

Contemplation  
of  
Emptiness

Nelly Pyatsky



# Contemplation of Emptiness

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## Contemplation of Emptiness

“Contemplate the emptiness of this world. When you have destroyed the perception of yourself, you will overcome even death. The Lord of Death cannot find those who perceive things in such a way.”

*Sutta-nipāta*, 5.15

“Form is emptiness, and emptiness is form. The same is true for sense, thought, will, and consciousness.”

*Heart Sūtra*

## *The Dry Well*

Thirsting of the senses intoxicates and wears out the mind. I see a well, and wish to drink from it. However, it is filled with but echoing memories.

The well is empty. It has dried up. I come down to the bottom in hope of discovering a dribble of water if any, only to find cracks in the soil.



Being at the bottom of the well, I understand that it embodies the world of desires. Only in the bright heavens I see a strip of blue, from which descends the breath of peacefulness into the void world of the well.



## *The Ruined House*

Sadness conceals the path and enslaves the mind. The world becomes gloomy and the spirit cannot find refuge in itself. The senses become similar to a ruined house with shattered windows, sagging doors, and a collapsed roof.





But what could have been ruined? Only that which is impermanent, that which arose from delusion. It is the feeling of loneliness that is ruined, and the disturbing dream of complacency that is in ruins. Gazing upon the ruined house, I see in it the abandoned perception of my personality.



## *The Forsaken Temple*

Fear encumbers the mind, and deprives it of vitality. In the thicket of confusion, I see the forsaken temple of my hopes. There, instead of chants, resonate the sounds of rain drops, which penetrate the ragged roof.



The forsaken temple is the world of thought confined by fear. However, fear is only scary on the outside, which is where I feel myself as if I were my body. But when I enter the temple, fear transforms into its walls, which keep me away from wandering about in the world of names and forms. This temple was forsaken by me in the past, but now I renew in it the service of renouncing the world.



## *Upside-Down Palace*

Anger submerges the mind in anxiety and darkness. Indignation upsets the bowl of senses, causing their power and vitality to splatter out. The sky of hopes falls apart, becoming a palace that is turned upside down.



In anger, spite and enmity I discern the upside-down palace of the mind.  
The upside-down palace of anger is located behind the mirror, like a reflection in water. My own power has upturned it. And it is my power that will raise it and revive the heavens of mind, which are ruled by good-will.



## *The Chilly Bathhouse*

Euphoria agitates and dissipates the mind. The senses burst out, the mind flails about uncontrollably like a boat that has been sent on a turbulent river. Impatience pervades all of the senses. They are naked like the body of a visitor of a bathhouse.



I discern in euphoria a chilly bathhouse. I warm myself inside it, pouring over my body freezing water of sobering shame for my mistakes. Burning cold evokes in me a sensation of inner warmth, which bestows upon me the joy of overcoming suffering.



*Let there be good!*