



Jon Wesick

The Great Mahayana

I spotted the Buddha at a VD clinic.
What a comfort to see him,
especially there,
but I'd just peed in a cup
and was too embarrassed to ask
whether love was immaculate
or just another infection.

Outside Mahakasyapa shook his fist
at a neighbor playing Led Zeppelin
and in a church basement
a man with a shaved head
faced a room of folding chairs.

“Hello, I’m Sagata and I’m an alcoholic.”

If I hadn’t invited Nagarjuna
over for steak and beer,
none of this would have happened.
Now Ananda hands out condoms
in the red-light district where short skirts rise
over blue panties. Does his eye linger
a little too long?

Buddhahood
restricted to connoisseurs of self-denial
no more! No more climbing Mt. Sumeru
in oven mitts and Teflon sandals!
In the Great Mahayana everyday life is enlightenment.
What do you think? Gold chain, Rolex watch,
Bodhidharma as personal-injury lawyer?
Mercedes-Benz, Armani suit,
Zen Master Dogen at Los Alamos?

Jon Wesick has published work in such journals as *Pearl*, *Slipstream*, and *The New Orphic Review*. He is an editor of the *San Diego Poetry Annual* and hosts the Gelato Poetry Series in San Diego.