



## FROM DRAGON FLOWER MOUNTAIN

Rev. Master Kōten

*This is the story that the land told me:*

The Old Woman was very tired - she had been climbing the ridge, carrying the basket, for what seemed like a long time. Her work was almost done. Only one task remained and then she could rest. She climbed slowly for she was very old. When she reached the top of the ridge, she turned around and looked back over all that she had created. She had given everything of herself and now the land was still and complete far below and all around her.

Silently, she blessed each rock and every beloved pool and tree that she had made - each lovingly and completely blessed. Then she blessed the strong wind, which came from her own breath, so that it would always blow away all clinging evil and smoke. She blessed the heat of the strong sunlight, which came out of the warmth of her own vast body, so that it would always melt the ice and snows in the springtime. Next, she looked up and blessed the strong rooted mountains created from her own bones so that they should always stand guard and lead the eye and soul upwards. At last she blessed the strong river that had been poured out from her own lifeblood that it would always flow and bring life to the dry lands.

Finally she turned and looked far below at the most beloved of all - the place where all these elements: wind and heat and water and earth come together to mix and to meld - the meeting of the rivers - the place at the centre of the heart where life emerges and becomes possible.

Then, for the sake of all those who would come to this, the most beautiful place, and love it and make their homes here - in the hearing of all worlds and all times, with all that she had brought into being as witnesses, she spoke, quietly, distinctly, with all power and for all to hear and remember: "Do not kill, do not kill yourselves and do not try to kill me. Do not steal, do not steal from yourselves and do not try to steal from me. Do not lie, do not lie to yourselves and do not try to lie to me. Do not abuse, do not abuse yourselves and do not try to abuse me. Do not pollute, do not pollute yourselves and do not try to pollute me. Then she was silent and the very rocks and trees reverberated with her voice and her message, and the river and the wind and the sun and the mountain replied, "For all time we will remember."

Only one more thing remained to be done, her own special gift to the future - a place, a space, a treasure valley where there would be stored up, for all to find and use, every plant - leaf, root, berry that could heal and feed- a place of abundance, and of life, and of quiet and spiritual peace. She lifted her basket full to the brim with every good seed and root, and with all love and deep intention she poured everything out. As she did so, a beautiful, calm and blessed valley appeared full of all good things. It was guarded by lovely hills and mountains and a stream of water ran through it, giving life.

She smiled, turned and laid her body down at the entrance to the new valley - to rest until it was time in the far, far future for her to arise and renew the world.

Here ends the story that the land told me. She is still there where she laid her body down so long ago - in the form of the enormous rock at the entrance to Botanie Valley. If you look carefully you can see her, asleep on her side, her head to the north and her basket lying empty where she placed it ready to take it up again in the fullness of time.

\* \* \*

### ***Beast***

Whirligig eyes.  
The ravening beast  
Raging.  
For a world not  
Straight with  
His unspent desire.  
Quaking.  
He curses.  
Bares his  
Ancient teeth.  
Thinks murder.  
Straining muscles  
He struts and snarls.  
Dumb.  
Only calmed  
By conjuring  
The pearl clasped  
In his great claw.

-Meredith Ittner