it takes

I lose myself

completely, am

struck dumb

in your

buddha

love

Where is my

ground, where

is my Heysus

spinning to

now

This (heady) gain

is nerve loss

(also)

It is mystery

one enters

−−terrified

(& possibly

alive …)

Witless &

spooked,

& unafraid

to say so

(god help

me)

Look in mine

eyes & give

me your

strength,

I have none

that doesn’t

shake the bases

loose in the

night

Look in mine

eyes, I have

forgotten how

to see

**Back Principles (15) : the Cradle**

Why do I keep

coming back to these

un-manageable things,

images

−−they mean

nothing

(to me)

They have history

on their side

which means

what, exactly

−−that they

are images,

cradles we

put things in

till later

(all our lives)

They are just

open hoarding

drawers

Do they have our

backs up to

& including

the big un-lock

Do we shake them out

anywhere after-

wards

We are civilized

people, but

have no real

homes at all

−−empty

cradles

**Back Principles (16) : won’t be budged**

Ok I won’t fret

the small stuff

−−still leaves the big

one (that locker …

fret-full, yaah)

That last closed

drawer

Scares the be-jesus

(hey Zeus)

out of me, & isn’t

bravado always

the biggest liar

of all

What if it won’t

go, it’s never

gone anywhere

anyway

Won’t be budged

Locked in for

life, sitting

in a cradle

staring out

at me

**Back Principles (17) : endless drawers**

Maybe when you get

tired of looking at

it (& it you)

that’s when you

can just walk

away

Give up all the

ghosts

−−yours

& everyone

else’s

See your life

pass before

your eyes

Wish you knew

where it was

going

Or not …

(oh that

drawer

again …)

Endless

**Back Principles (18) full on / full off**

It’s like roulette for

methuselurities

Drawers opening

& closing

without end

Nightmare either

way

−−*full on*

or *full off*

Beyond terror

Give me the

Nazarene, pls

Shut the casino

rip out the gaudy

red carpeting,

dim the flakey

lights

Keep something else

dimly burning

for a while

(god sake

on that,

buddha

too)

**Back Principles (19) : sapien & cowardly heart**

Been through the agoraphobic’s

desert, Yuma at 117 degrees

Life in the furnace under

a terrifying open sky

(no place to burrow)

You say I need to en-

dure the sweat-lodge,

sleep with snakes

& scorpions

at my side

(every fear alive)

Live a full week

w/ the Terrors

(find the buddha …

or the christ

magnified?)

You say …

you say …

And in you I

surely trust

(god help

me …)

True soul

touch me,

ease me

(somewhat …)

Horror wherein lurks

the desert of my

sapien &

cowardly

heart

**Back Principles (20) : unremarkable things**

Burrow into fear

it is no simple

exercise

Comes nearer (& dearer)

each moment you are ā-

way, indistractible

Will not rest when

you are on that

wild, ridiculous

sky-road to

habitats un-

known

−−will not

rest, habituated

or no

There *is* no rest

for the wicked

(of course)

nor for the brave

(space-rider)

So do not be brave

it means nothing

at all

Poseurs & bravado

Live in fear (or quest)

of the buddha &

the christ

−−fretless,

back to back

Spineless & ā-feared

(endlessly, & to

no good)

Six string or twelve?

(he fretted)

My christ I cannot

do that, it is no

sacred thing

(hanging on metal

or on nylon

strings)

It is a string (a loop)

of unmerited, un-

remarkable

things

I was hanging in

there, waiting,

noting your

admirable lack

of fear

(grace notes)

Synapses or some-

thing real, like

slide guitar,

hard wired

straight to

the spun

down

soul

I beg you christ-

like, & you

slide by un-

noticed

**Back Principles (21) : out of your hands**

You teach me & I

am stubborn,

go stubborn in

your hands

I am dumb,

ā-feared

And yet,

knowing

you …

I could be …

could just

*be*

But that is

so far to

go

A life-time trying

to think it

through

You’re right, I

am nowhere

(And nowhere

to be found)

Letting go carries

all the fear out

of your

hands

I would be

braced in

you

(or wish

to be)

Loop your fingers

together (pls)

& catch me

Make a brace

that holds

the *two*

of us

For eternity …

A brace

that nets

the both

of us

too

**Back Principles (22) : naked**

This is naked

(I know)

but it be not

cheap

It is spare &

minimal

(as you

would

wish

me)

I live in your

shadow &

you ask nothing

of me but

let go

This is the least

you can teach

me, give

myself

to me

Naked &

no easy

thing

And forever

running out

of time to

learn

**Back Principles (23) : ready to pay**

Running down the

clock, see the

naked man

run

All his bounded

glory absenting

itself

−−you call for

a U-turn

Illegal on this high-

way

he points out

signage

(stickler for

detail)

Go with your lips

stuck closed then

they don’t bother

with a seal

(nor a kiss)

They have you in

the thought loop

want you un-

prepared for

closure,

ready to

pay

**Back Principles (24) : in absence**

Spiritual crises a life-

time, & virgin births

dime a dozen

Spiritual crisis

parables by

committee &

a lost Q

Mis-translations

mis-dating

mis-placing

gā-lore

And yet the christ

sits still

(like your buddha)

−−resonant

as all

desire

Tormenting in

absence

**Back Principles (25) : make it land**

Tonight we are both

in pain (space-rider)

Back to back

we can only

stand

(webbed

netted

braced)

I will hold you

it is just

return

There is another

“principle” here

−−if we can

find it …

But it *is*

here

Lives inside

… your

buddha, his

christ,

who knows

for sure …

It is not a

dead thing,

it can fly

(space-rider)

Watch it …

… come & go

One day, pls,

make it

land

**Back Principles (26) : this agoraphobic thing**

He would fly to you

again tonite if

he could

On the wings

of a Q

On a hope

that it be

true

Far easier

to believe

in you …

This is the

struggle

(of course)

Struggle path, back-

road, wrestle ground

(muddied

angels)

Welcome to the

sweat-lodge

The furnace is

set at 117,

& going

higher

Hang on to

the nearest

nylon string,

you won’t like

this agora-

phobic

thing

**Back Principles (27) : things that cowards say**

She is burning by the

sweat-lodge, burn-

ing, flaming out

He’s watching thru

his open drawer,

surprised to see

fire & smoke

pass by all

holy doubt

Monks will kerosene

themselves alight

(unafraid entire

vast night)

He will squint

liquid eyes all

morning long,

watch her return

comes on strong

We are not monks,

he said (did dis-

avow)

enough sweat

already on my

naked brow

Oh the things

that cowards

say

when

she is still so

far away

**Back Principles (28) : watching you breathe**

You will bring your

buddha back

on your return

That will mean

nothing &

everything

to him

Night chills will be

stuck back in

the drawer

(until un-

locked

again)

He would have

you teach him

(alone)

just by

watching you

breathe

**Back Principles (29) : temporary too**

He would have

you near, help

him choose be-

tween the two

Wiser still, he

would include

himself,

three at least

by now

(And you make

four)

So where does he

go after you?

Too many questions

−−just silence

for response

Hold on, hold

on to each

*other* is all

they can

think

to do

And that forever

temporary too

**Back Principles (30) : absent there**

This suddenly isn’t working

out too well (he read

himself between

the lines)

Maybe no-one has

anyone’s back

at all (after

all, at all−−

that kind of

small ’n all)

Maybe it’s just

something to yab

about until the

light goes out

There are no bones

or backbones then,

nothing holding

any of it up

Except the weak

promise of

tomorrow’s

breath of

air

And your buddha

seems sublimely

absent there

**Back Principles (31) : make some fizz**

Absent tarmac, rails

roads, you can’t

travel *to* it

*Not* a place on

the map, try

inside she

said

Too glib? (Or fib …)

And how get

there any-

way? Bore a

hole, you

bore (“to

himself”)

Nothing ever

works the way

advertised,

why should

spirits move in

there now ?

There is hot &

there is cold

(another one just

flew by)

Can’t bore a hole

in cold sky, try

your backbone,

make some fizz

**Back Principles (32) : all the way to hell**

Heading south

inside himself

−−to touch

the christ

Much help

needed

(of, or off,

course)

Navigate

too much

bones in

the way

Sinew too

The christ is

silent

(buddha too)

−−means nothing

at all, nothing

new

You gotta

reach

deeper

or not

at all

Wring the

bowel next,

like a door-

bell

… all the way

to hell (&

gone)

**Back Principles (33) : continuously greased**

Nothing more to report

at present, the usual

static in way of

penetration heart

or soul, whichever

makes more sense

in these terrifying

&/or godforsaken

moments &

glimpses

of true

time

Nothing new in the

sweat locker &

same lock on

the perennial

drawer

The medieval drawer

slid easy to & fro

being so

continuously &

smoothly

greased

**Back Principles (34) : spiritual fatigue**

This is surely

spiritual fatigue

(on the loose)

(at loose ends)

Backed into a corner

(loosely speaking)

Back me, back

me not …

My back is knotted

Lies bound in a

locked drawer

When it creaks open

pray for something

merciful

Pray there is

something

there

You will not

have my back

beyond this

point

It will be loose

at ease, or it

will be

broken

**Back Principles (35) : genealogy**

Going in deep

(by now)

need rimes

w/ fatigue

Is (surely) driving

this path

(muddied

angels, ruts

& all)

Where does this

genealogy

“get off” ?

(the beaten

track one

lies in)

We’ve been

“all over it”

endlessly

by now—

sliding

drawer

Our live-sprung

young ones—

where are we

*from* ?

We’re “at”

where do

we *go*

from

here ?

**Back Principles (36) : them who need**

We “go” to darkness

(or to light …)

Pray the christ

(baldly bold

here)

will “be” there

after all

It is (finally)

our cultural

in-heritance

(genealogy)

The buddha

in another’s

drawer

Bless them all

That seek …

Bless his love

(who sees the

buddha)

Bless him who

yearns to see

Bless them

who need

**Back Principles (37) : blessings**

Bless him

−−for he

needs

His need

grows

yearly

(mouldy crop

on a side-

path)

She cures it

(kindness of

her buddha)

But not his

(not his)

(knotted up)

He asks the

christ …

hiding

in his

drawer

That now ungreased

static-y slide,

that *leap*

of faith

I slide by you

un-noticed in

your temple,

bless you

(who have

found)

Bless me

(who has

need of

you)

**Back Principles (38) : (truthfully) alone / Behind you**

I leap

you (singular) leap

he, she, or it leaps

I was leaping

I shall have leaped (leapt?)

(like a damned leper …)

I am leaping

(all ways)

She (you) give him

courage

to leap

(unashamed)

Out of the

(spirit) closet,

the drawer

For the christ

God help him …

His need

is naked

& (truthfully)

alone

Behind you

**Back Principles (39) : pockets empty**

Yes, we have each

other’s back

… till death

do us part

I have no other

“principles”

left

Back left & back

right pockets

sitting on

empty

**Back Principles (40) : as you do**

How can he love

the christ

when *you* are

so there, so

very there

(for him)

And your buddha

cannot speak

to him …

As you do

**Back Principles (41) : how to go forward**

Path to the Divine

(is the christ)

How he thinks …

But now *you* –

path to the

path

(Tao to Tao ?)

I feel you

behind me

Still not knowing

how to go

forward

(without

you)

**Back Principles (42) : so *incredibly* small**

This is crazy-mazy talk,

one of those wonky

prayer paths,

Thesean

Goes in circles too

Comes (always)

back to you

Perhaps the christ

is in the buddha

The buddha in

the christ

We are so

*incredibly*

small,

we’d fit in

anything

at all

**Back Principles (43) : she said so too**

Why so afraid

it’s only a

flippin’

drawer

Closes & locks

down easy

some fine

one day

(After a lot

of thought)

The drawer is

well versed

in this,

you’re not

(that’s the rub)

And thinking

doesn’t help

(She said so

too, &

said the

buddha

knew)

**Back Principles (44) : another lifetime**

Ok, he’d almost come

to say, let’s

get this over

with …

Let’s shut the god-

damn drawer

Then you came along,

wedged it wide again

There are two paths

to this chest,

forward

& back

(two beats)

Go back then,

put it off

another life-

time

*Do this for me*,

he said

(pls believe

him, & those

who follow)

**Back Principles (45) : all we can do**

This doesn’t solve

anything, just

delays it

But what a

way to go

out

(make it

last life-

times

two)

You finally

at his back

Prayer is pure

selfishness

(leave the

christ, the

buddha

well enough

alone)

I pray to you …

Let me have

your back

too

(All we can

do)

**Back Principles (46) : feel my face open**

This is not over

The search

spirituelle

And for love

(just the once)

There *is* a

connection

(though it

baffles)

Two-three-four-

cornered

god …

And you

−−at my

back

And before

me …

Feel my

face

open

**Back Principles (47) : the christ, the buddha, & you (love)**

You

you

& you

(god …)

You, you & you

Where do

we go

from

here ?

**Back Principles (48) : seal it in your soul**

Where do we go

from here, where

*did* we go

from here

“Arrivals” is at

5:00 p.m.

(local time)

Take me some-

where then

Take him …

Take them both

home

Let the christ

find them

there,

waiting

Ask your

buddha

to do this

for you

Then seal it

in your

soul

**Back Principles (49) : nothing left to do**

You have brought him

closer to the christ

than anyone

has before

And you follow

the buddha (!)

He would bleed

for you, give

his life for

you

Look what you

have *done*

It is miracle

enough

Nothing left

to do but

wait …

**Back Principles (50) : with you too**

I wait

you wait

he, she, or it waits

No−− you have

found

I wait alone

(but with you)

He waits alone

(with you too)

**Back Principles (51) : think big**

Put this thing off

keep the drawer

open, you wedge

it there

He would bleed

inside, or

without

You know that …

He is not ready

to leave you

Yet you have

brought him

to this place

You (she)

him (me)

Bless you …

We are incredibly

small for this

The christ, the

buddha, makes

us think

big

**Back Principles (52) : agoraphobic**

Big spaces are

made of this

Phoenix to Yuma

−−terrifying

The christ to

the buddha …

terrifying too

Hold my back (pls)

the landscape

would break

it in halves

Agoraphobic,

big space

Holding emptiness

in my hands

**Back Principles (53) : face the christ / thank your buddha well**

He would hold

only you

Only you

will do

Then he nears

the christ

Broken hands

may heal

Touch & time

Let there be

enough of

each

You will heal

this

That is the

“leap” of

faith

The rest will

take care of

itself

Then he’ll face

the christ

(& thank

your

buddha

well)

**Back Principles (54) : all over his face**

Bring us together

*Brought* us

together

(… yes)

There is a

promise

here

It is made,

sealed

We breathe it

You breathe

yours, he

breathes

his

You make

it true

Bring it, deliver

it over,

your breath

all over

his face

**Back Principles (55) : like the wind**

The buddha in

your breath

Stirs the christ

in his soul

Remember

that …

Like the wind

on his face

as a child

Never forgotten

It must

be so,

he feels

it still

Your breath

reminds

him

And the christ

(& the buddha)

were there

**Back Principles (56) : if you will**

Let go, she says,

stop thinking …

Fall into your

buddha

Call him the

christ, if

you will

**Back Principles (57) : no meaning**

He will have

your back

too

When you

fall

Know this …

No matter

the name

Words have

no meaning

here (at all)

**Back Principles (58) : more than life itself**

Your breath like some

kind of long

remembered

wind on his

face

Shake him closer

than ever

The christ love

& buddha love

are one

Get him there

You say to him

*I love you more*

*than life itself*

It is miracle

enough

The Divine lives

here, call it

what you will

Though we are in-

credibly small

the path just

got shorter

by two

breaths

**Back Principles (59) : you make this journey**

Life itself …

life itself

What better path

(or place)

Mud washes off,

drawers open

close en route

You make this

journey cleaner

(clearer)

from terrified

space

**Back Principles (60) : befriend them on their ancient way**

This is as close as

we can (possibly)

come, the gift

of our lives

Miracle enough

The path has

two backs

to carry it

They *have*

each other’s

back

No matter what

muddied angels

say

The buddha &

the christ

befriend them

on their

ancient

way