In the Spring of 2000, I taught a class on the oxherding pictures and asked students to submit their own versions of the well-known scenes, depicting the path of Zen. —M.W.

The Oxherding Pictures

Robert Dodge

SUMMER 2000

Searching for the Ox

gle alone
omething missing
everything shifting
and unsteady

Seeing the Traces

what's this?
something flashes
startling
right under his nose

Seeing the Ox

udden insight
overwhelming
unexpected
in his face
The Ox Forgotten
the dream is over
but something lingers
safe, content
he floats

Herding the Ox
dropped away
too much to handle
just observing
looks OK

Catching the Ox
chaos!
nowhere to stand
attachment, aversion
clinging in fear
The Ox and Boy Both Gone
through the window
moonlight streaming
floods everything
all dissolves

Returning to the Origin
morning sunlight
restores the world
so familiar
ever new

Coming Home on the Ox's Back
strong and steady
marching homeward
now is found
what was not lost

Entering the Market with Bliss-Bearing Hands
life goes on
moment by moment
his delight
shows the way