

Entangling Vines

宗門葛藤集

Zen Koans of the *Shūmon Kattōshū*

Translated and Annotated by

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First Edition

Printed in Japan

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Entangling Vines

Part 1

CASE 1 二祖安心 *Pacifying the Mind of the Second Patriarch*¹

二祖慧可、問達磨大師云、某心未安、乞師安心。師云、將心來與汝安。祖云、覓心不可得。師云、與汝安心竟。

Huike, the Second Patriarch, said to Bodhidharma, “My mind is not yet at rest. Master, I implore you, set my mind to rest.”

The master replied, “Bring your mind here and I’ll set it to rest for you.”

Huike said, “I’ve searched for my mind, but am unable to find it.”

“There,” said the master, “I’ve set your mind to rest.”

1. Also *Wumen guan* 41, Main Case. For background material on this koan see *Huike* in the Biographical Notes.

CASE 2 六祖衣鉢 *The Sixth Patriarch’s Robe and Bowl*¹

六祖因明上座趁至大庾嶺。祖見明至、即擲衣鉢於石上云、此衣表信、可力爭耶、任君將去。明遂舉之、如山不動。踟躕悚慄。明云、我來求法、非爲衣也。願行者開示。祖云、不思善不思惡、正與麼時、那箇是明上座父母未生以前本來面目。明當下大悟、遍體汗流。泣淚作禮問云、上來密語密意外、還更有意旨否。祖曰、我今爲汝說者、即非密也。汝若返照自己面目、密却在汝邊。明云、某甲雖在黃梅隨衆、實未省自己面目。今蒙指授入處、如人飲水冷暖自知。今行者即是某甲師也。祖云、汝若如是、則吾與汝同師黃梅、善自護持。

The senior monk Huiming pursued Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch, to Dayu Peak. Huineng, seeing him come, placed the robe and bowl on a rock and said, “This robe represents the dharma. Can it be taken by force? You may have it if you wish.”

Huiming tried to pick it up, but it was heavy as a mountain and wouldn't budge. Hesitant and frightened, Huiming said, "I came in search of the dharma, not for the sake of the robe. Lay brother,² please instruct me."

Huineng said, "Do not think of good, do not think of evil. At this very moment, what is your original face before your father and mother were born?"³

At that moment Huiming was deeply enlightened, and his entire body flowed with sweat. With tears in his eyes, he bowed and asked, "Is there any meaning still more profound than the hidden meaning and words you have just imparted to me?"

"There's nothing hidden about what I have revealed," replied Huineng. "Just turn your own light in upon yourself and observe your original face, and you'll find within yourself all that's hidden."

Huiming said, "Although I practiced with the assembly under Hongren, I had yet to realize my original face. Now that you have shown the way in, I'm like one who has tasted water and knows for himself whether it's cold or warm. You, lay brother, are now my teacher."

Huineng replied, "If that's how it is with you, then you and I are equally the disciples of Hongren. Take good care of yourself!"⁴

1. Also *Wumen guan* 23, Main Case. For background material on this koan see *Huineng* and *Huiming* in the Biographical Notes.

2. A lay brother 行者 was, in China, a nonordained worker in a monastery. Huineng is said to have been the first Chinese lay brother. In Japan the term was applied to people, both ordained and nonordained, who were engaged in caring either for the senior clergy or for the temple buildings.

3. The translation of this line follows the interpretation of Japanese Zen. The Chinese text can also be translated, "What was your original face before your father and mother gave birth to you."

4. This statement, 善自護持, is usually interpreted in Japanese Zen to mean, "Maintain well this teaching you have received."

CASE 3 五祖他奴 *Wuzu's "Slaves of Another"*¹

東山演禪師示衆曰、釋迦彌勒、猶是渠奴、且道、渠是阿誰。

Wuzu Fayan of Mount Dong said to the assembly, "Even Śākyamuni and Maitreya are merely someone's slaves.² Tell me, who is it?"

1. Also *Wumen guan* 45, Main Case.

2. Śākyamuni is the historical buddha; Maitreya is the buddha of the future. See *Śākyamuni* and *Maitreya* in the Biographical Notes.

CASE 4 雲門須彌 *Yunmen's "Mount Sumeru"*

雲門因僧問、不起一念時、却有過也無。門云、須彌山。

A monk asked Yunmen Wenyan, "Is something amiss when not even a single thought arises?"

Yunmen replied, "Mount Sumeru!"¹

1. In ancient Indian cosmology, Sumeru is the enormous mountain at the center of the universe, stretching from 84,000 *yojana* below the surface of the sea to 84,000 *yojana* above it. The god Indra resides on its summit in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, and the four heavenly kings live on its four sides. It is surrounded by seven concentric golden mountain ranges, each separated by a sea of fresh water. Beyond this is an ocean containing four continents—Pūrvavideha, Aparagodānīya, Uttarakuru, and Jambudvīpa—to the east, west, north, and south of Sumeru. Surrounding the entirety are two ranges of iron mountains.

CASE 5 馬祖即心 *Mazu's "This Very Mind"*¹

明州大梅山法常禪師、問馬祖云、如何是佛。祖云、即心即佛。後有僧又問、如何是佛。祖云、非心非佛。

Damei Fachang of Ming Province asked Mazu Daoyi, "What is buddha?"

Mazu answered, "This very mind is buddha."

Later another monk asked Mazu, "What is buddha?"

The master replied, "Not mind, not buddha."

1. The first part of this koan forms *Wumen guan* 30, Main Case; the second part forms *Wumen guan* 33, Main Case. For a "followup" see *Damei Fachang* in the Biographical Notes.

CASE 6 趙州放下 *Zhaozhou's "Let It Go"*¹

嚴陽尊者問趙州、一物不將來時如何。州云、放下著。者云、已是一物不將來、放下這什麼。州云、恁麼則擔取去。者於言下大悟。

Yanyang Shanxin asked Zhaozhou Congshen, "If I come with nothing, what then?"

"Let it go!" replied Zhaozhou.

"But I've come with nothing," answered Yanyang. "How can I let it go?"

"Then go on carrying it!" said Zhaozhou.

At this Yanyang was deeply enlightened.

1. Also *Record of Tranquility* 57, Main Case.

CASE 7 兜率三關 *Doushuai's Three Barriers*¹

兜率悅和尚、設三關問學者、撥草參玄、只圖見性、即今上人性在甚處。識得自性、方脫生死、眼光落地時、作麼生脫。脫得生死、便知去處、四大分離、向甚麼處去。

Doushuai Congyue devised three barriers to test his students:

Pulling weeds and exploring the dark are solely for the purpose of seeing self-nature.² So right now, where is your self-nature?

If you realize self-nature, you escape birth-and-death. So as the light in your eyes dims,³ how do you escape?

When you escape birth-and-death, you know where you go. So as your four elements separate,⁴ where do you go?

1. Also *Wumen guan* 47, Main Case.

2. "Pulling weeds" refers either to clearing a path to call upon a teacher, or to removing obstructive thoughts and delusions.

"The dark" translates 玄; "dark" is the original sense of the word, but it came to indicate, in Taoism and later in Zen, "the hidden," "the mysterious, or "the abstruse principle."

3. That is, as you approach death.

4. The four great elements—earth, water, fire, and air—signify the various components that make up the body, with earth representing the solid elements, water the liquid elements, fire the life energies, and air the bodily movements. Thus the separation of the four elements symbolizes the total dissolution of the physical body.

CASE 8 靈雲見桃 *Lingyun's Peach Blossoms*

福州靈雲志勤禪師、因見桃花悟道。有頌云、三十年來尋劍客、幾回葉落又抽枝。自從一見桃花後、直至如今更不疑。後舉似滄山。山曰、從緣入者、永不退失、汝善護持。玄沙聞云、諦當甚諦當、敢保老兄猶未徹在。雲門云、說甚徹不徹、更參三十年。後來大川濟和尚上堂、僧出舉前頌問、大川答云、作賊人心虛。

Lingyun Zhiqin of Fuzhou was enlightened upon seeing the blossoms of a peach tree. In a verse he said:

For thirty years I sought a sword-master.¹

How many times have leaves fallen and new buds appeared?

But since having seen the peach blossoms,

I have never doubted again!

Later he related this verse to his master, Guishan Lingyou. Guishan said, "Those with the karmic roots of enlightenment never regress. Take good care of yourself!"

When Xuansha Shibeï heard about this, he said, “Lingyun may have been right on, but I’ll guarantee that his understanding was incomplete.”

Yunmen Wenyan said, “You talk of complete and incomplete? Thirty more years of training!”

Later, during a lecture, a monk asked Dachuan Puji about the verse. Dachuan said, “A thief has no peace of mind.”²

1. “Sword-master” 劍客 indicates a master of the Way, one who wields the sword of wisdom that cuts the root of delusion, “the sword that freely gives life or takes it away.”

2. The expression “a thief has no peace of mind” may be a statement either of praise or of censure.

CASE 9 趙州柏樹 *Zhaozhou’s “Juniper Tree”*¹

趙州因僧問、如何是祖師西來意。州云、庭前柏樹子。僧云、和尚莫將境示人。州云、我不將境示人。僧云、如何是祖師西來意。州云、庭前柏樹子。後來法眼問覺鐵嘴(鶻)云、承聞趙州有柏樹子話是否。鶻(鶻)云、先師無此話、莫謗先師。眼云、真獅子兒能獅子吼。

A monk once asked Zhaozhou Congshen, “What is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West?”²

Zhaozhou answered, “The juniper tree in the front garden.”³

The monk replied, “Master, don’t teach me using external objects.”

Zhaozhou said, “I’m not teaching you using external objects.”

The monk asked, “What is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West?”

Zhaozhou answered, “The juniper tree in the front garden.”

Afterward Fayán Wenyi asked Jue Tiezui, “I heard that your teacher, Zhaozhou, spoke of a juniper. Is this true?”

Jue Tiezui replied, “My late teacher never said such a thing—don’t slander him!”

Fayan commented, “The true child of a lion gives a good lion’s roar!”

1. Zhaozhou and the monk’s first exchange forms *Wumen guan* 37, Main Case. The entire exchange is found in *Record of Tranquility* 47, Commentary.

2. “What was the meaning of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West?” is a standard question in Zen, meaning, in effect, “What is the essence of Zen?” What was it, in other words, that Bodhidharma wished to transmit when he made the long, dangerous trip from India to China? (In China, India was regarded as “the West,” since travelers came from the west over the Silk Road.)

3. The type of tree mentioned, the 柏, is often translated as “oak,” but the Chinese 柏 is actually a type of juniper tree. The reading of “oak,” *kasbiwa*, for this character is a Japanese one. Harada Shōdō Rōshi has commented informally that the uselessness of the Chinese juniper for lumber or nearly any other purpose lends added flavor to Zhaozhou’s reply.

CASE 10 黃龍三關 *Huanglong's Three Barriers*¹

黃龍禪師、問隆慶閑禪師云、人人有箇生緣處、如何是汝生緣處。對曰、早晨喫白粥、至今又覺飢。又問、我手何似佛手。對曰、月下弄琵琶。又問、我脚何似驢脚。對云、鷺鷥立雪非同色。師每以此三語問學者、莫能契其旨。天下叢林、目爲三關。纔有酬者、師無可否、斂目危坐。人莫涯其意。延之又問其故。師云、已過關者、掉臂徑去、安知有關吏。從吏問可否、此未透關者也。

Huanglong Huinan asked Longqing Qingxian, "Everyone has a native place. What is your native place?"

Longqing answered, "Early this morning I had some rice gruel, and now I feel hungry again."

"How is my hand like the buddha's hand?" Huanglong asked.

"I play a lute in the moonlight," Longqing answered.

"How does my leg resemble the leg of a donkey?" he asked.

Longqing answered, "A snowy egret stands in the snow; their colors are not the same."²

Huanglong always presented students with these three statements, but no one could give a satisfactory response. Monks everywhere called them "The Three Barriers of Huanglong." Even with the few who gave answers, the master would neither agree nor disagree, but only sit there in formal posture with eyes closed. No one could fathom his intent. When asked the reason for this, Huanglong replied, "Those who have passed through the gate shake their sleeves and go straight on their way. What do they care if there's a gatekeeper? Those who ask the gatekeeper's approval have yet to pass through."

1. Huanglong's three questions constitute *Wumen guan* 49, Main Case.

2. A classic Zen image for separation in the midst of equality.

CASE 11 瑞巖主人 *Ruiyan's "Master"*¹

瑞巖彥和尚、每日自喚主人公、復自應諾。乃云、惺惺著、喏。他時異日、莫受人瞞、喏喏。

Every day Ruiyan Shiyuan would call to himself, "Master!"

"Yes!" he would answer himself.

"Be wide awake!" he would say.

"Yes!"

"Whatever the time, whatever the day, never be misled by others!"

"Yes! Yes!"

1. Also *Wumen guan* 12, Main Case.

CASE 12 趙州勘婆 *Zhaozhou Sees Through an Old Woman*¹

臺山路上、有一婆子、凡有僧問、臺山路向甚麼處去、婆云、驀直去。僧纔行三五步。婆云、好箇師僧、又與麼去。後有僧舉似趙州。州云、待我去爲爾勘過這婆子。明日便去亦如是問、婆亦如是答。州歸謂衆云、臺山婆子、被我勘破了也。

An old woman lived by the road to Mount Tai.² A monk asked her, “Which way is the road to Mount Tai?”

“Straight ahead,” the woman said.

When the monk had taken a few steps the woman commented, “A good monk, yet off he goes!”

Later a monk told Zhaozhou Congshen about this. Zhaozhou said, “Let me check this old woman for you.”

The next day Zhaozhou went and asked the woman the same question, and she gave the same reply. Zhaozhou returned and said to the assembly, “I’ve seen through that old woman of Mount Tai.”

1. Also *Wumen guan* 31, Main Case.

2. Mount Tai 臺, more properly referred to as Mount Wutai 五臺, is located in Shanxi, not far from the city of Zhaozhou, where Zhaozhou Congshen lived. Mount Tai has long been identified with the “Mount Clear and Cool” mentioned in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* as the dwelling place of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. It is regarded as the most sacred of the four Buddhist mountains in China, the others being Mount Potou 破頭 (sacred to Avalokiteśvara), Mount Jiu Hua 九華 (sacred to Kṣitigarbha), and Mount Emei 峨嵋 (sacred to Samantabhadra).

CASE 13 郎中地獄 *Langzhong’s “Hell”*

崔郎中問趙州、從上諸聖、還墮地獄也無。州云、驀上落。中云、已是大善知識、爲甚還落地獄。州云、我若不墮、爭得救郎中。

Cui Langzhong asked Zhaozhou Congshen, “Have any of the sages ever fallen into hell?”

“They’re the first to go there,” replied Zhaozhou.

“But they’re enlightened teachers,”¹ said Langzhong. “Why would they fall into hell?”

“Well, if I didn’t fall into hell, how could I help you?” Zhaozhou answered.

1. “Enlightened teachers” 善知識 is a translation of *kalyāṇamitra*, lit., “good and wise friends” or “worthy friends.” This strictly Buddhist term refers to someone who helps others on the path to enlightenment. It is used in various meanings depending upon the context, and thus has been rendered in several ways in the present translation.

CASE 14 長生混沌 *Changsheng's "Chaos"*

長生問靈雲、混沌未分時如何。雲云、露柱懷胎。生云、分後如何。雲云、如片雲點大清。生云、未審大清還受點也無。雲不答。生云、恁麼則含生不來也。雲亦不答。生云、直得純清絕點時如何。雲云、猶是真常流注。生云、如何是真常流注。雲云、似鏡長明。生云、向上還有事也無。雲云、有。生云、作麼生是向上事。雲云、打破鏡來、與汝相見。長生問、混沌未分時、含生何來。師云、如露柱懷胎。

Changsheng asked Lingyun Zhiqin, "What about the time of primordial chaos,¹ before any differentiation?"

Lingyun answered, "A pillar conceives."²

Changsheng said, "What about after differentiation?"

Lingyun responded, "It's like a wisp of cloud marking the Great Pure Sky."³

Changsheng asked, "Does the Great Pure Sky accept this mark or not?"

Lingyun didn't answer.

Changsheng continued, "If that were so, living beings would not come forth."

Again Lingyun didn't answer.

Changsheng continued, "How about when there's only absolute purity and all stains are avoided?"

Lingyun replied, "That would be holding to eternal truth."⁴

"What is 'holding to eternal truth'?" Changsheng asked.

"It is like the infinite luminosity of a mirror," said Lingyun.

"Is there, then, a transcendence even of this?"⁵ asked Changsheng.

"There is," replied Lingyun.

"What is this transcendence?" Changsheng asked.

Lingyun said, "Smash the mirror, then you and I can meet."

Changsheng then asked, "At the time of primordial chaos, before any differentiation, where do living beings come from?"

Lingyun answered, "It's like a pillar conceiving."

1. "The time of primordial chaos" 混沌未分 is the time before the differentiation of yin and yang, the two forces of which all phenomena are formed.

2. "Pillar" 露柱 (lit., "exposed pillar") usually means a pillar not hidden in the architecture of a building; it may also indicate an independently standing pillar, column, or obelisk. The term is often used in Zen to signify the original source.

3. "Great Pure Sky" 大清 (lit., "the great purity") refers to the purity of the vast sky. The term can also indicate the Way.

4. That is, to become attached to the pure realm of satori.

5. "Transcendence" 向上事 indicates supreme realization—the transcendence even of enlightenment, the emptying even of sunyata.

CASE 15 孤峰不白 *One Peak Is Not White*

僧問曹山云、雪覆千山、爲甚麼孤峰不白。山云、須知異中異。僧云、如何是異中異。山云、不墮諸山色。

A monk asked Caoshan Benji, “Snow covers a thousand mountains. Why is one peak not white?”

Caoshan said, “You should know the true difference [in the non-white peak].”¹

The monk asked, “What is the true difference?”

Caoshan answered, “It doesn’t descend to being the color of the other mountains.”

1. 異中異, translated here as “true difference,” could be more literally translated as “the difference within the difference.” *Hirata* comments that 中 in this case serves as a kind of emphasis, as in 眼中眼, “the eye within the eye,” meaning “the true eye.”

CASE 16 牛過窗櫺 *An Ox Goes Through a Lattice Window*¹

五祖演禪師曰、譬如水牯牛過窗櫺、頭角四蹄都過了、因甚麼尾巴過不得。

Wuzu Fayan said, “It’s as though a water buffalo is passing through a lattice window.² Its head, horns, and four legs have all gone through. Why can’t its tail go through?”

1. Also *Wumen guan* 38, Main Case. This koan was identified by *Hakuin Ekaku* as one of the eight “difficult to penetrate” (J., *nantō* 難透) koans.

2. The original Chinese can mean either “passing through” or “passing by.” Most Rinzai masters prefer the former, for the sake of emphasis.

CASE 17 乾峰三種 *Qianfeng’s “Three Types of Sickness”*¹

乾峰和尚上堂曰、法身有三種病二種光、須是一透過、始解穩坐地。雲門出衆云、庵內人爲甚麼不知庵外事。峰呵呵大笑。門云、猶是學人疑處。峰云、子是什麼心行。門云、也要和尚相委悉。峰云、直須恁麼穩密、始解穩坐地。門云、喏喏。

Yuezhou Qianfeng went to the hall and said, “The dharmakaya has three types of sickness and two types of light.² Only after passing through these can one sit in peace.”

Yunmen Wenyan stepped forward from the assembly and asked, “Why is someone inside a hut unaware of what’s happening outside?”

Qianfeng gave a hearty laugh.

Yunmen said, “Your student still questions this.”

Qianfeng asked, “What’s on your mind?”

Yunmen said, “I wish the master to understand fully.”

“It’s only in such profound stillness that one understands sitting in peace,” Qianfeng replied.

“Yes, yes!” Yunmen agreed.

1. Also *Record of Tranquility* 11, Commentary.

2. The dharmakaya is one of the “three bodies” (trikaya) of buddha, a Mahayana doctrine categorizing buddha’s absolute and relative aspects. The three bodies are:

Dharmakaya: the essential or absolute body of buddha: buddha as truth itself, as the essence of wisdom. The dharmakaya is typically represented by Vairocana Buddha.

Sambhogakaya: the “reward” or “recompense” body, received as a reward for fulfilling the vows undertaken while the buddha was still a bodhisattva. The sambhogakaya is typically represented by Amitābha Buddha.

Nirmanakaya: the body assumed by a buddha when appearing in the world to bring enlightenment to others. The nirmanakaya is typically represented by the historical buddha, Śākyamuni.

The “three types of sickness and two types of light” are interpreted in various ways. One interpretation is that found in *Record of Tranquility* 11, in which the three types of sickness are:

Missing the way prior to arrival 未到走作: to be caught in the realm of the relative, unable to attain the state of enlightenment.

Attachment after arrival 已到住著: to attain the state of enlightenment, but then cling to this state as though it were something substantial.

Liberation free of all conditions 透脫無依: to attain the realm of liberation (not dwelling inwardly in sunyata, nor clinging outwardly to phenomena), but then to cling to this state of nondependence.

The two types of light correspond to aspects of “missing the way prior to arrival.”

The ZGDJ defines the three types of sickness in the same way as the *Record of Tranquility* does; the “two types of light” are defined as:

Subtle delusions that arise on the subjective level 能取光.

Subtle delusions that arise on the objective level 所取光. (977a)

CASE 18 山谷木犀 *Shangu’s Sweet-Olive Blossoms*

山谷一日參晦堂和尚。堂云、所公諳書中有一兩句。仲尼曰、以吾爲隱乎二三子、吾無隱乎爾。甚與宗門事恰好也。公知之麼。云、不知。時晦堂與山谷山行之次、天香滿山。堂問曰、公聞木犀花香麼。云、聞。堂曰、吾無隱乎爾。山谷忽悟去也。經兩月後、庭堅參死心禪師。死心一拶曰、心長老死學士死、燒爲兩堆灰。恁麼時向什麼處相見。庭堅擬議無如何。後在黔南道中晝寢、及覺不覺忽悟、得死心用處。從是得大自在之三昧。

One day the poet Shangu was visiting Huitang Zuxin. Huitang said, “You know the passage in which Confucius says, ‘My friends, do you think I’m hiding things from you? In fact, I am hiding nothing from you.’¹ It’s just the same with the Great Matter of Zen. Do you understand this?”

“I don’t understand,” Shangu replied.

Later, Huitang and Shangu were walking in the mountains where the air was filled with the scent of the sweet-olive blossoms. Huitang asked, “Do you smell the fragrance of the blossoms?”

Shangu said, “I do.”

Huitang said, “You see, I’m hiding nothing from you.”

At that moment Shangu was enlightened. Two months later he visited Sixin Wuxin. Sixin greeted him and said, “I’ll die and you’ll die and we’ll end up burnt into two heaps of ashes. At that time, where will we meet?”

Shangu, uncertain, could not respond. Later, while on the road to Qiannan, he awoke from a nap and suddenly understood what Sixin had meant. Thereafter he attained the samadhi of perfect freedom.

1. *Analects* 7:23.

CASE 19 香巖上樹 *Xiangyan’s “Up a Tree”*¹

香巖智閑禪師云、如人上樹、口啣樹枝、手不攀枝、腳不踏樹。樹下有人問西來意、不對即違他所問、若對又喪身失命。正與麼時、作麼生對。有虎頭上座云、上樹即不問、未上樹請和尚道。師呵呵大笑。雪竇云、樹上道即易、樹下道即難。老僧上樹、致將一問來。

Xiangyan Zhixian said, “It’s like a person in a tree, hanging from a limb by his teeth and unable to grab a branch with his hands or touch the trunk with his feet. Someone under the tree asks, ‘What is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West?’ If the person doesn’t reply, he fails the questioner; if he does reply, he loses his life. In such a situation, how would you respond?”

The senior monk Hutou said, “I don’t ask about the person up the tree. Before anyone is up the tree, tell me, master, what is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West?”

At that the master gave a hearty laugh.

Regarding this, Xuedou Chongxi commented, “It’s easy to speak when one is up a tree, hard to speak when one is underneath. This old monk is up a tree. Bring me a question!”

1. The first paragraph appears as *Wumen guan* 5, Main Case.

CASE 20 卍庵樹上 *Wan'an's "Up a Tree"*

卍庵顏禪師、問空東山云、香巖樹上意旨如何。山云、好對春風唱鷓鴣。

Wan'an Daoyan asked Dongshan Huikong, "What is the meaning of Xiang-yan's 'Up a Tree'?"

Dongshan replied, "Here, let me sing 'Partridge' to the spring breeze!"¹

1. "Partridge" 鷓鴣 was apparently the title of a song.

CASE 21 雲門屎橛 *Yunmen's "Dry Piece of Shit"*¹

僧問雲門、如何是佛。門云、乾屎橛。

A monk asked Yunmen Wenyan, "What is buddha?"

Yunmen answered, "A dry piece of shit."²

1. Also *Wumen guan* 21, Main Case.

2. Scholars of Tang-dynasty slang debate the exact meaning of the term 乾屎橛. Some take it to mean a piece of bamboo used in place of toilet paper; others interpret it to mean a dried piece of dung. Recent opinion tends toward the second alternative. Needless to say, in either case the intention of the term is the same.

CASE 22 雲門蘇廬 *Yunmen's "Sulu"*

雲門示衆云、平地上死人無數、出得荊棘林者好手。時有僧出云、恁麼則堂中第一座有長處也。門云、蘇廬蘇廬。

Yunmen Wenyan addressed the assembly, saying,

The plain is littered with corpses;

One who passes through the forest of thorns is a true adept.¹

At that moment a monk stepped forth and said, "If that's the case, then the head monk excels."

"*Sulu, sulu!*"² said Yunmen.

1. "The plain is littered with corpses" expresses the lifeless condition of someone lost in "dead sitting." "The forest of thorns" is a metaphor for the ordinary world of delusion.

2. *Sulu, sulu* 蘇廬蘇廬, a phrase from the "The Opening of the Amṛta Gate" 開甘露門, read at memorial services, is an incantation used to drive off demons.

CASE 23 德山托鉢 *Deshan Carries His Bowls*¹

雪峰在德山會下作飯頭。一日齋晚、德山托鉢、下至法堂。峰云、鐘未鳴鼓未響、這老漢托鉢向什麼處去。山無語低頭歸方丈。雪峰舉似巖頭。頭云、大小德山不會末後句。山聞令侍者喚至方丈、問云、汝不肯老僧那。頭密啓其意。山至來日上堂、與尋常不同。頭於僧堂前、撫掌大咲曰、且喜此老漢會末後句。他後天下人、不奈他何。雖然如是、只得三年活。果三年化去。

Xuefeng Yicun was serving as cook in the assembly under Deshan Xuanjian. One day lunch was late. When Deshan came down from the hall carrying his bowls, Xuefeng asked him, "The bell and drum [announcing mealtime] have not yet sounded. Where are you going with your bowls, old fellow?"

Deshan bowed quietly and returned to his quarters.

When Xuefeng told Yantou Quanhuo about this, Yantou commented, "Even Deshan, great as he is, doesn't know the final word."²

Hearing of this, Deshan had his attendant summon Yantou. "You don't approve of me?" he asked.

Yantou secretly revealed his purpose to him. The next day Deshan's lecture was not the same as usual. Yantou went to the front of the monks' hall. Clapping and laughing, he said, "How wonderful that the old fellow has grasped the final word! After this no one in the world can do anything to him. But even so, he has only three years left to live."

Three years later Deshan died.

1. Also *Women guan* 13, Main Case, and *Blue Cliff Record* 51, Commentary.

2. "Final word" 末後句 means, literally, "the word after the end," the word beyond all words. See also Case 148.

CASE 24 密庵意旨 *Mian's True Meaning*

僧問密庵傑和尚、德山托鉢意旨如何。庵云、無意旨。曰、因什麼托鉢下僧堂。庵云、要行便行要坐便坐。

A monk asked Mian Xianjie, "What is the meaning of 'Deshan Carries His Bowls'?"

The master answered, "No meaning."

"Then why," asked the monk, "did Deshan carry his bowls down from the monks' hall?"

"If he wants to go, he goes; if he wants to sit, he sits," Mian replied.

CASE 25 馬祖西江 *Mazu's "West River"*¹

龐居士參馬祖便問、不與萬法爲侶者、是什麼人。祖云、待爾一口吸盡西江水、即向爾道。士豁然大悟作頌曰、十方同聚會、箇箇學無爲。此是選佛場、心空及第歸。

Layman Pang Yun called upon Mazu Daoyi and asked, "Who is it that doesn't keep company with the ten thousand things?"

Mazu answered, "I'll tell you when you swallow the water of the West River in a single gulp."

At that moment Pang was deeply enlightened. He composed a verse:

All in the ten directions are of the same assembly,
Each and every one learning the doing of nothing.²
This is the place where buddha is chosen.³
Mind empty, exam passed, I've returned home.

1. Also *Blue Cliff Record* 42, Commentary.

2. Another possible translation is, "From the ten directions we've equally gathered together, each of us learning that there's nothing to do."

3. The original Chinese for "the place where buddha is chosen" is 選佛場, a word that, as a compound, is used in Zen to mean "meditation hall."

CASE 26 不入涅槃 *Not Entering Nirvana*

文殊所說摩訶般若曰、清淨行者、不入涅槃。破戒比丘、不墮地獄。

In the *Mahāprajñā Sutra Preached by Mañjuśrī* it says, "Virtuous practitioners do not enter nirvana; precept-breaking monks do not fall into hell."¹

1. T 8:728b.

CASE 27 石霜竿頭 *Shishuang's "Top of a Pole"*¹

石霜和尚云、百尺竿頭、如何進步。

Shishuang Chuyuan asked, "How would you step forward from the top of a hundred-foot pole?"

1. A fuller version of this koan appears in *Wumen guan* 46, Main Case, and the *Record of Tranquility* 79, Main Case. The Song-dynasty biographical collection *Compendium of the Five Lamps* 五燈會元 includes this case in the section on *Changsha Jingcen*, not *Shishuang Chuyuan*.

CASE 28 香巖擊竹 *Xiangyan's Sound of a Bamboo*¹

香巖智閑禪師、一日芟除草木、因以瓦礫擊竹作聲、廓然省悟。乃述頌曰、一擊忘前知、更不假修治。動容揚古路、不墮悄然機。處處無蹤跡、聲色忘威儀。諸方達道者、咸言上上機。

One day Xiangyan Zhixian was sweeping the grounds when a bit of tile struck a bamboo. Hearing the sound, Xiangyan was suddenly enlightened. He composed a verse:

A single “tock!”—all knowledge forgotten;
 No need for further study and practice.
 Daily activities proclaim the Ancient Way;
 No more falling into passive stillness.²
 Wherever I go I leave no trace;
 In the world I forget proper conduct.³
 Everywhere Masters of the Way
 Speak of this as the highest function.⁴

1. For background material on this case, see *Xiangyan Zhixian* in the Biographical Notes.

2. The original Chinese, 悄然機, generally refers to a state of sadness, but in Zen is interpreted to mean a state of stagnant quietism.

3. Literally, “In [the realm of] sound and form I forget all I do,” with “the realm of sound and form” 聲色 signifying the phenomenal world. 聲色 can also indicate the worldly passions, though in Buddhism this is a minor usage. “Proper conduct” 威儀 is the monk’s dignified deportment in the four “postures” of walking, standing, sitting, and lying.

4. “Highest function” translates 上上機, with 上上 referring to beings of the highest potential. In the Zen context the sentence can be seen to mean “to function perfectly in keeping with the Way.”

CASE 29 心隨萬境 *The Mind Moves with Its Surroundings*

第二十二祖、摩拏羅尊者、傳法偈曰、心隨萬境轉、轉處實能幽。隨流認得性、無喜亦無憂。瑯琊覺拈云、可恁麼不可恁麼。

Manora, the twenty-second Indian patriarch, said in his transmission verse:

The mind moves with its surroundings,
 A movement that is truly profound.¹
 Follow this flow and perceive mind’s nature,
 And there is neither joy nor sorrow.

Langye Huijue commented on this verse, saying, “It’s like this, yet it isn’t like this.”

1. “Truly profound” translates 幽, which can also mean “dark,” “silent,” or “mysterious.”

CASE 30 倩女離魂 *Qiannu and Her Spirit*¹

五祖演禪師、問僧云、倩女離魂、那箇是真底。

Wuzu Fayan asked a monk, “Qiannu and her spirit were separated.² Which was the real Qiannu?”

1. Also *Wumen guan* 35, Main Case.

2. The tale of Qiannu was a popular Tang-dynasty story. The best-known version is found in the Ming-dynasty novel *Jiandeng xinhua* 剪燈新話. A girl named Qiannu 倩女 was in love with Wang Zhou 王宙, a young man whom she had known since childhood, and who fully returned her affection. Qiannu was extraordinarily beautiful, however, and much sought after as a bride. When a promising young government official asked for her hand in marriage, her father quickly agreed to the advantageous match. Zhou, deeply distressed, decided he could not bear to live nearby with Qiannu married to another man, so he decided to travel upriver to start a new life. The night he departed, however, he heard a voice calling to him. When he looked to see who it was, he was overjoyed to find that Qiannu had followed him. The two decided to proceed onward to the region of Shu 蜀, where they settled, married, and had two children. Qiannu could not forget her parents, however, so after five years she and Zhou decided to return to their hometown to ask her father's forgiveness for their rash act. Upon arriving, Zhou decided to proceed alone to Qiannu's home to explain the situation. Greeted warmly by Qiannu's father, Zhou proceeded to tell him that he and Qiannu had run off together, but that they were now married and living comfortably with two children. The father, greatly astonished, replied that his daughter had been there in his house for the entire five years, though ill and incapable of speaking. Zhou, visiting the sick woman's room, saw that it was indeed Qiannu. He thereupon led her father to the river, where the other Qiannu, his wife, was waiting with their two children. They returned to the house, and, as they approached, the sick Qiannu left her bed and came to meet them. Seeing the married Qiannu, she smiled and walked toward her, and suddenly the two women merged, becoming one person.

CASE 31 虛堂頌古 *Xutang's Verse*

虛堂、倩女離魂頌云、行弔先桃菊、喪車後紙錢。老胡門下客、寧可入黃泉。

Xutang Zhiyu composed a verse on “Qiannu and Her Spirit”¹:

In front of the cortege, peach and reed brooms;
Behind the hearse, paper money.
We disciples of the Old Foreigner—
Why would we enter the Realm of the Dead?²

1. For “Qiannu and Her Spirit,” see Case 30, and note 1 of that case.

2. *Mujaku*: Brooms made of peach branches and reeds preceded funeral processions to symbolically sweep away misfortune. Special paper money was strewn after the hearse as an offering to the deities of death, in order to ensure safe passage to a good afterlife. “The Old Foreigner” is Śākyamuni or Bodhidharma; “this disciple” is Xutang. Even among secular people there is an exorcising of the evil and inauspicious at the time of death; why then should a buddha-disciple who has thoroughly realized the Way ever have to enter the unhappy realm of the dead?

CASE 32 雲門露字 *Yunmen's "Exposed"*

僧問雲門、殺父殺母、向佛前懺悔。殺佛殺祖、向甚麼處懺悔。門云、露。

A monk asked Yunmen Wenyan, "If you kill your father and mother, you can repent in front of the buddhas. If you kill the buddhas and ancestors, where can you repent?"¹

Yunmen said, "Exposed!"²

1. See also *Record of Linji "Discourses"* 18, "Whatever you encounter, either within or without, slay it at once. On meeting a buddha slay the buddha, on meeting a patriarch slay the patriarch, on meeting an arhat slay the arhat, on meeting your parents slay your parents, on meeting your kinsman slay your kinsman, and you attain emancipation. By not cleaving to things, you freely pass through." (Sasaki 1975, p. 25)

2. This is an example of Yunmen's "one-word barriers" 一字關. "Exposed!" 露 denotes something that, just as it is, is fully revealed in all of its truth and immediacy.

CASE 33 密庵沙盆 *Mian's "Cracked Millstone"*

天童密庵咸傑禪師、一日應庵問、如何是正法眼。密曰、破沙盆、應領之。雙杉元禪師、戒行嚴潔、住秀之天寧。小參舉、應庵華因問密庵、如何是正法眼。庵云、破沙盆、拈云、者些說話、如丫叉路口、多年一條爛木頭、風吹日炎。道印文在什麼處。五陵公子少年時、得意春風躍馬蹄。不惜黃金作彈子、海棠花下打黃鸝。元和尚爲甚別不提唱、唯拈古詩一篇。

One day Ying'an Tanhua asked Mian Xianjie of Tiantong, "What is the True Eye of the Dharma?"

Mian answered, "A cracked millstone."¹ Ying'an accepted this reply.

Shuangshan Yuan was a strict observer of the precepts who lived at Tianning temple in Xiushuixian. One day during an informal dharma talk he mentioned this exchange between Ying'an and Mian, commenting, "This useless story is like a rotten log, wind-bleached, sun-scorched, and long abandoned by a crossroads. Tell me, where in it is Ying'an's dharma transmission to Mian?" Answering himself, he recited the poem,

When the princes of Wuling were young, they danced their horses and
reveled in the spring breeze;

With no thought for money, they made pellets of gold and shot at night-
ingales under flowering trees.

Why didn't Shuangshan lecture on Mian's words, but simply recite an old verse?

1. "A cracked millstone" means something of utterly no use.

CASE 34 國師三喚 *The National Teacher Calls Three Times*¹

南陽忠國師、三喚侍者。侍者三應諾。國師云、將謂吾辜負汝、元來却是汝辜負吾。

The National Teacher Nanyang Huizhong called to his attendant three times. Three times his attendant answered. The National Teacher said, "I was about to say I've let you down, but actually it's you who have let me down."²

1. Also *Wumen guan* 17, Main Case.

2. "Let you down" and "let me down" translate 辜負汝 and 辜負吾, respectively. The word 辜負 has many nuances—"betray"; "go against"; "oppose"; "transgress against"; etc.—and is rendered in different ways by different masters depending upon their sense of the koan.

CASE 35 懶安有句 *Lan'an's "Being and Nonbeing"*¹

福州長慶懶安和尚、示衆云、有句無句、如藤倚樹。疎山聞得道、我有一轉語、要去問者老子。夏罷遂入閩見懶安和尚。又謂之滄山和尚。裴相國師閩、自滄山請住長慶。疎山到彼、值師泥壁次、疎山便問、有句無句、如藤倚樹、是和尚語否。滄山云、是。疎山云、忽然樹倒藤枯、句歸何處。滄山放下泥盤、呵呵大笑歸方丈。疎山云、某甲三千里外、賣却布單、特爲此事來。和尚爲甚不與某甲說。滄山云、侍者將錢來、與者矮闍黎去。(又謂疎山云)他日有獨眼龍、爲汝點破去在。(疎山)後到明招舉前話。招云、滄山頭正尾正、只是不遇知音。疎山云、忽然樹倒藤枯、句歸何處。招云、更使滄山咲轉新。疎山當下有省。乃云、滄山元來咲中有刀。後來大慧禪師、在圓悟會裡、悟遂令居擇木堂、作不釐務侍者、每日同士大夫入室。圓悟只舉有句無句、如藤倚樹。大慧纔開口、悟便道不是。如是將半年。一日同趙表之、方丈藥石次、(大慧)把筋在手、忘了喫飯。圓悟顧師而語表之曰、只這漢參得黃楊木禪也。師遂引狗看熱油鑊爲喻。圓悟曰、只這便是金剛圈栗棘蓬。居無何扣圓悟曰、聞和尚嘗問五祖此話、不知記其答否。圓悟笑而已。師云、若對人天衆前問、今豈無知者耶。圓悟乃云、向問有句無句如藤倚樹時如何。祖云、描也描不成、畫也畫不就。又問、忽遇樹倒藤枯時如何。祖云、相隨來也。師聞舉乃抗聲曰、某甲會也。圓悟曰、只恐爾透公案不得。云、請和尚舉。圓悟遂舉。師出語無滯。圓悟曰、今日方知吾不汝欺也。遂著臨濟正宗記、以付之、俾掌記室、分座訓徒。

Changqing Lan'an of Fuzhou addressed the assembly, saying, "'Being' and 'nonbeing' are like vines clinging to a tree."²

Shushan Guangren, hearing of this, said, "I have a turning-phrase for that old man³—I must call on him." So at the end of the training period he went to the province of Min to visit Changqing Lan'an, who was also known as Guishan Lan'an because he became priest of Changqing Temple at the invitation of Guishan Lingyou, during the period Layman Pei Xiu was governor of Min.

When Shushan arrived, Lan'an was plastering a wall. Shushan asked, "Being and nonbeing are like vines clinging to a tree.' Did you say that?"

"Yes," Lan'an replied.

"If suddenly the tree falls and the vine withers," Shushan said, "where do 'being' and 'nonbeing' go?"

Lan'an threw down his plaster tray and gave a loud laugh, then started for his quarters. Shushan said, "I've sold my possessions and traveled three thousand *li* here for the sake of this matter! Why won't you give me an explanation?"

Lan'an said to his attendant, "Bring some money and give it to this little monk."⁴ Then he turned to Shushan and said, "There's a one-eyed dragon who will explain it to you some day."⁵

Later, Shushan went to Mingzhao Deqian and related the above story. Mingzhao said, "Lan'an's the real thing from head to toe, only he's never had a true friend who knows him through and through."

Shushan asked, "If suddenly the tree falls and the vine withers, where do 'being' and 'nonbeing' go?"

Mingzhao responded, "That would make Lan'an laugh again."

At that moment Shushan was awakened, and said, "There was a dagger in Lan'an's laughter right from the very start."

Later, Dahui Zonggao, while still a student under Yuanwu Keqin, was placed in the lay practicers' hall and given the position of attendant-without-duties. Every day Yuanwu would have him come to his room for instruction, just like the officials who were Yuanwu's lay students. All Yuanwu ever said was, "'Being' and 'nonbeing' are like vines clinging to a tree." When Dahui opened his mouth to respond Yuanwu would cut him off, saying, "That's no good."

Nearly half a year went by in this way. One day while Yuanwu was having dinner with the official Zhao Biaozi, Dahui, chopsticks in hand, forgot to eat his rice.

Yuanwu looked over at Dahui, then turned to Zhao and said, "This fellow is practicing boxwood Zen."⁶ To Dahui, who looked like a dog eyeing a pot of hot oil,⁷ he said, "This is [hard to penetrate and hard to grasp,] like a diamond trap or a chestnut burr."

Later Dahui went to Yuanwu and said, "I heard that you once asked Wuzu about 'being' and 'nonbeing'. Do you remember the master's answer?" In reply Yuanwu only laughed.

Dahui said, "Since you asked in front of the assembly, surely even now there is someone who remembers."⁸

Yuanwu replied, "When I asked about the statement, 'Being and nonbeing are like vines clinging to a tree,' Wuzu answered, 'Try to describe it, and it cannot be described; try to portray it, and it cannot be portrayed.' When I asked, 'What if the tree suddenly falls and the vine withers?' Wuzu said, 'They come down together!'"⁹

When Dahui heard this story he cried, "I've got it!"

Yuanwu said, "I fear you haven't thoroughly penetrated this koan."

Dahui said, "Please, Master, question me in any way you wish." Yuanwu proceeded to question him, and Dahui replied without hesitation.

Yuanwu said, "Today you see that I haven't deceived you." He then conferred upon Dahui the record of the true transmission of Linji's dharma, put him in charge of Zen instruction, and had him lecture to the other monks.

1. The first section of this koan appears as *Record of Tranquility* 87, Main Case.

2. The words translated as "being" and "nonbeing" are 有句 and 無句, respectively. The character 句 generally means "word" or "phrase," but here it has little meaning in itself, so that 有句 and 無句 refer simply to 有 ("being," form, the phenomenal aspect of reality) and 無 ("nonbeing," emptiness, the noumenal aspect of reality).

When Changqing says, "Being' and 'nonbeing' are like a vine clinging to a tree," he means that being and nonbeing are mutually dependent. Shushan's question, "If the tree suddenly falls and the vine withers, where would 'being' and 'nonbeing' go?" inquires about going beyond being and nonbeing, existence and nonexistence, phenomenon and noumenon.

3. A "turning phrase" 一轉語 is a word or phrase of deep significance that either reveals the depth of understanding of the speaker or precipitates understanding in the listener at a critical moment in that person's practice. In the former sense, the word "turning" indicates the presentation of a different aspect of one's understanding; in the latter sense, "turning" expresses the fundamental "turnabout" that occurs upon awakening.

4. Shushan Guangren was apparently quite short in stature. See *Shushan Guangren* in the Biographical Notes.

5. The "One-eyed Dragon" 獨眼龍 refers to the master Shushan met next, Mingzhao Deqian, who was blind in one eye.

6. The boxwood tree is said to be extremely slow-growing, and even to shrink during leap years. "Boxwood Zen" often refers to the Zen of students who, though slow to awaken, are earnest and unswerving in their practice.

7. The most likely meaning is that dogs have a liking for oil, but are unable to drink it when the oil is hot. Thus the dog can only look longingly at something it cannot get.

8. That is, "Since you asked in public, there is no reason to refrain from telling me Wuzu's answer."

9. The original Chinese, 相隨來也, is open to various interpretations depending on the context. ZGDJ glosses it, "to understand what the master has said"; ZGJT has "to imitate someone or follow their lead." Here it might be seen as similar in sense to "Dasui's 'Kalpic Fire,'" *Record of Tranquility* 30, Main Case: "A monk asked Dasui, 'When the fire at the end of an aeon rages through and the whole universe is destroyed, is *this* destroyed or not?' Dasui said, 'Destroyed!' The monk said, 'Then it goes along with that?' Dasui said, 'It goes along with that [隨他去]." (Cleary 1988, p. 131)

CASE 36 南泉鎌子 *Nanquan's Sickle*

南泉在山作務次、僧問、南泉路向何處去。泉拈起鎌子云、我者茅鎌子、買得三十錢。僧云、不問茅鎌子、南泉路向何處去。泉云、我使得甚快也。

Once when Nanquan Puyuan was working in the mountains a monk asked him, "Which way is the road to Nanquan?"

Nanquan held up his sickle and said, "I bought this sickle for thirty coins."

The monk said, "I didn't ask about the sickle. Which way is the road to Nanquan?"

Nanquan said, "I can really use this—so sharp!"

CASE 37 百丈野狐 *Baizhang's Wild Fox*¹

百丈山大智禪師、凡參次、有一老人、常隨衆聽法。衆退老人亦退。忽一日不退。師遂問、面前立者復是何人。老人云、某甲非人也。於過去迦葉佛時、曾住此山。因學人問、大修行底人、還落因果也無。某甲答他云、不落因果。後五百生墮野狐身。今請和尚代一轉語、貴脫野狐身。遂問、大修行底人、還落因果也無。師云、不昧因果。老人於言下大悟、作禮云、某甲已脫野狐身、遂住在山後、敢告和尚、乞依亡僧事例。師令維那白槌告衆、曰食後送亡僧。大衆言議、一衆皆安、涅槃堂又無病人、何故如是。食後只見師領衆至山後巖下、以拄杖指出一死野狐、乃依法火葬。師至晚上堂、舉前因緣、黃檗便問、古人錯祇對一轉語、五百生墮野狐身、轉轉不錯、合作箇什麼。師云、近前來與爾道。檗遂近前與師一掌。師拍手笑曰、將謂胡鬚赤、更有赤鬚胡。

Whenever Baizhang Huaihai lectured, an old man would sit with the assembly and listen to the teachings. When the assembly left, so would the old man. Then one day the old man remained, and the master asked him, "Who are you, standing here in front of me?"

The old man said, "I am not a human being. Long ago, in the time of Kāśyapa Buddha,² I was a priest living on this mountain. A student asked whether enlightened beings are subject to cause and effect. I said, 'They are not subject to cause and effect.' For this I have been reborn as a fox for five hundred lifetimes. I request a turning-phrase from you so that I may be freed from this fox's body."

He then asked, "Are the enlightened subject to cause and effect?"

The master answered, "They are not confused about cause and effect."³

At these words the old man was deeply enlightened. He bowed and said, "I am now free of the fox's body, which is lying on the other side of the mountain. I beseech you, perform for me the service for a deceased monk."

The master had the duty-monk strike the gavel and announce to the community that they would be holding a service for a dead monk after the meal.⁴ The monks wondered about this among themselves, since everyone was well and no one had been sick in the infirmary.

After the meal the master led the group to the foot of a cliff on the other side of the mountain, where he pointed out a dead fox with his staff. He then cremated it in accordance with the rule.

That evening the master took the high seat and explained the day's events. Thereupon Huangbo asked, "Because the old man gave a mistaken answer he was reborn as a fox for five hundred lifetimes; what would have happened to him if his answer hadn't been wrong each time?"

The master said, "Come close and I'll tell you." Huangbo went up and gave the master a slap.

The master clapped his hands and said, "I thought *I* was a red-bearded foreigner, but here's someone who's even more of a red-bearded foreigner!"⁵

1. Also *Wumen guan* 2, Main Case.

2. Kāśyapa Buddha was the fourth of the six nonhistorical buddhas said to have preceded Śākyamuni, the historical buddha. The others were Vipaśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, and Kanakāmuni.

3. The original Chinese is a double negative, a strong emphaziser, so that the meaning is, in effect, "The enlightened are crystal clear about cause and effect."

4. The duty-monk 維那 is the monk in charge of supervising the work and job assignments at the monastery. The term combines 維, an abbreviation of 網維, "supervisor," and 那, the last syllable of the Chinese transliteration of *karma-dāna* (羯磨陀那), the Sanskrit term for the monk who filled the same position.

5. The term "red-bearded foreigner" has several connotations. In certain contexts it refers to Bodhidharma; here, the commentaries generally agree, the meaning is "bandit" or "thief," terms of high praise in Zen.

CASE 38 關山賊機 *Kanzan's "Works like a Thief"*¹

關山和尚曰、柏樹子話、有賊之機。

Kanzan Egen said, "The koan 'Zhaozhou's Juniper Tree' works like a thief."

1. See Case 9.

CASE 39 二僧捲簾 *Two Monks Roll Up a Bamboo Shade*¹

清涼大法眼、因僧齋前上參次、眼以手指簾。時有二僧、同去捲簾。眼云、一得一失。

When the monks had gathered in the hall before the midday meal to hear Fayan Wenyi, the master pointed to the bamboo blinds. At this, two monks went and rolled them up, both in the same manner. Fayan said, "One gains, one loses."

1. Also *Wumen guan* 26, Main Case.

CASE 40 虛空為紙 *Use the Empty Sky for Paper*

五祖演禪師示衆云、若有人虛空為紙、大海為硯、須彌為筆、如何書得祖師西來(意)五字。若書得西來意五字、老僧展坐具禮拜爾。

Wuzu Fayan said, "Using the empty sky for paper, the sea for an inkwell, and Mount Sumeru for a brush,¹ how would you write the words, 'The meaning of the Patriarch's coming from the West?' If any of you can do this, I will spread my sitting cloth and bow before you."²

1. In Indian cosmology, Mount Sumeru is the Universal Mountain. See Case 4, note 1.

2. The sitting cloth (Skt. *niṣīdana*) is one of the few articles that a monk is allowed to possess. Originally used for sitting, it is now in East Asia used primarily during ceremonies, when monks spread it on the floor or a cushion to make their prostrations upon. It is employed in a similar way to show respect for an eminent monk; thus "to spread one's sitting cloth" is synonymous with "to express respect or admiration for." See Cases 131 and 139.

CASE 41 賢女屍林 *The Wise Women in the Mortuary Grove*

世尊。因七賢女遊屍陀林。一女指屍謂諸姊云、屍在這裡、人向甚處去。中有一姊云、作麼作麼。諸姊諦觀、各各契悟。

Once, at the time of the Buddha, seven wise women were taking a walk through a mortuary grove. The eldest pointed to a corpse and asked the others, "The corpse is here, but where has the person gone?"

One of the younger women replied, "What's this? What's this?"

The other women all saw clearly, and each attained enlightenment.

CASE 42 漂墮鬼國 *Drifting to the Land of the Demons*

于頔相公問紫玉、如何是黑風吹其船舫、漂墮羅刹鬼國。師云、于頔這客作漢、問恁麼事作什麼。于當時失色。師指云、祇這箇便是漂墮羅刹鬼國。于聞已信受。

The minister Yu Di asked Ziyu Daotong, "What is meant by, 'A fierce wind blew a ship off course and set it drifting toward the land of the rakshasas'?"¹

The master replied. "Yu Di, you miserable lackey! Why are you asking something like *that*?"

Yu Di's face turned white. The master pointed to him and said, "You have just drifted to the land of the rakshasas."

Yu Di took this teaching to heart.

1. This line is from the *Lotus Sutra*, "Chapter on the Universal Gateway of the Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World's Sounds" (觀世音菩薩普門品); T 9:56c. See Watson 1993b, p. 299. A rakshasa is a demon that devours human beings. For background material on this koan, see *Ziyu Daotong* in the Biographical Notes.

CASE 43 秀才造論 *A Scholar Writes a Treatise*

昔有秀才、造無鬼論、成纔放筆。忽一鬼現身、斫手謂秀才曰、爾爭奈我何。五祖演道、我當時若見、便以手作鶻鳩嘴向伊道、谷谷呱。南堂靜曰、秀才雖知無鬼、而不知鬼之所以無。五祖先師雖知鬼之所以無、而不能掃蹤滅跡。若是大隋即不然。待他斫手道爾爭奈我何、只向道、閻。直饒是大力鬼王、也教伊頭破作七分、如阿梨樹枝。且道、是那箇閻字、汝道無我響。

A scholar once wrote a treatise arguing that demons do not exist. The moment he finished and laid down his brush, a demon appeared before him, assumed a fighting pose, and demanded, "So, scholar, what are you going to do about *me*?"

Wuzu Fayán commented, "If I'd seen the demon, I would have put my hands in front of my mouth like the beak of a *bo* dove and cried, 'Coo! Coo!'"¹

Nantang said, "Though the scholar knew there are no demons, he didn't know *why* there are none. Though Wuzu knew why there are no demons, he couldn't remove the traces and erase the tracks. I wouldn't have done it that way. When the demon appeared, clenched its fists, and demanded what I intended to do, I'd have looked at him and shouted, '*Yan!*'"² Even if the fiend was the great, powerful Demon-King himself, I'd have cleaved his skull into seven pieces, like the branch of an *arjaka* tree.³ Tell me, what is this word *yan*? You may say, 'Nothing', but I say, '*Ni!*'"⁴

1. The *bo* dove 鶉鳩 is said to call to other doves on clear days and warn them away on days of rain. It is also called the “singing dove” 鳴鳩 because it calls ceaselessly; for this reason it has come to symbolize the perpetual teaching of the dharma. “Coo! Coo!”, the cry of the dove, may also be a spell to drive away demons.

2. *Yan* 閻 refers to Yanmo 閻魔, the greatest of demons, who is Lord of the Underworld and judge of the dead.

3. This image comes from *Lotus Sutra*, “Chapter on Dharani” (陀羅尼品): “If there are those who fail to heed our spells / and trouble and disrupt the preachers of the Law, / their heads will split into seven pieces / like the branches of the *arjaka* tree” (Watson 1993b, p. 311). The word translated as “branch” 枝 is thought to refer in the Chinese *Lotus Sutra* to the tree’s flower, which is said to break into seven pieces when touched.

4. According to *Kajitani*, the “nothing” refers to the scholar and his statement. Other possibilities are the demon or the word *yan*. *Ni* 讐 is used in Japanese Zen either as a term of derision or as an equivalent of the shout “*Katsu!*” Interesting background information on the exclamation is found, however, in *Mochizuki*, where it is noted that in China demons were thought to become *ni* when they died. Just as humans are terrified of demons, so are demons terrified of *ni*. Thus writing the character 讐 on a piece of paper and pasting it above the entrance to a household was believed to keep all demons away. (9:233)

CASE 44 室內一燈 *The Lamp in the Room*

香林遠禪師、僧問、如何是室內一盞燈。遠云、三人證龜作鼈。

A monk asked Xianglin Chengyuan, “What is the single lamp in the room?”¹ Xianglin replied, “If three people testify to it, a terrapin is a softshell.”

1. The lamp and the room are symbols of the dharma.

CASE 45 心身共捨 *Cast Aside Both Mind and Body*

黃檗運禪師、示衆云、內外身心、一切共可捨。凡人多不肯空心、恐落於空。不知自心本空。愚人除事不除心、智者除心不除事。菩薩心如虛空、一切共捨、所作福德、皆不貪著。然捨有三等、內外身心、一切俱捨、猶如虛空無所取着。然後隨方應物、能所皆忘、是爲大捨。若一邊行道布德、一遍施捨、無希望心、是爲中捨。若廣修衆善、有所希望、聞法知空、遂乃不着、是爲小捨。大捨如火燭在前、更無迷悟。中捨如火燭在傍、或明或暗。小捨如火燭在後、不見坑窞(故)。

Huangbo Xiyun said to the assembly,

Inner and outer, body and mind—all must be discarded. Most people are unwilling to empty their minds, fearing that they will fall into emptiness;

little do they realize that their minds are empty from the start. The foolish eliminate things but do not eliminate thought; the wise eliminate thought but do not eliminate things. Bodhisattvas have minds like empty space—they have renounced everything and have no attachments, even to the merit they have made. However, there are three levels of renunciation. Great renunciation is when inner and outer, body and mind have all been cast aside and, like empty space, have no place for attachment; after this, one follows the situation and responds to circumstances, with both subject and object forgotten. Middling renunciation is when one follows the Way, performs virtuous acts, and gives selflessly, with no thought of gain. Small renunciation is when one does all sorts of good deeds in the hope of gaining merit but relinquishes such attachments upon hearing the dharma and realizing that all is empty.

Great renunciation is like having a flame in front of you: no longer is there either delusion or enlightenment. Middling renunciation is like having a flame at your side: there are times of light and times of darkness. Small renunciation is like having a flame behind you: you cannot see the pitfalls in front of you.¹

1. From Huangbo's *Chuanxin fayao* [Essentials of transmitting the mind]. See also Blofeld 1958, pp. 48–49.

CASE 46 達磨不來 *Bodhidharma Didn't Come to China*

福州玄沙備禪師、因雪峰呼爲頭陀。每見之曰、再來人也、何不徧參去。對云、達磨不來東土、二祖不往西天。雪峰然之。

Xuefeng Yicun called Xuansha Shibe of Fuzhou a true ascetic,¹ and, whenever he saw him, said, “You’re a reborn sage!² Why don’t you travel about to study Zen?”

In response Xuansha said, “Bodhidharma didn’t come to China, the Second Patriarch didn’t go to India.”³ Xuefeng accepted this answer.

1. “A true ascetic” translates 頭陀, which is a transliteration of the Sanskrit *dhūta*, someone who has abandoned all attachments to food, shelter, and clothing and singlemindedly pursues the Way.

2. “A reborn sage” 再來人, lit., “one who has come again,” refers to a reborn buddha, bodhisattva, or great sage.

3. The comment refers to the fact that during his training Xuansha decided to leave his native Fujian and study with masters in other parts of China. As he reached the pass that connects the mountain-ringed province of Fujian with the rest of China, he stumbled and hurt his toe. At that moment he was deeply enlightened, and exclaimed, “Bodhidharma didn’t come to China, the Second Patriarch didn’t go to India!” He thereupon turned around and returned to Fujian. See also Case 121.

CASE 47 丹霞燒佛 *Danxia Burns a Buddha Image*

丹霞然禪師、嘗到洛京慧林寺值天寒。遂於殿中取木佛燒向火。院主偶見呵責云、何得燒我木佛。師以杖撥灰云、吾燒取舍利。主云、木佛安有舍利。師云、既無舍利、更請兩尊再取燒之。院主自眉鬚墮落。

Once, when Zen master Danxia Tianran was visiting the temple Huilin si in the capital, it was so cold that he took a wooden buddha image from the buddha hall, set it a fire, and warmed himself by the blaze.

The priest happened to see this and scolded Danxia, saying, “How can you burn our wooden buddha!”

Danxia stirred the coals with his staff and said, “I’m burning it to retrieve the holy relics.”¹

The priest replied, “How could there be relics in a wooden buddha?”

“If there are no relics,” Danxia answered, “then please give me the two attendant images to burn.”

The priest’s eyebrows fell out.²

1. “Holy relics” (Skt. *śarīra*) refers to the relics of a buddha or sage that remain after cremation, and are sometimes said to be indestructible, gem-like substances.

2. Someone’s eyebrows falling out is a traditional image for the consequences of falsely preaching the dharma.

CASE 48 寤寐恆一 *Asleep or Awake, at All Times Be One*

首楞嚴經曰、寤寐恆一。

In the *Śūraṅgama Sutra* it is written, “Asleep or awake, at all times be one.”¹

1. T 19:121a.

CASE 49 趙州無字 *Zhaozhou’s “Wu”*¹

趙州、因僧問、狗子還有佛性也無。州云、無。僧云、一切衆生皆有佛性、狗子爲什麼却無。州云、爲伊有業識性在。又有僧問、狗子還有佛性也無。州云、有。僧云、既有爲甚却撞入這箇皮袋裡。州云、爲他知而故犯。

A monk asked Zhaozhou Congshen, “Does a dog have buddha-nature?”
Zhaozhou answered, “*Wu!*” [No!]

The monk replied, “All sentient beings have buddha-nature. Why would a dog not have it?”

Zhaozhou said, “Because it has karmic consciousness.”²

Another monk asked, “Does a dog have buddha-nature?”

Zhaozhou answered, “You!” [Yes!]

The monk replied, “If it has, why then is it still stuffed into a bag of skin?”

“Because even though it knows, it deliberately transgresses,” said Zhaozhou.

1. The first two sentences form *Wumen guan* 1, Main Case. The entire koan is found in *Record of Tranquility* 18, Main Case.

2. “Karmic consciousness” translates 業識性 (Skt. *karma vijñāna*), the unawakened, deluded consciousness that arises through the workings of fundamental ignorance.

CASE 50 佛直祖曲 *Buddha Straight, Ancestors Crooked*

佛說直、祖師爲甚麼唱曲。

The Buddha’s teaching was straight. Why do the ancestors sing such a crooked tune?

CASE 51 狗子之頌 *A Verse on Zhaozhou’s “Dog”*

趙州義烏稠巖了贊禪師、題無字頌云、趙州狗子無佛性、萬疊青山隱古鏡。
赤脚波斯入大唐、八臂那吒行正令。

Chouyan Liaoyun of Wuzhou wrote the following verse on the koan “*Wu*”:

Zhaozhou’s dog has no (*wu*) buddha-nature;¹

Endless blue mountains are hidden in the ancient mirror.²

The barefoot Persian came to China,³

Eight-armed Nalakūvara followed the true teaching.⁴

1. Another possible translation is, “Zhaozhou’s dog has the buddha-nature of *wu*.”

2. “The ancient mirror” represents the mind in a state of emptiness.

3. “The barefoot Persian” is another name for Bodhidharma.

4. See *Nalakūvara* in the Biographical Notes. The “true teaching” 正令 is generally seen to represent the buddhadharma, although some Zen masters read the term more literally as “true command,” and comment that the “command” was for Nalakūvara to protect Buddhism.

CASE 52 中峰無字 *Zhongfeng's "Wu"*

中峰本和尚曰、趙州因甚道箇無字。謂之中峰八箇字。或謂之因甚道話。

Zhongfeng Mingben asked, "What was the reason that Zhaozhou said 'Wu'?"

This is called "The eight-word question of Zhongfeng" or "The question of why he said what he did."

CASE 53 大慧無字 *Dahui's "Wu"*

大慧曰、趙州無字祇麼舉。

Dahui Zonggao said, "Just work diligently on Zhaozhou's 'Wu'."

CASE 54 僧未問佛 *Before the Monk Asked About Buddha-Nature*

古人云、此僧未問佛性、趙州未答無時如何。

A man of old said,¹ "Before the monk asked about buddha-nature, before Zhaozhou answered 'Wu!'—what about then?"

1. It is unknown who the "man of old" is.

CASE 55 古德透徹 *Penetrate It Thoroughly*

古德云、透徹看。

An ancient worthy said,¹ "Penetrate it thoroughly!"²

1. It is unknown who the "ancient worthy" is.

2. "It" refers to Zhaozhou Congshen's 'Wu'.

CASE 56 女子出定 *A Woman Comes Out of Samadhi*¹

昔文殊至諸佛集處、值諸佛各還本處。惟有一女人、近彼佛坐、入於三昧。文殊乃白佛、言何此女人得近佛坐、而我不得。佛告文殊、汝但覺此女、令從三昧起、汝自問之。文殊遶女人三匝、鳴指一下、乃托至梵天、盡其神力而不能出。世尊云、假使百千文殊、亦出此女人定不得。下方過四十二億河沙國土、有罔明菩薩、能出此女人定。須與罔明大士、從地湧出禮拜佛。佛勅罔明。却至女人前、鳴指一下。女人於是從定而立。

Long ago Mañjuśrī went to a gathering of buddhas just as they were returning to their own domains. However, one woman remained sitting in samadhi near the seat of Śākyamuni Buddha.

Mañjuśrī asked Śākyamuni, “Why can a woman get near the Buddha’s seat when I cannot?”

Śākyamuni replied, “Just wake the woman up, bring her out of samadhi, and ask her yourself.”

Mañjuśrī circled the woman three times, snapped his fingers once, raised her into the Brahma Heaven, and employed all of his supernatural powers, but he was unable to bring her out of samadhi.

Śākyamuni then said, “Even a hundred thousand Mañjuśrīs wouldn’t be able to bring this woman out of samadhi. Down below, past as many worlds as there are grains of sand in four billion two-hundred million Ganges Rivers, there is a bodhisattva named Delusion who is able to bring her out.”²

At that moment Delusion emerged from out of the ground and paid homage to Śākyamuni. Then, as instructed by the Buddha, he went before the woman and snapped his fingers once. At this the woman emerged from samadhi.

1. Also *Women guan* 42, Main Case. For a related koan, see Case 95.

2. “Delusion” is a translation of “Wangming” 罔明, a name synonymous with 無明 or 無知, “ignorance.” In contrast to Mañjuśrī the bodhisattva of perfect enlightenment, Delusion is a low-level bodhisattva.

CASE 57 水上行話 *East Mountain Walks on the Water*

僧問雲門、如何是諸佛出身處。門曰、東山水上行。

A monk questioned Yunmen, “What is the place where all buddhas attain complete liberation?”

Yunmen replied, “East Mountain walks on the water.”

CASE 58 法華禪定 *Lotus Samadhi*

法華曰、深入禪定、見十方佛。

In the *Lotus Sutra* it is written, “Deeply entering samadhi, see the buddhas of the ten directions.”¹

1. *Lotus Sutra*, “Chapter on Peaceful Practices” (安樂行品); T 9:39c.

CASE 59 大通智勝 *The Buddha of Great Universal Wisdom Excellence*¹

法華經曰、大通智勝佛、十劫坐道場。佛法不現前、不得成佛道。

In the *Lotus Sutra* it is written, “The Buddha of Great Universal Wisdom Excellence sat in the place of enlightenment for ten kalpas, but the buddha-dharma did not manifest to him, and he could not attain the buddha-way.”²

1. A fuller version appears in *Women guan* 9, Main Case.

2. This passage is from the *Lotus Sutra*, “Chapter on the Phantom City” (化城喻品); T 9:26a; 160c. For the sake of background, it is of interest to note that in the *Lotus Sutra* account, at the end of the ten kalpas the Buddha of Great Universal Wisdom Excellence sat on a throne made for him by the gods of the Brahma Heaven and, after ten more kalpas, attained Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. Following this he taught the dharma, from one level to the next, until he reached the highest level, that of the *Lotus Sutra*. His sixteen sons eventually all attained buddhahood; the ninth son became Amitāyus Buddha, and the sixteenth son became Śākyamuni Buddha.

CASE 60 黃龍念讚 *Huanglong's "Sutra Chanting"*

黃龍和尚、住黃檗時、室中每舉曰、鐘樓上念讚、床脚下種菜。勝首座下一轉語道、猛虎當路坐。他便退黃檗與他住、自居積翠庵。

When Huanglong Huinan was residing on Mount Huangbo, he would say to monks who came for instruction, “Up in the bell tower, reciting sutras; down by the meditation bench, raising vegetables.”¹

The head monk Sheng gave a turning-phrase,² saying, “A fierce tiger sits in the middle of the road.”

At this Huanglong retired, turning his position as master of the monastery over to Sheng and going to live at the Jicui Hermitage.

1. The daily monastic routine of ritual practice, meditation, and manual labor.
2. “Head monk Sheng” is *Huangbo Weisheng*.

CASE 61 馬祖塩醬 *Mazu's "Salt and Sauce"*

馬祖既得法、直往江西、建立宗旨。一日讓和尚曰、道一在江西說法、總不見持箇消息來。遂囑一僧云、汝去待他上堂、即問作麼生、看他道甚麼記取來。其僧依教去、見上堂、便出問作麼生。師云、自從胡亂後二十年、不曾少鹽醬喫。讓(師)然之。

After Mazu Daoyi received the dharma from Nanyue Huairang, he went to Jiangxi and there spread the teachings of the Zen school.

One day Huairang said, "Daoyi is in Jiangxi teaching the dharma, but there's been no word from him." He therefore said to one of the monks, "Go to Mazu's place, wait until he gives a lecture, then ask, 'How is it?' Remember what he says, then tell me when you come back."

The monk did as instructed. When he asked, "How is it?", Mazu replied, "It's been twenty years of making do,¹ but I've never lacked for salt or sauce."

Huairang praised this reply.

1. "Making do" is an attempt to translate 胡亂, which means "temporary" or "transient." *Mujaku* explains that the word 胡 means "barbarian" and 亂 the turbulence that followed their incursions, during which the Chinese would hurriedly leave their cities. From this the compound 胡亂 came to indicate something sudden, hurried, temporary, and "for the interim." Mazu uses the term to signify that his residence at the temple was unplanned and ultimately temporary.

CASE 62 柏樹托鉢 *The Juniper Tree and the Bowls*

趙州柏樹子、與德山托鉢、是同是別乎。

"Zhaozhou's 'Juniper Tree'" and "Deshan Carries His Bowls"¹—are these koans the same or are they different?

1. See Cases 9 and 23.

CASE 63 張公喫酒 *Mr. Zhang Drinks Wine*

古人云、張公喫酒李公醉。

A man of old said,¹ "Mr. Zhang drinks wine, Mr. Li gets drunk."

1. The "man of old" is *Yunmen Wenyán*.

CASE 64 鼓山伽陀 *Gushan's "Revenge"*

鼓山珪云、十年海上覓冤讐、不得冤讐未肯休。芍藥花開菩薩面、櫻欄葉散夜叉頭。

Gushan Shigui said, "For ten years at sea I have sought revenge; until I get revenge I cannot rest."¹

Blossoming peony flowers, like bodhisattvas' faces;
Scattered palm fronds, like demons' heads.

1. *Kajitani*: "Revenge" here means "realization."

CASE 65 一失人身 *To Lose a Human Birth*

梵網經云、一失人身、萬劫不復。

The *Brahma Net Sutra* says, "Lose your human birth once, and you won't regain it for ten thousand kalpas."¹

1. T 24: 1003a.

CASE 66 首山此經 *Shoushan's "Sutra"*

首山念禪師、僧問、一切諸佛皆自此經出、如何是此經。師云、低聲低聲。僧云、如何受持。師云、不污染。

A monk asked Shoushan Shengnian, "The buddhas all issue from this sutra; what sutra is it?"

The master said, "Speak softly! Speak softly!"¹

"How am I to receive and maintain this?" the monk asked.

"Don't ever defile it!" answered the master.

1. *Mujaku*: This implies that the other person has said something silly.

CASE 67 興化打中 *Xinghua's "Stay in the Center"*

興化獎禪師、因僧問、四方八面來時如何。師云、打中間底。僧便禮拜。師云、山僧昨日赴箇村齋、途中遇一陣狂風暴雨、向古廟裡避得過。應庵華云、衆中商量道、向古廟裡避得過、是空劫已前自己。又道便是他安身立命處、殊不知興化腰纏十萬貫、騎鶴下揚州。

A monk asked Xinghua Congjiang, “What should you do when problems come at you from every direction?”

The master said, “Stay in the center.”

The monk bowed.

The master then said, “Yesterday, as I was on my way to a vegetarian dinner in the village, I was caught in a sudden storm with heavy rains and violent winds, so I headed for an old shrine and found shelter.”

Ying’an Tanhua commented, “The assembly considered the matter and said, ‘Taking shelter in an old mausoleum refers to the self that precedes the Kalpa of Emptiness,¹ or to the place where Xinghua attained peace of mind and fully realized his original nature.’ Little did they know that Xinghua, his purse filled with one hundred thousand in cash, mounted a crane and went down to Yangzhou.”²

1. The “Kalpa of Emptiness” 空劫 is the kalpa that lies between the destruction of one universe and the formation of the next.

2. The implication of “going down to Yangzhou” is not entirely clear. The city of Yangzhou 揚州 had a well-known pleasure quarter. *Morobashi*, however, mentions an old tale that may provide relevant background information. A group of men were discussing their wishes. One man said that he would like to become governor of Yangzhou, another that he would like to have plenty of money, and another that he would like to fly on the back of a crane. Thereupon another man said, “So if someone slung a hundred thousand in cash from his waist, got on a crane, and flew off to Yangzhou, then he’d fulfill all of these wishes at once.” (5:319b-c)

CASE 68 滬山水牯 *Guishan’s “Water Buffalo”*

滬山祐禪師、示衆云、老僧百年後、向山下檀越家、作一頭水牯牛、於左脇下書五字。云、滬山僧某甲。此時若喚作滬山僧、又是水牯牛、喚作水牯牛、又云滬山僧某甲。且道、喚作甚麼即得。仰山出禮拜而去。

Guishan Lingyou addressed the assembly, saying, “When this old monk’s one hundred years are finished, I’ll be reborn as a water buffalo at the believer’s house by the foot of the mountain.¹ On the water buffalo’s lower left flank will be written the five characters 滬山僧某甲, ‘Monk So-and-so of Mount Gui.’

“If you call it a monk from Mount Gui, it’s still a buffalo, and if you call it a buffalo, it’s still a monk of Mount Gui. So tell me then, to get it right, what should you call it?”

Yangshan Huiji stepped forward, bowed, and walked away.

1. Those who died with unpaid debts were said to be reborn as water buffaloes at the creditor’s household. The characters of the dead person’s name would often appear on the animal; the person’s descendants would then buy the animal, paying off the debt.

CASE 69 古帆未掛 *The Sail Has Yet to Be Hoisted*

僧問巖頭、古帆未掛時如何。頭云、小魚吞大魚。云、掛後如何。頭云、後園驢喫草。虛堂問南浦、曰、古帆未掛時如何。浦云、螻蛄眼裡五須彌。堂云、掛後如何。浦云、黃河向北流。

A monk asked Yantou Quanhuo, “How about when the old sail has yet to be hoisted?”

Yantou replied, “Small fish swallow big fish.”

The monk said, “How about after it’s been hoisted?”

Yantou said, “The donkey grazes in the back garden.”

Later Xutang asked Nanpo Jōmyō, “How about when the old sail has yet to be hoisted?”

Nanpo said, “Five Mount Sumerus in the eye of a gnat.”

Xutang continued, “How about after it’s been hoisted?”

Nanpo said, “The Yellow River flows north.”¹

1. The Yellow River actually flows east.

CASE 70 洞山三斤 *Dongshan’s “Three Pounds of Hemp”*¹

僧因問洞山、如何是佛。山云、麻三斤。

A monk asked Dongshan Shouchu, “What is buddha?”

Dongshan answered, “Three pounds of hemp.”

1. Also *Women guan* 18, Main Case; *Blue Cliff Record* 12, Main Case.

CASE 71 南堂異類 *Nantang’s “Other Realms”*

南堂十辯驗云、須向異類中行。

In his ten admonitions,¹ Nantang Yuanjing says, “Work actively for the salvation of beings in other realms.”²

1. Nantang’s ten admonitions are: i) have faith that there is a separate teaching transmitted outside the sutras; ii) attain a firm understanding of this separate transmission; iii) know the unity of the “dharma-teaching of the sentient” 有情說法 and the “dharma-teaching of the nonsentient” 無情說法; iv) see into your self-nature vividly and clearly, and be firm and steady in your step; v) possess the discerning dharma eye; vi) practice in such a way that you leave no traces, being firm in your commitment to the dharma; vii) achieve a balance of practice and understanding; viii) destroy false doctrines and promote correct ones; ix) possess great ability; x) work actively in the different realms of existence.

2. *Kajitani*: This refers to working for the salvation of, specifically, animals, with precedents in statements like *Guishan Lingyou's* "When my one hundred years are finished I will be reborn as a water buffalo at the believer's house by the foot of the mountain" (Case 68) and *Nanquan Puyuan's* "After understanding.... one should become a water buffalo at the believer's house by the foot of the mountain" (Case 98).

CASE 72 無功德話 *No Merit*¹

達磨大師、見梁武帝。帝問、朕起寺度僧。有何功德。磨云、無功德。

When Bodhidharma met Emperor Wu of the Liang, the emperor asked, "I have built temples and ordained monks. What merit have I gained from this?"

Bodhidharma answered, "No merit."

1. For a fuller version of this episode, see *Blue Cliff Record* 1, Commentary.

CASE 73 千尺井中 *A Man in a Thousand-foot Well*¹

性空禪師、僧問、如何是祖師西來意。師云、若人在千尺井中、不假寸繩出得此人、即答汝西來意。僧云、近日湖南鴨和尚出世、亦爲人東語西話。師乃喚沙彌寂子、拽出這死屍看。仰山後舉似耽源、如何出得井中人。源云、咄、癡漢、誰在井中。仰山不契、後又問滄山、如何出得井中人。山乃召云、慧寂。寂應諾。山云、出了也。寂後住仰山、常舉前話、示衆云、我於耽源處得體、滄山處得用。

A monk asked Shishuang Xingkong, "What is the meaning of the Patriarch coming from the West?"

The master answered, "Let's say there's a man in a thousand-foot well; if you can get him out without using any rope, I'll answer you about the meaning of the Patriarch's coming from the West."

The monk said, "But in Hunan now there's a priest named Ya who freely explains everything to people."²

Thereupon Xingkong summoned Yangshan Huiji and said,³ "Drag this corpse out of here."

Later Huiji asked Danyuan Yingzhen, "How would you get the man out of the well?"

Danyuan retorted, "Dolt! Blockhead! Who's in a well!?" Huiji didn't understand, and later put the same question to Guishan Lingyou.

Guishan called out, “Huiji!” When Huiji answered “Yes,” Guishan said, “There, he’s out of the well!”

Later, when Huiji lived on Mount Yang, he would always tell this story to the assembly, saying, “I grasped what it *is* at Danyuan’s place, I grasped how it *works* at Guishan’s.”

1. See *Blue Cliff Record* 18, Commentary.
2. The monk is asking, “Other priests are willing to explain, so why aren’t you?”
3. At that time Yangshan Huiji was a novice under Xingkong, with the name Jizi 寂子.

CASE 74 大梅梅子 *Damei’s “Plum Pit”*

龐居士、因問大梅常和尚、久聞大梅、未審梅子熟未也。師云、何處著觜。居士云、百雜碎。師展手云、我還核子來。居士無語。

Layman Pang asked Damei, “I’ve long heard about the Great Plum.¹ Is the fruit ripe yet?”

The master said, “What’s there to peck at?”

Layman Pang said, “I’ve chewed it to bits!”

The master held out his hand and said, “Then give me the pit.”

Layman Pang said nothing.

1. The name “Damei” 大梅 means “big plum tree.”

CASE 75 法燈未了 *Fadeng Is Not Yet Finished*¹

法燈、示衆云、本欲深藏巖嶽隱遁過時。奈清涼老人有未了公案、出來與他了却。時有僧出問、如何是未了公案。燈便打云、祖禰不了、殃及兒孫。

Qingliang Taiqi said to the assembly, “At first I intended to pass my time secluded deep in the mountains, but, troubled by the unfinished koan of Old Man Qingliang,² I emerged and am now completing it for you.”

At this a monk came forward and asked, “What is this unfinished koan?”

Taiqi struck the monk and said, “What the ancestors leave unfinished, the descendants must deal with.”³

1. “Fadeng” is the honorary title of *Qingliang Taiqi*.
2. Old Man Qingliang 清涼老人 refers to *Fayan Wenyi*, who was Taiqi’s teacher.
2. This translation follows the ZGJT. *Kajitani* interprets 祖禰 as “ancestral tomb,” a metaphor for the buddhas’ and masters’ vow to save all beings, and reads the entire line as, “If the ancestral tomb is left unfinished, misfortune befalls the descendants.”

CASE 76 南泉油糍 *Nanquan's Fried Dumplings*

南泉願禪師、一日不赴堂、侍者請赴堂。師云、我今日在莊上喫油糍飽。者云、和尚不會出入。師云、汝去問莊主。者方出門、忽見莊主歸、謝和尚到莊喫油糍。

One day Nanquan Puyuan did not go to the dining hall. When he was urged to do so by his attendant, Nanquan said, "Today I stopped in at the house below and had some fried dumplings, so I'm satisfied."

"But you haven't gone out all day," replied the attendant.

"Then go ask the owner of the house below," said Nanquan.

Just as he was leaving the gate, the attendant saw the owner of the house below on his way home. The owner asked him to thank Nanquan for stopping by to have some fried dumplings.

CASE 77 無鬚鎖子 *The Beardless Suozi Bone*

石霜諸禪師、僧問、如何是和尚深深處。師曰、無鬚鎖子兩頭搖。

A monk asked Shishuang Qingzhu, "The master's most profound depth—what is it like?"

The master replied, "The beardless *suozi* bone is shaking at both ends."¹

1. *Kajitani*: "Beardless" 無鬚 means to be free of delusion ("beard" here symbolizes the *klesā*); *souzi* 鎖子, which literally means "chain," refers to the chain-like *suozi* bone 鎖子骨 that is said to exist only in the body of a bodhisattva, and to remain after the bodhisattva has been cremated.

CASE 78 外道六師 *The Six Non-Buddhist Teachers*

大珠和尚、因維摩座主問、經云、彼外道六師等、是汝之師、因其出家、彼師所墮、汝亦隨墮。其施汝者、不名福田、供養汝者、墮三惡道。謗於佛毀於法、不入衆數、終不得滅度。汝若如是、乃可取食。今請禪師、明爲解說。珠云、迷徇六根者、號之爲六師。心外求佛、名爲外道。有物可施、不名福田。生心受供、墮三惡道。汝若能謗於佛者、是不着佛求。毀於法者、是不着法求。不入衆數者、是不着僧求。終不得滅度者、智用現前。若有如是解者、便得法喜禪悅之食。

A lecturer on the *Vimalakīrti Sutra* questioned Dazhu Huihai, saying, “In the sutra it is written:

If you take the six non-Buddhist teachers as your masters, renounce the household life because of them, and follow them into the same erroneous views; if those who make offerings to you receive no merit, and those who make donations to you fall into the three evil realms;¹ if you slander buddha, vilify the dharma, do not enter the sangha, and in the end fail to attain the realm of emancipation—if this is the way you are, then you may receive food.²

Meditation Master, I ask that you clarify the meaning of this passage for me.”

Dazhu responded, “Those who, in delusion, follow the six senses are called ‘the six teachers’; those who seek buddha outside the mind are called ‘non-Buddhist’. If you make offerings out of abundance, you receive no merit; if you receive donations with some purpose in mind, you fall into the three evil realms.

“If you slander buddha, then you seek nothing from buddha; if you vilify the dharma, then you seek nothing from the dharma; if you do not enter the sangha, then you seek nothing from the sangha; if in the end you fail to attain the realm of emancipation, then wisdom and its function are manifested right in front of you.

“If you understand the passage in this way, then you have attained the feast of joy in the dharma and delight in samadhi.”

1. The three evil realms 三惡道 are those of the animals, pretas, and hell-dwellers.

2. *Vimalakīrti Sutra*, “Disciples” chapter; T 14:540b-c. It should be noted that the *Vimalakīrti Sutra* passage as quoted in the koan is actually an abridged version of the actual text:

Subhuti, if without seeing the Buddha or listening to his Law you are willing to take those six heretical teachers, Purana Kashyapa, Maskarin Goshaliputra, Samjayin Vairatiputra, Ajita Keshakambala, Kakuda Katyayana, and Nirgrantha Jnatiputra, as your teachers, leave the household life because of them, and follow them in falling into the same errors they fall into, then you will be worthy to receive food.

Subhuti, if you can subscribe to erroneous views and thus never reach the “other shore” of enlightenment; if you can remain among the eight difficulties and never escape from difficulty, and can make common cause with earthly desires and remove yourself from a state of purity; if when you attain the samadhi of nondisputation you allow all living beings to attain the same degree of concentration; if those who give you alms are not destined to gain good fortune thereby, and those who make offerings to you fall into the three evil paths of existence; if you are willing to join hands with the host of devils and make the defilements your companion; if you can be no different from all these devils and these dusts and defilements; if you can bear hatred toward all living beings, slander the Buddhas, vilify the Law, not be counted among the assembly of monks, and in the end never attain nirvana—if you can do all this, then you will be worthy to receive food. (Watson 1997, pp. 42–43)

CASE 79 芭蕉拄杖 *Bajiao's Staff*¹

芭蕉和尚、示衆云、爾有拄杖子、我與爾拄杖子。爾無拄杖子、我奪爾拄杖子。虛堂愚拈云、請各放下者拄杖子。且道、三轉語、還有優劣、也擊拂子。

Bajiao Huiqing said to the assembly, "If you have a staff, I'll give you a staff; if you have no staff, I'll take the staff away."

Xutang Zhiyu commented, "Each one of you, throw this staff away."

He then said, "Now tell me, are any of these three turning-phrases better than the others?" He made a rap with the bottom of his whisk.

1. Also *Wumen guan* 44, Main Case.

CASE 80 世尊未說 *The Buddha Never Preached*

世尊、臨入涅槃、文殊請佛再轉法輪。世尊咄云、吾四十九年住世、未嘗說一字。汝請吾再轉法輪、是會轉法輪耶。

As the Buddha was about to enter Parinirvāṇa, Mañjuśrī asked him to turn the wheel of the dharma one more time. The Buddha admonished him, saying, "For forty-nine years I have dwelt in the world, but I've yet to preach a single word. You ask me to once again turn the wheel of the dharma, but have I ever turned the wheel of the dharma?"¹

1. See also *Blue Cliff Record* 28, Commentary on the Verse.

CASE 81 圓悟禍門 *Yuanwu's "Gate of Misfortune"*

圓悟勤禪師、僧問、如何是佛。師曰、口是禍門。

A monk asked Yuanwu Keqin, "What is buddha?"

Yuanwu replied, "The mouth is the gate of misfortune."

CASE 82 莫妄想話 *Drop Deluded Thought*

汾州無業國師、凡有請問、但云莫妄想。

Whenever Fenzhou Wuye was asked a question, he would simply say, "Drop deluded thought!"

CASE 83 錯用心話 *Misusing the Mind*

天童應庵華禪師、上堂云、參禪人切忌錯用心。悟道(明)見性是錯用心、成佛作祖是錯用心、看經講教是錯用心、行住坐(座)臥是錯用心、<喫粥>喫飯是錯用心、屙屎送尿是錯用心、一動一靜一往一來是錯用心。<更有一處錯用心>、歸宗不敢與諸人說法。何故、一字入公門、九牛牽不出。

Ying'an Tanhua of Tiantong took the high seat and said, "Practicers of Zen must be careful to avoid misusing the mind.

"To attain enlightenment and see self-nature—this is misusing the mind.

"To attain buddhahood and become a master—this is misusing the mind.

"To study the sutras and expound the teachings—this is misusing the mind.

"To walk, to stand, to sit, to lie down—this is misusing the mind.

"To [eat gruel and] eat rice—this is misusing the mind.

"To shit and to piss—this is misusing the mind.

"To move, to be still, to go, to come—this is misusing the mind.

"[There's one more misuse of the mind, but] I won't explain it to you, because 'once a word enters a government office, nine oxen cannot pull it out'."¹

1. Words in brackets are from the original text of the koan in the *Compendium of the Five Lamps* 五燈會元.

CASE 84 仰山枕头 *Yangshan's Headrest*

僧問仰山、法身還解說法也無。山云、我說不得、別在一人說得。僧曰、說得底人、在什麼處。山推出枕头。滄山聞乃云、寂子用劍刃上事。

A monk asked Yangshan Huiji, "Can the dharmakaya expound the dharma?"¹

"I'm not able to expound it," replied Yangshan, "but there is someone else who can."

"And where is this person who can expound it?" asked the monk.

Yangshan pushed forward his headrest.

When Guishan Lingyou heard of this, he commented, "Yangshan wields a keen blade!"

1. For "dharmakaya," see Case 17, note 2.

CASE 85 三佛夜話 *The Three "Buddhas" of Wuzu*¹

五祖演、三佛侍於一亭上夜話(語)、及歸燈已滅。演於暗中曰、各下一轉語。佛鑑曰、彩鳳舞丹霄。佛眼曰、鐵蛇橫古路。佛果曰、看脚下。演曰、滅吾宗者、乃克勤爾。

One evening, as Wuzu Fayan's three disciples Fojian Huiqin, Foyan Qingyuan, and Foguo Keqin were attending Wuzu at an inn, they and the master talked so late that, when it came time to leave, the lamps were already out. In the darkness Wuzu said, "Each of you, give me a turning-phrase."

Fojian said, "A radiant phoenix dances in the sunset sky."²

Foyan said, "An iron snake lies across the ancient road."³

Foguo said, "Watch where you step!"⁴

Wuzu commented, "Only Foguo will destroy my teachings!"

1. The name of the koan derives from the fact that the three important disciples of Wuzu Fayan appearing in this case all have names which contain the character *fo* 佛, "buddha": "Fojian" 佛鏡 (Buddha Mirror), "Foyan" 佛眼 (Buddha Eye), and "Foguo" 佛果 (Buddha Fruit; Foguo is another name for *Yuanwu Keqin*).

2. A common Zen metaphor for the phenomenal aspect of reality.

3. A common Zen metaphor for the absolute aspect of reality.

4. The expression used by Foguo, 看脚下, is frequently written on boards and placed in the entrance halls of Zen monasteries as a reminder always to maintain awareness.

CASE 86 馬祖翫月 *Mazu's Moon Viewing*

百丈海西堂藏南泉願、侍馬祖翫月次、祖曰、正恁麼時如何。堂曰、正好供養。丈云、正好修行。南泉拂袖便去。祖云、經入藏禪歸海、惟有普願、獨超物外。

Once Baizhang Huaihai, Xitang Zhizang, and Nanquan Puyuan were attending Mazu as they viewed the autumn moon. Mazu asked them what they thought of the occasion.

Xitang said, "It's ideal for a ceremony."

Baizhang said, "It's ideal for training."

Nanquan shook his sleeves and walked away.¹

Mazu said, "Zhizang has gained the teachings, Huaihai has gained the practice, but only Puyuan has gone, alone, beyond all things."²

1. "To shake one's sleeves and leave" indicates scorn for a certain matter. See Cases 132, 191, and 217 for other examples.

2. Mazu's rejoinder is partly a play on words involving the names of Xitang Zhizang 西堂智藏 and Baizhang Huaihai 百丈懷海. The first two lines of his comment can be read, "The teachings enter the storehouse 藏 (for 智藏); the practice returns to the sea 海 (for 懷海)."

CASE 87 佛不知有 *The Buddhas Don't Know It*¹

僧問南泉道、三世諸佛不知有、狸奴白牯却知有。爲甚麼三世諸佛不知有。泉云、未入鹿苑時、猶較些子。僧云、狸奴白牯、爲甚麼却知有。泉云、汝爭怪得伊。

A monk asked Nanquan Puyuan, “The buddhas of the past, present, and future don't know it;² cats and oxen do know it. Why is it that the buddhas of the past, present, and future don't know it?”

Nanquan said, “They still knew something before entering the Deer Park.”³ “Why is it that cats and oxen *do* know it?”

“How could you possibly doubt that they would?” answered Nanquan.

1. Also *Record of Tranquility* 69, Main Case.

2. “Know it” is an attempt to translate 知有, a phrase that some commentators interpret as “to know what is” or “to know existence or being (Skt. *bhava*),” but that in Zen generally implies “to know enlightenment, buddha-nature, the original face.”

3. The Deer Park (Skt. *Mrigadāva*) is where the Buddha, after his awakening under the Bodhi Tree, gave his first sermon and gained his first disciples.

CASE 88 臨濟孤峰 *Linji's “Solitary Peak”*¹

臨濟上堂云、一人在孤峰頂上、無出身之路、一人在十字街頭、亦無向背。那箇在前、那箇在後。不作維摩詰、不作傅大士。珍重。

The master took the high seat in the hall and said, “One man is atop a solitary peak with nowhere further to go. One man is at a busy crossroads, distinguishing neither front nor back. Which one is ahead, which one is behind?² Don't do like Vimalakīrti, don't do like Fu Dashi.³ Take good care of yourselves.”

1. Also *Record of Linji*, Discourses 7.

2. Other translations: “One person is on top of a solitary peak and has no path by which to leave. One person is at the busy crossroads and has neither front nor back. Which is ahead, which is behind?” (Sasaki 1975, p. 5); “One person is sitting on top of a lonely mountain peak, yet he has not removed himself from the world. One person is in the middle of the city streets, yet he has no likes and dislikes. Now which one is ahead? Which one is behind?” (Watson 1993a, p. 17).

Most interpretations of this passage contrast practice in the mountains with practice in the marketplace; *Yamada* comments that the man on the peak and the man at the crossroads are one and the same, as dead to the self when preaching among the crowds as when meditating in solitude (1976, p. 163).

3. The translation follows the usual interpretation in traditional Zen Buddhism: “Don't be silent like Vimalakīrti, don't try to explain things like Fu Dashi.” The line can also be rendered, “Don't take one to be Vimalakīrti and the other to be Fu Dashi.” For background material on *Vimalakīrti* and *Fu*, see their entries in the Biographical Notes.

CASE 89 語默離微 *Speech and Silence*¹

風穴和尚、因僧問、語默涉離微。如何通不犯。穴云、長憶江南三月裡、鷓鴣啼處百花香。

Fengxue Yanzhao was asked by a monk, “Speech and silence partake of both transcendence and functioning, so how can we proceed without transgressing?”²

Fengxue answered, “I always remember Jiangnan in the third month, partridges calling amidst all the flowers so fragrant.”³

1. Also *Wumen guan* 24, Main Case.

2. “Transcendence and functioning” translates 離微, a term first used by the fifth-century Chinese monk *Sengzha*. The word 離 (lit., “separate” or “removed”) indicates the world of the noumenon, separate from all forms, names, and phenomena; 微 (lit., “subtle” or “fine”) indicates the mysterious and infinitely subtle functioning of this absolute truth in the world of phenomena. Thus 離微 denotes the aspects of absolute, transcendent reality and its manifestations in the realm of things. The questioner is thus asking, “Express the ultimate through silence, and you’re limited to the noumenal. Express it in words, and you’re limited to the phenomenal. So how can one function in true freedom without erring on either side?” *Yamada* (1976, p. 200) comments that 離 represents the return-to-the-source of zazen; 微 represents activity in the world. Speech offends against transcendence; silence offends against function. How then can we combine both aspects? Sees also *Shibayama’s* detailed discussion (1974, pp. 176–77).

3. Fengxue’s reply quotes a line by the great Tang poet Du Fu 杜甫 (712–770).

CASE 90 仰山白槌 *Yangshan’s Gavel*¹

仰山和尚、夢見往彌勒處、安第二座。有一尊者白槌云、今日當第二座說法。乃起白槌云、摩訶衍法離四句絕百非、諦當諦當。

In a dream Yangshan Huiji went to the place of Maitreya Bodhisattva and was assigned the second seat. One of the venerable monks there struck a gavel and said, “Today the person in the second seat will lecture on the dharma.”

Yangshan rose, struck the gavel, and said, “The Mahayana teaching transcends the four propositions and the one-hundred negations.² Listen carefully! Listen carefully!”³

1. Also *Wumen guan* 25, Main Case.

2. The four propositions and the one-hundred negations were formulated by the Buddhist thinker Nāgārjuna as an explanation of the doctrine of sunyata. The four propositions are “one, many, being, and nonbeing.” The one-hundred negations comprise the sum total of the various ways in which these propositions may be negated.

3. “Listen carefully, listen carefully” translates 諦當諦當, which can be more literally rendered as, “This is true, this is true!”

CASE 91 六祖風幡 *The Sixth Patriarch's Banner in the Wind*¹

六祖大師、因風颺刹幡、有二僧對論。一僧云、幡動。一僧曰、風動。往復曾未契理。祖云、不是風動、不是幡動、仁者心動。二僧悚然。

The Sixth Patriarch saw a banner flapping in the wind. Two monks were arguing, one saying that the banner was moving, the other that the wind was moving. They argued back and forth and were unable to come to any agreement.

The Sixth Patriarch said, "It isn't the banner that moves, nor is it the wind that moves. It's your minds that move." The two monks were astonished.

1. Also *Wumen guan* 29, Main Case.

CASE 92 五家評商 *Comments on the Five Houses*

五祖演、因僧問、如何是臨濟下事。演云、五逆聞雷。如何是雲門下。曰、紅旗閃爍。如何是曹洞下。曰、馳書不到家。如何是滄仰下。曰、斷碑橫古路。如何是法眼下。曰、巡人犯夜。

A monk asked Wuzu Fayan, "What about the Linji school?"

The master said, "Mortal offenders hear the thunder."¹

"What about the Yunmen school?"

The master said, "Scarlet banners flutter."²

"What about the Caodong school?"

The master said, "Messages are sent but never reach the house."³

"What about the Guiyang school?"

The master said, "A broken monument across an old road."⁴

"What about the Fayan school?"

The master said, "A night watchman breaks the curfew."⁵

1. "Mortal offenders" translates 五逆, those people who have committed the five cardinal sins of Buddhism: killing one's father, killing one's mother, killing an arhat, shedding the blood of a buddha, and destroying the harmony of the sangha. Such offenders were regarded in the early Buddhist tradition as incapable of ever attaining enlightenment; according to the ZGJI, they were said to be struck dead by lightning and consigned immediately to hell.

For Linji's creative interpretation of the "mortal offenders," see the "Discourses" 22 section of the *Record of Linji*.

2. ZGJI: Scarlet banners flutter in the distance, like cloud-dragons glimpsed in the mist.

3. ZGJI: Words and phrases point toward the truth but do not reach it. Room is left for the essential matter.

4. ZGJI: On an old, broken monument lying across a seldom-traveled road, the inscription is faint and only the clear-eyed can read it. *Mujaku*: All are puzzled.

5. ZGJT: In order to apprehend those who are out after the curfew, it is necessary for the watchman himself to break the curfew. As with *Mujaku*'s traditional interpretation, "the watchman steals at night," the implication is that, in order to transcend words and letters, words and letters are used.

CASE 93 百草頭話 *The Tips of the Plants*

會元第三、云、龐居士問靈照女云、古人曰、明明百草頭、明明祖師意。汝如何會。女云、老老大大、莫作這箇說話。士曰、汝又作麼生。云、明明百草頭、明明祖師意。士咲之。

According to the *Compendium of the Five Lamps*, fascicle 3, Layman Pang asked his daughter Lingzhao, "A man of old said, 'Clear, clear, the tips of the plants; clear, clear, the meaning of the ancestors.' How do you understand this?"

"You shouldn't talk of such things, old man that you are," replied Lingzhao.

"Well, how do you understand it?" the layman persisted.

"Clear, clear, the tips of the plants; clear, clear, the meaning of the ancestors," she said.

At this the layman laughed.

CASE 94 願空諸有 *Know the Emptiness of All That Exists*

于頔公、問龐居士疾次、士謂之曰、但願空諸所有、慎無實諸所無好。住世間皆如影響。

When Prefect Yu Di came to inquire about Layman Pang's illness, Pang said to him, "I ask only that you know the emptiness of all that exists, and be careful not to take as real all that does not exist. Life in the world is like shadows and echoes."¹

1. The *Recorded Sayings of Layman Pang* has the following passage between the two episodes given in *Kattōshū* Case 93 and Case 94. "The Layman was about to die. He spoke to Lingzhao, saying: 'See how high the sun is and report to me when it's noon.' Lingzhao quickly reported, 'The sun has already reached the zenith, and there's an eclipse.' While the Layman went to the door to look out, Lingzhao seated herself in her father's chair and, putting her palms together reverently, passed away. The Layman smiled and said: 'My daughter has anticipated me.' He postponed [his going] for seven days." (Sasaki, Iriya, and Fraser 1971, p. 75)

CASE 95 女子定答 *Why the Woman Came Out of Samadhi*

虛堂、因僧問、文殊是七佛之師、因甚出女子定不得。師云、家鬼作祟。僧云、罔明是下方聲聞、因甚却出得。師云、半幅全封。

A monk asked Xutang, “Mañjuśrī was the teacher of the Seven Buddhas. Why was he unable to bring the woman out of samadhi?”¹

The master answered, “It was because his household spirits obstructed him.”²

The monk continued, “And why was Delusion, a low-level sravaka, able to make her emerge?”

“A half-sheet of paper is just right for wrapping,”³ replied the master.

1. See Case 56.

2. *Mujaku*: Household spirits 家鬼 are ancestral spirits that generally work for the benefit of their descendants, but occasionally their actions hurt the family fortunes. In the present case, “household spirits” refers to Mañjuśrī’s wisdom, which put him so far above the level of the disciple that he was unable to help her out of samadhi.

3. *Mujaku*: Just as small objects are more easily wrapped with small pieces of paper than with large ones, so less mature students are often best helped by bodhisattvas near their own level. (The character 幅 [“sincerity”] in the original 半幅全封 is an obvious scribal error for 幅 [“a piece of paper”]; the phrase has been translated accordingly.)

CASE 96 見色明心 *To See Form and Enlighten the Mind*¹

雲門、上堂云、作麼生是聞聲悟道、見色明心。舉起<手>曰、觀音菩薩將錢來買餠餅。放下手曰、元來祇是饅頭。

Yunmen took the high seat and said, “What is it ‘to hear sound and realize the Way; to see form and enlighten the mind?’”

Raising his hand, Yunmen said, “Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva brings money and buys a sesame rice-cake.” Lowering his hand, he said, “Actually, it’s a dumpling.”²

1. Also *Record of Tranquility* 82.

2. Yunmen is said to have regarded sesame rice-cakes as a great delicacy; dumplings were a plain, everyday type of food.

Yunmen’s raised arm and lowered arm are usually interpreted to indicate, respectively, the realm of the transcendent and the realm of the relative. The arm gesture is believed to have its origin in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* story of Sudhana’s visit to Bhishmottaranirghosha, the eighth of the fifty-three teachers in the “Entry into the Realm of Reality” chapter. Bhishmottaranirghosha raises his hand and touches Sudhana’s head, showing him the infinite worlds of the buddhas, beyond all bounds of space and time. Bhishmottaranirghosha then lowers his hand, and Sudhana is once again in the everyday world, standing in front of the bodhisattva.

CASE 97 別峰相見 *A Meeting on Another Mountain*¹

教中說、妙峰孤頂德雲比丘、從來不下山。善財去參、七日不逢、一日却在別峰相見。及乎見了、却與他說一念三世一切諸佛、智慧光明、普光法門。圓悟云、德雲既不下山、因什麼却在別峰相見。若道他下山、教中說、德雲比丘、從來不會下山、常在妙峰孤頂。到這裡、德雲與善財、的的在那裡。

In a sutra it is written that Bhikku Meghaśri dwelt on the summit of Wondrous Mountain and never came down.² Sudhana went to meet him but could not find him even after a week. One day, however, he encountered him on the peak of another mountain. After they met, the bhikku explained that the three worlds are but a moment of thought, and spoke of the myriad buddhas' wisdom-light and of the dharma gate of universal illumination.

Yuanwu Keqin commented, "If Meghaśri never came down from the peak of Wondrous Mountain, how then could he have met Sudhana on another mountain? You may say that he *did* leave the mountain, but it is written in the sutra that he never descended from the summit of Wondrous Mountain and was always there. So where exactly were Meghaśri and Sudhana?"

1. Also *Blue Cliff Record* 23, Commentary.

2. The sutra referred to is the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, where Bhikku Meghaśri appears as the first of the fifty-three teachers Sudhana calls upon in the "Entry into the Realm of Reality" chapter.

CASE 98 南泉水牯 *Nanquan's "Water Buffalo"*¹

趙州諗禪師、問南泉曰、知有底人、向甚處去。泉云、山前檀越家、作一頭水牯牛去。州云、謝師指示。泉云、昨夜三更月到窗。

Zhaozhou Congshen asked Nanquan Puyuan, "A person who knows it²—where should he go?"

Nanquan answered, "One should become a water buffalo at the believer's house by the foot of the mountain."

"Thank you, teacher, for this instruction," Zhaozhou said.

Nanquan said, "Last night at midnight the moon shined on the window."

1. Also *Record of Tranquility* 69, Commentary.

2. See Case 87.

CASE 99 雲門三句 *Yunmen's Three Statements*¹

雲門三句、函蓋乾坤、截斷衆流、隨波逐浪。

The three statements of Yunmen:

It covers heaven and earth, as a lid fits a box.

It severs all flows.

It rides the waves and sails the swells.²

1. Also *Blue Cliff Record* 90, Commentary. The third statement, 隨波逐浪, is also found in *Blue Cliff Record* 8, Introduction.

2. There are various interpretations of the three statements. The most generally accepted is that offered by the ZGDJ, which sees the statements as descriptive of the workings of a true Zen master:

- i) the master's functioning perfectly fits that of the student;
- ii) the master cuts off the thoughts and delusions of the student;
- iii) the master matches his guidance to the capacities of the student and presses those capacities to the limit. (77a)

CASE 100 薰風自南 *A Fragrant Wind Blows from the South*

徑山大慧杲禪師、一日聞圓悟陞堂舉、僧問雲門、如何是諸佛出身處。門曰、東山水上行。天寧即不然、忽有人問如何是諸佛出身處、只向他道、薰風自南來、殿閣生微涼。大慧言下便悟去。

One day Dahui Zonggao of Mount Jing heard Yuanwu Keqin say from the high seat,

A monk asked Yunmen, "What is the place from which all buddhas come?" Yunmen replied, "East Mountain walks on the water."¹

But I would not have said that. If someone were to ask me, "What is the place from which all buddhas come?" I would simply say,

A fragrant breeze blows from the south,
Giving rise in the palace to a refreshing coolness.²

At these words Dahui was greatly enlightened.

1. See Case 57, above.

2. Yuanwu is quoting lines from a famous poem by Liu Gongquan 柳公權 (778–865), a Tang-dynasty official known as much for his excellent calligraphy as for his poetry. The verses were Liu's response to two lines presented by Emperor Wenzong 文宗 (809–840) in a linked-verse contest: "People suffer from the burning heat, but I always love the summer days."

CASE 101 百丈開田 *Baizhang's New Paddy*

洪州百丈山涅槃和尚、一日謂僧云、汝與我開田了、我爲汝說大義。僧開田了歸、請師說大義。師乃展開兩手。

Baizhang Weizheng (Niepan) of Hongzhao said to the monks, "If you clear a new rice paddy for me, I will explain to you the Great Principle."

After clearing the new paddy, the monks returned and asked the master to explain the Great Principle. The master held out his two hands.

CASE 102 華嚴心喻 *The Avatamsaka Sutra's Simile of the Mind*

華嚴曰、心如工畫師、作種種五陰。一切世間中、莫不從心造。

In the *Avatamsaka Sutra* it is written, "The mind is like an artist, ceaselessly producing the five skandhas.¹ In all the world, there is nothing that is not produced by the mind."²

1. The five skandhas are the transitory "aggregates" that constitute all physical, mental, and other elements in the phenomenal world. The five skandhas are: form (*rūpa*); sensation (*vedanā*); perception (*saṃjñā*); mental formations (*saṃskāra*); and consciousness (*vijñāna*).

2. T 9:465c.

CASE 103 運庵反衣 *Yun'an Returns the Robe*

運庵、反松源衣之頌曰、老巖不負靈山記、颺下金襴(欄)如弊屣。

Regarding Yun'an Puyan's returning the robe of his teacher Songyuan Chongyue, [Beijian Jujian] wrote, "Old Man Puyan, true to Śākyamuni's prophecy on the Vulture Peak,¹ rejected the brocade robe like a pair of worn-out sandals."²

1. This refers to the Buddha's prophecy that all beings will attain buddhahood.

2. Songyuan Chongyue, nearing the end of his life, attempted to transmit to his disciple Yun'an the robe of *Baiyun Shouduan*. Yun'an refused, in a scene reminiscent of Linji's refusing of Baizhang's backrest and armrest:

One day [Linji] took his leave of Huangbo. Huangbo asked, "Where are you going?" "If I don't go to Henan, I'll return to Hebei," replied Linji. Huangbo hit at him. Linji seized Huangbo and gave him a slap. Laughing heartily, Huangbo called to his attendant, "Bring me the backrest and armrest that belonged to my late teacher Baizhang." "Attendant, bring me some fire!" cried Linji. "Be that as it may, just take them with you. In the future you'll sit on the tongue of every man on earth," said Huangbo. (Sasaki 1975, p. 56)

CASE 104 讚六祖偈 *A Verse in Praise of the Sixth Patriarch*

圓悟禪師、讚六祖云、稽首曹溪真古佛、八十生爲善知識。

Yuanwu Keqin said in praise of the Sixth Patriarch, “I prostrate myself before the true Old Buddha of Caoqi,¹ for eighty lives he reincarnated as a wise friend and teacher.”²

1. Caoqi 曹溪 was where the Sixth Patriarch resided.
2. For “wise friend and teacher,” see Case 13, note 1.

CASE 105 一子出家 *When Someone Is Ordained*

一子出家、九族生天、目連母因甚墮地獄。

When someone is ordained, nine generations of ancestors are reborn in the heavenly realms. Why then did Maudgalyāyana’s mother fall into hell?¹

1. See also *Maudgalyāyana* in the Biographical Notes. The case draws upon the story that Maudgalyāyana, with his “divine eye” (one of his supernatural powers), discerned that his mother was suffering in the realm of the hungry ghosts. Wishing to alleviate her suffering, he, together with the entire Buddhist community, made offerings to her.

This is traditionally regarded as the origin of the Ullambana celebration, the East Asian “All Souls Day,” in which people make offerings to the Three Treasures (buddha, dharma, and sangha) for the sake of their ancestors.

CASE 106 圓悟投機 *Yuanwu’s Enlightenment Verse*

圓悟和尚、投機偈曰、金鴨香消錦繡帷、笙歌叢裡醉扶歸。少年一段風流事、只許佳人獨自知。

In his enlightenment verse,¹ Yuanwu Keqin wrote:

The fragrance of the golden-duck censer fades within the brocade curtains;

Amidst pipes and songs, I’m led home through meadows, drunk.

The deepest refinement of the youth

Is for the lover alone to know.

1. Enlightenment verses 投機 are traditionally written by Zen students to express the gist of their realization.

CASE 107 夾山境話 *Jiashan's State of Mind*

僧問夾山、如何是夾山境。山云、猿抱子歸青嶂後、鳥啣花落碧巖前。法眼後大悟云、我二十年錯作境話會。

A monk asked Jiashan, "What is Jiashan's state of mind?"

Jiashan answered, "Monkeys clasping their young return beyond the purple peaks; birds with flowers in their beaks alight before the blue grotto."

Later Fayen Wenyi, upon attaining great enlightenment, commented, "For twenty years I misunderstood this story about Jiashan's state of mind."

CASE 108 袈裟裹鞋 *Straw Sandals Wrapped in a Vestment*¹

僧問投子宗道者、如何是道者家風。者云、袈裟裹草鞋。僧云、不審意旨如何。者云、赤脚下桐(銅)城。

A monk asked Wayfarer Touzi Fazong, "What is your style of practice?"

Fazong replied, "I wrap my straw sandals in my vestment."²

"What does that mean?" asked the monk.

"I go down to Tongcheng in my bare feet," answered Fazong.³

1. Also *Blue Cliff Record* 58, Commentary.

2. "Vestment" translates 袈裟 (Skt. *kaṣāya*), a large, rectangular clerical garment used primarily in East Asian Buddhism. Worn around the body and over the ordinary robe, with the left shoulder covered and the right shoulder exposed, it corresponds to the original Buddhist robe of India and has therefore come to symbolize monkhood and the dharma. In East Asia it is generally worn only for ritual functions or during formal meditation.

3. *Yamada*: Fazong's Zen is spontaneous, natural, and unaffected. Walking barefoot, he relies on neither "the dharma" nor material things (1985, pp. 292–93).

CASE 109 夾山拙坑 *Jiashan Digs a Hole*

夾山云、我二十年住此山、未曾舉著宗門中事。有僧問、承和尚有言、二十年住此山、未曾舉著宗門中事、是否。山云、是。僧便掀倒禪床。山休去。至明日普請掘一坑、令侍者請昨日問話僧來。山云、老僧二十年、只說無義話、令請上座打殺老僧埋向坑中。若不打殺老僧、上座自著打殺、埋此坑中。其僧束裝潛去。

Jiashan said, "I have lived on this mountain for twenty years but have never spoken of the Central Matter of our school."

A monk asked, "I heard that you claim never to have spoken of the

Central Matter of our school in the twenty years you have been living on this mountain. Is this true?”

Jiashan replied, “It is.”

Thereupon the monk pulled Jiashan off his seat. Jiashan retired.

The next day Jiashan ordered a pit to be dug, then told his attendant to summon the monk who had raised the question the day before.

Jiashan said to him, “For the past twenty years, I have spoken nothing but nonsense. Please beat me to death and bury me in this pit. If you cannot do this, then beat yourself to death and be buried.”

The monk gathered his belongings and snuck away.

CASE 110 朝聞夕死 *Hear in the Morning, Die in the Evening*

夫子曰、朝聞道夕死可矣。

Confucius said, “Hear of the Way in the morning, die content in the evening!”¹

1. *Analects* 4.8.

CASE 111 平常是道 *Ordinary Mind Is the Way*¹

南泉、因趙州問、如何是道。泉云、平常心是道。州云、還可假趣向否。泉云、擬向即乖。州云、不擬爭知是道。泉云、道不屬知不屬不知、知是妄覺、不知是無記。若真達不疑之道、猶如大虛廓然洞豁。豈可強是非也。州於言下大悟。

Zhaozhou Congshen asked Nanquan Puyuan, “What is the Way?”

Nanquan said, “Ordinary mind is the Way.”

Zhaozhou asked, “Can we deliberately strive toward this?”

Nanquan said, “To strive toward it is to turn away.”

Zhaozhou said, “Without striving, how can we know the Way?”

Nanquan said, “The Way has nothing to do with knowing or not-knowing. ‘Knowing’ is delusion, ‘not-knowing’ is apathy.² If you really attain the Way-without-doubt, it is vast and boundless like open space. How can you speak of affirmation and negation?”

At these words Zhaozhou was deeply enlightened.

1. Also *Wumen guan* 19, Main Case.

2. “Apathy” translates 無記, indicating a lack of content or function. Other possible translations include “oblivion” and “blankness.”

CASE 112 井樓請救 *Calling for Help from the Tower*

趙州、一日在南泉時、在井樓上打水。見泉過乃抱定柱懸一脚云、相救相救。泉遂於踏梯上打云、一二三四五。師便下樓具威儀上方丈云、適來謝和尚相救。虛堂代云、老僧不著便。

Zhaozhou Congshen, while still a monk in the assembly under Nanquan Puyuan, was on the tower one day drawing some water. Seeing Nanquan pass by, he grabbed a pillar, let one of his legs dangle down, and shouted, "Save me! Save me!"

Nanquan hit the tower ladder and said, "One, two, three, four, five."

Zhaozhou thereupon came down from the tower. Putting on his robes, he went up to Nanquan's quarters and said, "Thank you for helping me a moment ago."

Xutang, commenting in place of Nanquan, said, "This old monk blundered."¹

1. The original Chinese expression for "blundered," 不著便, can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Depending upon the context, the phrase can mean "unlucky," "at a loss," "inconvenient," or even, "the message did not get through."

The present translation follows the view of *Mujaku*, who comments that in Xutang's view, Nanquan should not have said what he did. *Mujaku* sees the meaning of 不著便 as similar to that of the expression 得便宜是落便宜: to think that one has succeeded, only to find that one has failed (*Blue Cliff Record* 66, Verse). ZGJT interprets 得便宜是落便宜 as, "To gain an advantage is to be trapped by advantage" (p. 352).

CASE 113 路逢死蛇 *A Dead Snake in the Road*

夾山云、路逢死蛇莫打殺、無底籃子盛將歸。虛堂頌云、擔板漢、歿拘束。餓死首陽山、誓不食周粟。

Jiashan said, "If you find a dead snake in the road, don't kill it. Take it home in a bottomless basket."¹

Xutang commented in a verse,

This board-carrier can't be restrained.²

Though he may starve to death on Mount Shouyang,

He's vowed never to eat the grain of Zhou.³

1. *Mujaku*: A metaphor for nothingness.

2. ZGJI: A "board-carrier" 擔板漢 is a person carrying a board on his shoulder, so that he's able to see in only one direction. It can indicate someone incapable of more than a single way of doing things, or someone of firm determination.

Mujaku: Jiashan views things only from the standpoint of nothingness and speaks irresponsibly in those terms alone.

3. The verse is an allusion to the brothers Boyi 伯夷 and Shuqi 叔齊, who were princes of the state of Guzhu 孤竹 during the late Yin dynasty (ca. 1500–1000 BCE). When the king died, he bequeathed his realm to Shuqi, the younger but more able of the two brothers. Shuqi, however, would not accept the throne, as he refused to place himself above his elder brother Boyi. Boyi, for his part, also turned down the succession as he could not disobey the will of his father. Both brothers therefore left the kingdom. Later, King Wu overthrew the last Yin emperor, an act of disloyalty that the brothers refused to condone, even though the emperor had been an evil ruler. They retired to live in the mountains as hermits, and finally starved to death on Mount Shouyang 首陽山 rather than eat the food of a dynasty that had come into power through force.

Mujaku: Jiashan, stuck in the realm of nothingness away from the world of things, will end up starving himself to death.

CASE 114 慈明行心 *Ciming's Practice*

慈明平生、以事事無碍行心、凡聖所不能測。

Ciming Chuyuan was totally free and unrestricted in spirit.¹ No one could tell whether he was foolish or wise.²

1. Ciming [Shishuang Chuyuan] is remembered in Zen for his often unconventional behavior; the present koan draws on this image of the great master.

The original for “totally free and unrestricted,” 事事無碍, literally means “the unobstructed interpenetration of all things.” This is related to the Huayan Buddhist doctrine of the four realms of the universe:

- i) the realm of phenomena 事法界
- ii) the realm of the absolute 理法界
- iii) the realm of phenomena and principle existing in unobstructed harmony 理事無礙法界
- iv) the realm of all phenomena existing in unobstructed harmony 事事無礙法界 (see also Case 168)

2. The original of “a fool or a sage,” 凡聖, is more literally rendered “a common person or a sage,” but in the context of the present koan the word 凡 is closer in meaning to “an eccentric.”

CASE 115 大燈三問 *Daitō's Three Questions*

大燈國師云、如何是透脫一路、如何是身心不二、如何是因果。

National Teacher Daitō asked:

What is the single path to liberation?

What is nonduality of body and mind?

What is cause-and-effect?

CASE 116 維摩金粟 *Vimalakīrti, the Golden-Grain Tathāgata*

僧問雲居簡禪師、維摩是過去金粟如來、因甚在釋迦如來會下聽法。簡曰、不是他爭人我。

A monk asked Yunju Daojian, “In a past life, Vimalakīrti was the Golden-Grain Tathāgata. Why then did he study the dharma as a disciple of Śākyamuni?”

Daojian replied, “Because he had no notions of self to contest.”

CASE 117 胡子無鬚 *The Foreigner Has No Beard*¹

或庵主、示衆曰、西天胡子、因甚無鬚。

Huo'an Shiti asked the assembly, “Why does the foreigner have no beard?”²

1. Also *Wumen guan* 4, Main Case.

2. “The foreigner” is Bodhidharma, who was known for his curly red beard. *Yamada* comments that *Dongshan Liangjie*, while a boy of seven studying at the local temple, was asked to recite the *Heart Sutra*. Coming to the phrase “[there is] no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no thought,” he stopped and asked, “But I do have eyes, ears, nose, and tongue. Why then does the sutra say that I don't?” The priest, recognizing the boy's ability, sent him to Wuxie Lingmo for further study. (1976, pp. 37–38)

CASE 118 心不是佛 *Mind Is Not Buddha*¹

南泉、示衆云、心不是佛、智不是道。

Nanquan Puyuan said, “Mind is not buddha, wisdom is not the Way.”

1. Also *Wumen guan* 34, Main Case.

CASE 119 清稅孤貧 *Qingshui, Poor and Alone*¹

曹山和尚、因僧問曰、清稅孤貧、乞師賑濟。山云、稅闌梨。稅應諾。山云、青原白家三盞酒、喫了猶道未濕唇。

The monk Qingshui said to Caoshan, “Master, I am poor and alone. Please help me.”

Caoshan said, “Venerable Qingshui!”

“Yes?” Qingshui responded.

Caoshan said, “You have had three cups of the best wine of Qingyuan,² and yet you claim not to have wet your lips.”³

1. Also *Wumen guan* 10, Main Case.

2. An area in China famous for its fine wine.

3. *Yamada* comments that in Buddhism salvation is not, “Knock and it shall be opened, seek and you shall find,” but the realization that “though you knock not, it is already open; though you seek not, it is already found” (1976, p. 83).

CASE 120 維摩丈室 *Vimalakīrti's Ten-Foot-Square Room*¹

圓悟云、維摩乃過去古佛、亦有眷屬、助佛宣化。具不可思議辯才、有不可思議境界、有不可思議神通妙用。於方丈室中、容三萬二千獅子寶座、與八萬大衆、亦不寬狹。且道是什麼道理、喚作神通妙用、得麼。且莫錯會。

Yuanwu Keqin said, “Vimalakīrti, who in the ancient past was a buddha,² possessed a family and helped Śākyamuni in his teaching. He had wondrous eloquence, wondrous functioning, and wondrous powers. Inside his ten-foot-square room he placed thirty-two thousand jeweled-lion thrones and hosted an assembly of eighty thousand in perfect comfort.

Tell me, what does this mean? Can one attribute it to the wondrous functioning of his supernatural powers? Don't get the wrong idea!

1. Also *Blue Cliff Record* 84, Commentary. For background material on this case, see *Vimalakīrti* in the Biographical Notes.

2. In the ancient past, Vimalakīrti had been the Golden-Grain Tathāgata 金粟如來. See Case 116.

CASE 121 佛性三轉 *Foxing's Three Turning-Phrases*

佛性禪師、三轉語曰、向上一路、千聖共行、調達因甚入地獄。達磨不來東土、二祖不往西天、玄沙因甚墜破脚指頭。打破虛空底人、向甚麼處安著。

Foxing (Gulin Qingmao) gave three turning-phrases:

If all sages practice the path to enlightenment together, why then did Devadatta fall into hell?¹

“Bodhidharma didn't come to China, the Second Patriarch didn't go to India.” What of Xuansha Shibe's stumbling and injuring his toe?²

Those who have broken through the void—where can they rest?

1. The question refers to the legend that Devadatta (Śākyamuni's cousin who attempted to usurp the Buddha's position as head of the sangha, caused schisms in the sangha, and made several attempts on Śākyamuni's life) fell into hell while still alive. See *Devadatta* in the Biographical Notes.

2. The comment and question refer to the episode from Xuansha Shibe's biography, mentioned also in Case 46, in which Xuansha was leaving his native Fujian on pilgrimage to visit masters in other parts of China. As he reached the top of the mountain pass at the border of Fujian he stumbled and injured his toe, the pain of which precipitated a deep enlightenment experience. Xuansha thereupon exclaimed, "Bodhidharma didn't come to China, the Second Patriarch didn't go to India!" He then turned around and returned to Fujian.

CASE 122 世尊初生 *When the Buddha Was Born*

世尊初生下、一手指天、一手指地、七步周行、目顧四方云、天上天下、唯我獨尊。雲門拈云、我當時若見、一棒打殺、與狗子令喫却(劫)、貴要天下大平。瑯琊覺云、雲門可謂、將此身心奉塵刹、是則名為報佛恩。

When the Buddha was born, he pointed to the sky with one hand and to the earth with the other. He then walked seven steps in a circle, looked in each of the four directions, and said, "Above the heavens and below, I alone am the Honored One."¹

Yunmen said, "If at the time I'd seen that, I'd have killed him with a blow of my staff and fed him to the dogs. What is essential is that the world be at peace."

Langye Huijue commented, "Yunmen, with body and mind, served the infinite worlds. This is known as requiting the benevolence of the Buddha."²

1. These are the first two lines of the Buddha's "birth verse," which he recited, according to legend, after his birth from his mother's side at the Lumbinī Grove. The full verse reads:

Above the heavens and below,
I alone am the Honored One.
The triple world is full of suffering;
It is I who will relieve it.

The source appears to be not a sutra, but rather the *Datang xiyou ji* 大唐西域記 (Record of the Western Regions) by Xuanzang 玄奘 (600?–664).

2. "Requiting the benevolence of the Buddha" is an expression from the *Sūraṅgama Sutra*: "At the Sūraṅgama assembly, Ānanda praised the Buddha, saying, 'With my whole heart I will serve all beings throughout the universe.' This is called 'requiting the benevolence of the Buddha'" (T 19:119b).

It is worth noting that the expression "whole heart" 深心 (lit., "deep mind"), found in the *Sūraṅgama Sutra* passage, is invariably changed to "body and mind" 身心 when quoted in Zen texts.

CASE 123 南泉失火 *Nanquan Loses the Fire*

僧問南泉、端居丈室、將何指示人。泉云、昨夜三更失却牛、天曉起來失却火。

A monk asked Nanquan Puyuan, “As you formally sit in your quarters,¹ how do you guide people?”

Nanquan replied, “Last night at midnight I lost the ox; this morning as dawn arrived I lost the fire.”²

1. This refers to the master sitting in his room receiving monks for *sanzen* instruction.
2. ZGJI: “Midnight” and “ox” are metaphors for darkness (equality); “dawn” and “fire” are metaphors for light (duality).

CASE 124 澆山摘茶 *Guishan Picks Tea*

澆山、與仰山摘茶次、澆云、終日只聞子聲、不見子形。仰遂撼茶樹。澆云、子只得其用、不得其體。仰云、和尚只得其體、不得其用。澆云、放子三十棒。

One day Guishan Lingyou was picking tea with Yangshan Huiji. Guishan said, “All day long I’ve heard your voice but haven’t seen your form.”¹

Yangshan shook the tea bush. Guishan commented, “You know how it *works* but you don’t know what it *is*.”

“You know what it *is* but you don’t know how it *works*,” Yangshan responded.

“I spare you thirty blows of my staff,” said Guishan.

1. The word 聲, translated here as “voice,” is interpreted by some masters to be the sound of Yangshan’s tea-picking.

CASE 125 百丈不食 *Baizhang’s “No Eating”*

百丈云、一日不作、一日不食。

Baizhang Huaihai said, “A day of no work—a day of no eating.”¹

1. Baizhang Huaihai was known for the importance he placed on physical work as part of the Zen monastic life. For additional background information see *Baizhang Huaihai* in the Biographical Notes.

CASE 126 南嶽說似 *Nanyue's "To Say It Is Like Something"*

六祖、因問南嶽讓和尚云、甚處來。讓云、嵩山安國師處來。祖云、恁麼來物是誰。讓經八年、方下語云、說似一物即不中。祖云、還假修證否。讓云、修證則不無、染污則不得。

The Sixth Patriarch asked Nanyue Huairang where he had come from.

"From the place of National Teacher Songshan Huian," answered Huairang.

The Sixth Patriarch said, "And just who is that which has come?"

Only after eight years could Huairang respond. He said, "Words resemble it, but they miss the mark."

The master asked, "Then does it involve practice and realization?"

Huirang said, "It requires practice and realization, yet never has it been defiled."

CASE 127 洛浦供養 *Luopu's "Veneration"*

洛浦、因僧問、供養百千諸佛、不如供養一箇無心道人。未審、百千諸佛有何過、無心道人有何德。浦云、一片白雲橫谷口、幾多歸鳥夜迷巢。

A monk asked Luopu Yuan'an, "A single wayfarer free of thought is more worthy of veneration than the myriad buddhas. What is the failing of the buddhas, and what is the merit of the wayfarer?"

Luopu answered, "A white cloud blocks the mouth of the valley;¹ many birds returning in the evening cannot find their nests."

1. "White clouds blocking the mouth of the valley" is a traditional Zen image for nonduality.

CASE 128 雲門一曲 *Yunmen's Tune*

雲門、僧問、如何是雲門一曲。門曰、臘月二十五。

A monk asked Yunmen, "What's your tune?"¹

Yunmen answered, "The twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month."²

1. That is, "What is your teaching?"

2. The end of the year.

CASE 129 趙州救火 *Zhaozhou's "Help! Fire!"*

趙州到黃檗、檗見來便閉却(劫)門。州於法堂內把火云、救火救火。檗便出擒住云、道道。州云、賊過後張弓。

When Zhaozhou Congshen called upon Huangbo, Huangbo saw him coming and shut the door.

Zhaozhou went to the dharma hall, where, torch in hand, he shouted, "Help! Fire! Help! Fire!"

Huangbo came and grabbed him. "Speak! Speak!" he demanded.

Zhaozhou replied, "That's drawing the bow after the thief has left!"

CASE 130 黃檗烏藤 *Huangbo's Staff*

黃檗、對臨濟施六十烏藤。

Huangbo gave Linji sixty blows with his staff.¹

1. See Case 195.

CASE 131 濟下三評 *Comparing Three Students of Linji*

光明藏、鎮州三聖院慧然禪師章、寶曇曰、臨濟之門有寶壽三聖興化、猶馬祖之門有百丈南泉歸宗也。百丈似馬祖而有氣力、歸宗似馬祖而絕豪邁、南泉似馬祖而絕恢廓。以是知、寶壽似臨濟而篤實、三聖似臨濟而駿發、興化似臨濟而淵(困)粹。篤實在青天喫棒處、打胡釘鉸處見。駿發在寂子打香嚴處、推倒德山、滅却(劫)正法眼藏處見。淵(困)粹在紫羅帳裡撒真珠、與面前橫兩遭處見。雖然各得其一、猶爲百世臨濟、況得其全、豈不爲千萬世臨濟哉。愚常恨、棒喝不施於今世、臨濟道微。豈後之學者、力有所不能堪。抑其師之有所未盡其旨。如人飲水冷暖自知。興化一辯香、自艱難辛苦得之。所以盛大。

In the "Zen Master Huiran of Sansheng Temple" chapter of the *Treasury of Bright Light*, Juzhou Baotan says:

Baoshou Yanzhou, Sansheng Huiran, and Xinghua Cunjiang were in the assembly under Linji, just as Baizhang Huaihai, Guizong Zhichang, and Nanquan Puyuan were in the assembly under Mazu.

Baizhang resembled Mazu in forcefulness; Guizong resembled Mazu in brilliance; and Nanquan resembled Mazu in breadth of mind. In the

same way, Baoshou resembled Linji in sincerity, Sansheng resembled Linji in keenness, and Xinghua resembled Linji in subtlety and depth.

The sincerity of Baoshou is seen in how he applied the staff to the clear blue sky,¹ and in how he struck Rivet-and-Shears Hu.² The keenness of Sansheng is seen in his exchange with Yangshan Huiji,³ and also in the way he struck Xiangyan,⁴ pushed over Deshan,⁵ and extinguished Linji's true dharma eye.⁶ The subtlety and depth of Xinghua is seen in his scattering of pearls in the purple-curtained room,⁷ and in the way he drew lines in front of the monk's face.⁸ Though they each gained but a single of the master's qualities, still Linji's Zen has lasted a hundred generations. If all his qualities were grasped, how could Linji's Zen fail to flourish for a thousand or ten-thousand generations?

What always troubles me is that if the stick and shout are not applied to the present generation, Linji's dharma will decline. Why should there be anything that later generations cannot do if they but make the effort? The problem is that their teachers have not yet fully penetrated Linji's dharma. It is like drinking water and knowing for oneself whether it is cold or warm. Xinghua's stick of incense⁹—this was gained through hardship and effort. Therefore Linji's dharma flourishes.

1. A monk asked, "When there's not a cloud for ten thousand miles, what then?" Baoshou answered, "The clear sky should taste the staff!" The monk said, "What offense has the clear sky committed?" Baoshou struck him. (*Compendium*, "Baoshou")

2. Rivet-and-Shears Hu (Hu Dingjiao) called upon Baoshou Yanzhao.¹ Baoshou said, "I've long heard about Rivet-and-Shears Hu. Is that you?"^b Yes," Hu answered. Baoshou asked, "Can you can drive a rivet into the void?" Hu replied, "Break it open, master, and bring it here!" Baoshou struck him. Hu didn't accept this. Baoshou said, "In the future, a talkative monk will clarify this matter for you." Hu later visited Zhaozhou and told him of this conversation. Zhaozhou asked, "Why were you hit by Baoshou?" Hu said, "I don't know what my error was." Zhaozhou said, "You couldn't even deal with that one split seam! How could you ask Baoshou to break open the void and bring it to you?" Hu was silent. Zhaozhou then said, "Just rivet shut that split seam" At these words Hu had an understanding. (*Blue Cliff Record* 48, Commentary)

a. Hu Dingjiao's name, 胡釘鉸, derived from the fact that he was a tinker (釘 means "nail" or "rivet," 鉸 means "scissors" or "shears").

b. Hu was well known in China as a poet before starting his Zen study.

3. Sansheng Huiran arrived at Yangshan Huiji's place. Yangshan asked him, "What is your name?" Sansheng answered, "Huiji." Yangshan said, "Huiji is *my* name." Sansheng replied, "Then my name is Huiran." Yangshan laughed heartily. (*Compendium*, "Sansheng")

4. Sansheng went to Xianyan Zhixian's place. Xiangyan asked, "Where did you come from?" Sansheng answered, "From Linji." Xiangyan said, "Did you bring Linji's shout?" Sansheng hit Xiangyan in the mouth with his sitting cloth. (*Compendium*, "Sansheng")

5. Sansheng arrived at Deshan Xuanjian's place and started to spread his sitting cloth [to pay obeisance]. Deshan said, "Don't spread your napkin—we haven't even got left-over soup and spoiled rice here." Sansheng said, "Even if you did, there'd be no place to put it." Deshan struck him. Sansheng grabbed Deshan's staff and pushed him onto the meditation platform. Deshan laughed heartily. Sansheng gave a disappointed moan. (*Compendium*, "Sansheng")

6. When Linji was about to die, he seated himself and said, “After I pass, do not allow my true dharma eye to go out.” Sansheng came forward and said, “How could I let your true dharma eye go out!” “Later on, when somebody asks you about it, what will you say?” asked the master. Sansheng gave a shout. “Who would have thought that my true dharma eye would go out upon reaching this blind ass!” said the master. Having spoken these words, the master sat erect and manifested nirvana. (*Record of Linji*, “Pilgrimages”)

7. Xinghua addressed the assembly, “I hear shouts in the front corridor and shouts in the back quarters.... If you could shout me into the void, even if I hadn’t a trace of breath when I fell back down, I’d revive and say, ‘That’s still not enough!’ Why? Because I have yet to display true pearls for you inside the purple-curtained room. (*Compendium*, “Xinghua”; “displaying true pearls for you inside the purple-curtained room” indicates Xinghua’s revealing his deepest understanding of Zen in the *sanzen* room.)

8. A fellow student of Xinghua Cunjiang came and entered the dharma hall. Xinghua gave a shout. The monk too gave a shout, then advanced three strides, whereupon Xinghua shouted again. The monk too shouted again, and after a moment came forward. Xinghua held up his staff. The monk again shouted. “You see! This guy’s still playing host!” remarked Xinghua. The monk hesitated. Xinghua struck him, drove him out of the dharma hall, and returned to his quarters. Someone asked, “The monk who was just here—what did he say to deserve the master’s anger?” Xinghua answered, “That monk had technique, he had essence, he had illumination, he had function. But when I drew a line in front of him with my hand he couldn’t respond. How long can one keep from hitting a blind oaf like that?” (See Case 192)

9. Following Linji’s death, Xinghua studied further under his fellow student Sansheng, from whom, he said, he learned the meaning of Linji’s “host” and “guest.” He then studied under Dajue, another of Linji’s dharma successors. When he inquired about the dharma, Dajue threatened him with a beating. At this Xinghua awoke to the deep meaning of the severe beatings Linji had received at the hand of his teacher Huangbo. (See Case 195)

Xinghua later said that, had he stopped with Sansheng’s teaching, his understanding would have been incomplete; under Dajue, he attained true realization. At the ceremony in the dharma hall when Xinghua assumed the abbacy of a monastery, he held up a stick of incense and said, “To merit this stick of incense, elder brother Sansheng concealed too much; elder brother Dajue revealed too much. It is best, therefore, that I offer it to my late teacher Linji.”

CASE 132 世尊蓮目 *The World-Honored One’s Lotus Eyes*

風穴、上堂云、世尊以青蓮目、顧視大眾。乃曰、正恁麼時、且說箇甚麼、道不說而說、又是埋沒先聖。且道說箇甚麼。念法華乃拂袖下去。穴擲下拄杖歸方丈。侍者隨後請益曰、念法華因甚麼不祇對和尚。穴曰、念法華會去也。

Fengxue Yanzhao went to the hall and said, “The World-Honored One looked upon the assembly with his blue-lotus eyes.”¹

Then he asked, “At that moment, what was the Buddha preaching? If you say he was preaching by not preaching, you are burying the Old Sage. So tell me, what was he preaching?”

At this, Shoushan Shengnian shook his sleeves and left.

Fengxue threw down his staff and returned to his quarters. His attendant, following after him, asked, “Why didn’t Shengnian answer you?”

“Because Shengnian understood,” replied Fengxue.²

1. “Blue-lotus eyes” 青蓮目 are one of the thirty-two marks of a buddha. In Buddhism the lotus is a symbol of the sacred and the beautiful. In the Zen school the term “blue-lotus eyes” has come to mean eyes able to discern the true from the false.

2. For background material, see *Shoushan Shengnian* in the Biographical Notes.

CASE 133 東西密付 *The Secret Transmission from West to East*

竺土大仙心、東西密相付。作麼生是密付底。

The true mind of the Great Sage of India was secretly transmitted from west to east. What was it that was secretly transmitted?

CASE 134 孔子一變 *Confucius’s “Changes”*

齊一變至於魯、魯一變至於道、道一變至何處。

With one change, Qi would attain to the level of Lu; with one change, Lu would attain to the Tao. With one change, to what would the Tao attain?¹

1. Based on *Analects*, “Yong Ye 雍也” [6:24]. Qi and Lu were ancient Chinese countries.

CASE 135 治生商業 *Earning a Living and Producing Things*

法華曰、治生產業、皆與實相、不相違背。

In the *Lotus Sutra* it is written, “Earning a living and producing things—these activities are all in accord with the true dharma.”¹

1. This paraphrases a line from “The Teacher of the Law” (法師功德品) chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*: “If good men or good women accept and uphold this sutra after the Thus Come One has entered extinction, if they read it, recite it, explain and preach it, or transcribe it, they will acquire twelve hundred mind benefits.... If they should expound some text of the secular world or speak on matters of government or those relating to wealth and livelihood, they will in all cases conform to the correct Law.” (T 9:50a; Watson 1993b, p. 263)