



Trees Don't Compare, by Zen Parable

A samurai, a very proud warrior, came to see a Zen Master one day. The samurai was very famous, but looking at the beauty of the Master and the grace of the moment, he suddenly felt inferior. He said to the Master, "Why am I feeling inferior? Just a moment ago everything was okay. As I entered your court suddenly I felt inferior. I have never felt like that before. I have faced death many times, and I have never felt any fear -- why am I now feeling frightened?" The Master said, "Wait. When everyone else has gone, I will answer. " People continued the whole day to come and see the Master, and the samurai was getting more and more tired waiting. By evening the room was empty, and the samurai said, "Now, can you answer me?" The Master said, "Come outside." It was a full moon night, the moon was just rising on the horizon. And he said, "Look at these trees. This tree is high in the sky and this small one beside it. They both have existed beside my window for years, and there has never been any problem. The smaller tree has never said to the big tree, 'Why do I feel inferior before you?' This tree is small, and that tree is big -- why have I never heard a whisper of it?" The samurai said, "Because they can't compare." The Master replied, "Then you need not ask me. You know the answer." --Zen Parable