



Book of
Serenity

Poems reflecting the 100 cases in the Book of Serenity, written by students of Tenshin Roshi celebrating the conclusion of reaching Case 100.

March 7, 2005

CASE 1

THE WORLD HONORED ONE ASCENDS THE SEAT

Cracking open the treasure storehouse
Each jewel shines from within, in between
And all the way through
A thousand faces at Green Dragon Temple.
Clearly observe thus:
Dharma rains down, great earth shivers –
A pair of eyes looks up:
Transgressed just for all of us.

Charlie Pokorny

CASE 2

BODHIDHARMA'S "EMPTINESS"

Bodhidharma!
We sit with you,
facing a wall.
The years go by.
Nothing holy,
only heart-felt effort.
All beings
throughout the world
in water or on land
rejoice.

Tova

CASE 3

THE INVITATION OF THE PATRIARCH TO EASTERN INDIA

Old Blue Eyes doesn't live anywhere.
Yet, for our sake, he rides his swift horse
through the open gate,
brandishing sutras
in the radiant moonlight.

Susan O'Connell

Case 3

CASE 4

THE WORLD HONORED ONE POINTS TO THE GROUND

How could anybody ever find sanctuary

On this bloody, war-torn, sorrow-full broken earth?

And yet a single growing stalk or blade of grass

Can homeopathically turn whole and heal the poisoned terra.

Released; may we redeem greed, hate, and muddle.

No sacred ground, save all grounds—every speck of dirt is wholly holy
holy.

Taking refuge in the triple-crowned Buddha field,

Now here, up to us, planted in the soil—Namu kie butsu, Namu kie butsu,
Namu kie butsu. . .

Taigen Shizan

QINGYUAN AND THE PRICE OF RICE

today,
the price of rice in Luling

does not necessarily reflect its cost

all over creation
there are signs to study, indicating the price at which it's all offered
but ,
since the path of peace has no sign,
RIGHT NOW
What is its cost?

Sarah Emerson

Case 5

CASE 6

MAZU'S "WHITE AND BLACK"

WHAT IS MY LIFE??

If not

these eyes

and

these feet

right H

E

R

E

convey

THAT

which is universally

longed for...

how else can happiness

be found?

Shoho Kuebast

Case 6

CASE 7

YAOSHAN ASCENDS THE SEAT

DREAMING WITH OPEN MOUTH

You're never at a loss for words,
yet you've made your deepest impression
in thunderous silence.

Then I feel each syllable I utter
cutting life like a tiny knife.
Carving out this lonely self,
until cold clarity reaches my bones.
And we sit there together like stones.

Scott Wren

Case 7

CASE 8

BAIZHANG'S "FOX"

1.

Great bodies of knowledge

Freud, Jung and the rest of the family.

One thoughtless laugh arises from

below my umbilicus

And I can walk upright

Breathing freely.

Painting and maintaining the three bodies

with the teflon of Awareness.

Oh, so easy to be blinded by the light

And then teach others the same delusion.

2.

A turning phrase, not blind to cause and effect.

A gift of the heart

Suspended, endlessly, from a fulcrum emerged from stillness.

In Delusion but not of Delusion.

Michael Smith

Case 8

CASE 9

NANQUAN KILLS A CAT

I went to sleep
And clearly understood over and over.
Each time re-entering wakefulness -
I could not retrieve what had not been found in words.

For godsake don't defile the cat.
Better than cutting it in two -
Pass it over here to me.
I'll put it in the oven.

Anonymous

Case 9

CASE 10

THE WOMAN OF TAISHAN

He did just what they did –
Except he had an eye open in his guts
A listening ear at the place where the heart cracks
And two fingers feeling the pulse of an old lady's words.

Charlie Pokorny

Case 10

CASE 11

YUNMEN'S "TWO SICKNESSES"

Don't Polish This Mirror!

In the flower of the flower
nothing's breathing
down a slender green throat
one word whistles
palms cradle clouds
O'd moments blow puffballs
signs ping! off surface
fog on the pond
is completely
un arisen

Roberta Werdinger

Case 11

CASE 12

DIZANG PLANTING THE FIELDS

My basket holds the whole matter.

On shaky legs I settle, then curl to one purring mass.
The heater's my equator—a few steps away Antarctica.
A turn to the left or the right is the same, yet the movement must be
completed.
A hut too holds a body—six steps from bed to desk and the nation's
affairs are known.
Yet what do you call the world when the North elopes with the South in the
night,
And the Buddhas and ancestors are stuck to the roof of your mouth in the
morning?
You go ahead—I'll stay with Dizang till the matter's settled.

Roberta Werdinger

Case 12

CASE 13

LINJI'S "BLIND ASS"

The tools of the trade passed on

Eye to Eye
Warm hand to warm hand

In this lineage
we shout, dance, and slap
when the cup is full
We empty it

The treasury of the eye of truth is not to be
destroyed
Or taken for granted.

Ryan Ginn

Case 13

CASE 14

ATTENDANT HUO PASSES TEA

Rev. Huo Plays With Fire

Playing the fool in a blood bowl...
Does he really think it comes and goes?
The standard fine is a broken nose,
But even that would be unearned praise.
There is a mountain of virtue in restraint,
Teaching an unruly child. One light pat . . .
Then the old assassin lets it rest.
Tell Huo to check his back
Before puffing out his chest.

Anbo

Case 14

CASE 15

YANGSHAN PLANTS HIS HOE

Dense in a thicket
A Crystal Horse appears.
Looking towards the South
A Journey is taken,
The Path is nowhere to be found.

Barbara E. Disco

Case 15

CASE 16

MAGU SHAKES HIS STAFF

It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing

Ching-a-ching of the pilgrim's staff - -
Will that put tigers and dragons to flight?
Reenacting the ancient scenes,
The Enlightened Guest grows over-ripe,
Chasing fog and grasping dreams,
Wind-blown into wrong and right.
A cool breeze at South Spring: mind, wind and banner dance.
Here it is mid-winter now;
Beyond the window, the old plum branch
Once again is drenched with white - -
Birth and death mingled on a single bough.

Anbo

Case 16

CASE 17

FAYAN'S "HAIRSBREADTH"

How can you get it that way?--
A hairsbreadth's difference is as the distance between heaven and earth.
Right effort calming mind
This and that; true and false; you and me
A thousand stars
One bright light
Experiencing the tilt when the fly sits on the balance.

Alan Hawkins

Case 17

CASE 18

ZHAOZHOU'S "DOG"

It spreads throughout having and not-having

Touching springs of red life
Tiles, reeds, faces, clouds – all resonate
With one toll of the bell

Charlie Pokorny

Case 18

CASE 19

YUNMEN'S "SUMERU"

"Vast Opportunity for Mountaineering—Sumeru."
Read the brochure.

Excited, I began planning my ascent.

Once on my way though,
The maps always led to unmarked cliffs,
Gaping crevasses.
Routes frequently doubled back.

Continuing the effort,
I eventually lost my crampons
And pitons
And line.

Now my pack is lighter
And I don't look much at the maps.
A scouring wind sings of deep peace.

Daiki Shinan Tim Ream

Case 19

CASE 20

DIZANG'S "NEARNESS"

Well placed without a place,
He goes forth to arrive;
One turning earth, so green and round,

Makes the same kind of pilgrimage.
Like the rabbis in the old story,
I wonder who this young upstart thinks he is,
Mouthing our red-bearded mother's slogans.
He should have his finger chopped off.

Ekai Uji Laurie Senauke

Case 20

CASE 21

YUNYAN SWEEPS THE GROUND

The One
is not busy.

Tova

Case 21

CASE 22

YANTOU'S "BOW AND SHOUT"

One foot in, one foot out –

This pain, this tethered soul, this beauty, this light released

Does the shout go beyond?

Does the bow come back?

Charlie Pokorny

Case 22

CASE 23

LUZU FACES THE WALL

I want to be
enlightened
want it easy, just to be told
not doing any work – watch out –
to go on like this until the year of the ass
what's the rush

Susan Clements

Case 23

CASE 24

XUEFENG'S "LOOK OUT FOR THE SNAKE"

on South Mountain turtle-nosed snakes eat
people
and shit buddhas and ancestors
today ~ in the world ~
many people are losing their bodies and their lives
why look somewhere else

Susan Clements

Case 24

CASE 25

YANGUAN'S "RHINOCEROS FAN"

you give me the Rhino Fan!
like Yunmen's staff
Nanquan's cat -
hot confusion

Susan Clements

Case 25

CASE 26

YANGSHAN POINTS TO SNOW

Bring me the rhinoceros.

No matter how big.

No matter how small.

Bring it all.

Not a sinew or smatter of horn in the hall.

Andy Ferguson

Case 26

CASE 27

FAYAN POINTS TO A BLIND

One gain. One loss.
If Shitou was there, he'd heave a great sigh.
Who has given you two when there's just one thing nigh?

Andy Ferguson

Case 27

CASE 28

HUGUO'S "THREE EMBARRASMENTS"

How embarrassing – not giving it up.
How bright and shining – not giving it up.
How stuck – not giving it up.
How inevitable – but it's not too late, yet.

Charlie Pokorny

Case 28

CASE 29

FENGXUE'S "IRON OX"

The Mind Seal of the Patriarchs is like the workings of an Iron Ox.
Dynamic when still, serene in its soar, the signless potential make the Big
Bang once more.

Andy Ferguson

Case 29

CASE 29

FENGXUE'S "IRON OX"

THE GREEN DRAGON CAVE

Have you seen the dragon at Green Gulch Farm?
You go there to study about koans, to listen to the teacher,
to take notes sitting quietly in your chair.
Then slowly you realize you are in the Dragon Cave and there is no
escape!
The room is hot and airless. Try to breathe and you are asked to speak
without knowing anything, to act when there are no rules,
to open your Dharma Eye now and see reality directly.
This little temple in an old barn becomes the Buddha Mind Seal,
becomes an iron bull, the red room,
a huge golden fish, and the very mind of the ancient sages.

Holding on won't do,
Letting go won't do,
How is it then, in the Green Dragon Cave?

Ninen

Case 29

CASE 30

DASUI'S "AEONIC FIRE"

here at the end of an aeon,
the fires are raging

going along with it
I am totally responsible
for the burning

Sarah Emerson

Case 30

CASE 31

YUNMEN'S "PILLARS"

Each blade of grass talks to the moon.
A raíndrop nudges the mountain into the sea.
Eyes wide open, but something is asleep.
Clouds and falling rain – a heart-rending sigh of joy.

Charlie Pokorny

Case 31

CASE 32

YANGSHAN'S "MIND AND ENVIRONMENT"

Sticky fingers smudge the windows.
In the stillness,
only blind men see.

Susan O'Connell

Case 32

CASE 33

SANSHENG'S "GOLDEN FISH"

Koan Class
Green Gulch Farm Zen Center
1990 - 2005

The buddhas come in,
filling the room
with their light,
Studying Serenity.

Slowly they come home,
letting go and holding fast,
Silent too.
The ancestors are there.

Hoshin Patricia Leonetti

Case 33

CASE 34

FENGXUE'S "SINGLE ATOM"

Purity

Words, flowing, a constant river of explication.
This graybearded mendicant knows precisely his error.
He glares out, his fist tight in jubilation.
Will you join him? Yes!

Gaelyn Godwin

CASE 34

FENGXUE'S "SINGLE ATOM"

The Atomic Age

To set up a single atom
Or not to set up a single atom —
That is the question.
Really it cannot be done.
But if you could do it,
You'd need two hands.
One hand — very small, cool, and steady —
Perfect for dealing with tiny things like atoms.
One hand — large and warm,
Intertwined with a brother or sister
Similarly equipped.
Going on like this,
Hand in hand, arm in arm,
There is no need for nations.
Ordinary people relax

And life just comes and goes.

Hozan Alan Senauke

Case 34

CASE 35

LUOPU'S ACQUIESCENCE

Once the tongue is cut off
the sun and rain must be used to speak,
the mountains and rivers extending a single hand.
But who can express herself
by spring's silently pushing forth ten-thousand sprouts
for the one with ears to hear?

Luminous Owl

Case 35

CASE 36

MASTER MA IS UNWELL

Pearl turning on itself
in the bowl

consciousness

no pearl

no bowl.

Filling the bowl

filling the crevice

that is mind

let go of the rope

keeping your

eye on the ball you

cannot see

just this person.

Remember just long enough

that mirrors from the inside do not reflect back

then clap so hard

you let go.

Non-
Abiding
Riding
Waves

Case 36

CASE 37

GUISHAN'S "ACTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS"

When the head turns, the entire, true human-body turns.
A fish swims like a fish.
When he hesitates, it's like a fish holding steady in the ebb and flow,
Is this to be eaten or is it just the play of light?

In the midst of an ocean where no land is in sight,
Yangshan drops his line down a thousand feet,
What is it?
Is it the immutable wisdom of the Buddhas?
Is it the fundamental affliction of ignorance?

With no fundamental to rely on,
how should we live?
Hey, girl. Do you know the self or not?

The gauze moon, now crescent, now round,
now dimly, now brightly, illumines
the vetch and bell-beans tangled in the fallow fields.
Here the violets push up amid the fallen sycamore leaves.
There the onion flowers and forget-me-knots bloom side-by-side.

San Getsu Kathy Early

Case 37

CASE 38

LINJI'S "TRUE MAN"

Watching the mind that thinks
the blind man sees through his ears.
Witness looking in and out
of the face
When it comes back to you let go
start over.

Non-
Abiding
Riding
Waves

Case 38

CASE 39

ZHAOZHOU'S "WASH YOUR BOWL"

feeling the ground
on the feet.
eating the wind
feel the chime.
look do not hesitate
be full be empty.
moon faced sun breath
of Buddha.
consciousness created chatter
never the same tone.
breakfast is life
the bowl is now.

Non-
Abiding
Riding
Waves

Case 39

CASE 40

YUNMEN, HOUBAI, AND HOUHEI

Tongue against palate, fingers on fabric:
Wind still whistles from the great movement.
“An answer, please, teacher” began its journey
September 24, 1994.

I joined Tenshin Reb Anderson's *Book of Serenity* class at Case 40, studied in an all-day workshop on September 24, 1994. This verse was written November 11, 2001 for Case 81, revised February 22, 2005. With gratitude to Reb and to Denise Newman. “Then I’m late.”

Carol Snow

Case 40

CASE 41

LUOPU ABOUT TO DIE

Green hills sprinkled with snow
Rompíng quietly, joyfully
breathing the late sunshine
Not so!

Is so!

Don't ask!

All alone the eyes of compassion
do not see eyes of compassion

I really don't understand
Miserable, Miserable
Things teach best
when they are dying

Jiko Linda Cutts

Case 41

CASE 42

NANYANG'S "WATER PITCHER"

Ravens and turkey vultures on the sand feasting,
on the wet sand a seal-shaped mound of yellow-white, fat flesh.

With this body the ancient buddha walks the dog,
when the umpan calls goes to lunch,
at night clacks clackers and extinguishes the lights.

Right here, right now—
How to offer up this gift?

Catherine Gammon

CASE 43

LUOSHAN'S "ARISING AND VANISHING"

(1)

The meditation instruction is clear
Are you there for it or not?
Witness, witness, the enlightenment of the ancestors.

Spring arriving
Forsythia Blooms at the End of the Road
The innocent returning sits at the embankment
Not moving even an inch
Witness, witness! Again and again
Dharma Gates are boundless
Delusion in profusion, swallowing the medicine
 What a mess!
Obstruction realized is not obstruction
Celebration
The Forsythia Universe reveals itself freely!
Understanding the root of such a display
Spring arrives
Moment after moment.

(2)

Clearly aware
In a twinkling, winking and blinking
 of an eye (1)
Whole worlds are there
 Whirling and twirling
It's a mystery, all happening
In the twinkling, winking and blinking
 of an eye

Sonya Gardenswartz

Case 43

CASE 44

XINGYANG'S "GARUDA"

Sticking the head out of the water
to feel the last rays of the setting sun,
the dark evening pond surface breaks into countless ripples –
trying to still them only creates more and more.
But riding the ripples to the far shore,
the blind turtle rests at ease in the shade of the great mountain.

Luminous Owl

Case 44

CASE 45

FOUR SECTIONS OF THE *ENLIGHTENMENT SCRIPTURE*

Wanna Make Somethin' Of It?

The most generous host
Locks no doors
Serve her guests no tea
Corrects no *faux pas*
Offers no more
 than a smile.

Albert Kutchins

CASE 46

DESHAN'S "COMPLETION OF STUDY"

Over a spangled shoulder the *sambista* crooks her mouth:
Deshan! no flowers on this wall.
At the end of the line, a bright response twitters above rustling
forms, dips down for a drink.
The sea is the street: the whole city pours through.
A thousand scampering feet, fingers pointing to just one moon.
When a foot meets earth with no hesitation, eons of toil are wiped
away.
Only brocade? More fish to hook? Deshan!
Yemaya's watery hand snagged the fat pink one flapping on your face.

Roberta Werdinger

CASE 47

ZHAOZHOU'S "CYPRESS TREE"

Speaking of August,
fog. Astonishing how it moves
the cypress.
Below a faucet, winter grass.

Vernon Small

CASE 48

VIMALAKIRTI'S "NONDUALITY"

Swashbuckling Superhero and Family Man with the Bushy Eyebrows were out walking. Family Man rode piggy-back, to keep his white clothes clean. They came to a door in space; signs indicated that 84K superheroes had already passed through. Swashbuckler said his magic word: "Not even one word." Family Man said his magic word: Not even one word. The door swung open. But tell me this – who is who's sidekick? Could we have come up with any more bizarre way to show our love?

Ekai Uji Laurie Senauke

CASE 49

DONGSAN PRESENTS OFFERINGS

Presented to My Teacher from Over a Bridge

The immediate offering of Just This cannot be tolled.

Not grasping outside, who would fail to taste?

Waiting for someone to whom I never need explain,

When the jade workings turn, the apparent is real, and real apparent.

Now I am not you, but how truly you are me.

Just this, Just this--caring for it well;

Though I cross the great water, everywhere I meet you,

Only half agreeing, I work to repay my ancient debt.

Taigen Shizan

CASE 50

XUEFENG'S "WHAT?"

"What else...?"

After all, what *did* the old hermit monk say to the two wanderers?
And did he bow his head—or shake it?
Retrospectively, 'What is it?' is 'What was it?'
What more can we make of 'just this'?
And how much more 'just this'
can be made of the waving bamboo,
reflected
in clear water?

Rin McCarthy

CASE 51

FAYAN'S "BOAT OR LAND"

Song of the Stringless Lute

When butter melts in the hot skillet, I crack open three eggs.
Plate, sit, coffee, toast--I'm about my day.
Tell me, do I have eyes or not? Rather, the eggs do.
They leap into the pan with an ardent sizzle.
At the concert's end, the band leader smashes his guitar--
that's one ear-splitting means of renunciation.
There's no Who or What here--those who receive Pete Townshend's
message
float the silence back to shore.

Roberta Werdinger

CASE 52

CAOSHAN'S "REALITY BODY"

Along

facing/faced with — the stations: the lessons — "What's the rest of it?" —

"To

perceive the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the
ability

to look at us in return." — inched,

sitting, the length of the viewing platform: showing the garden

[*karesansui*]

each 'aspect'

From the series, *Karesansui*. Quoted: Thomas Cleary, translator, Case [Koan] 52, "Caoshan's
'Reality Body,' *Book of Serenity*; Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs of Baudelaire"

Carol Snow

CASE 53

HUANGBO'S "DREG-SLURPERS"

You can't teach it to us,
We can't learn it from you.
Forest creatures just head for the clearing
When the night is dark
And the moon is full.
Wander all over Green Gulch valley
Searching among rocks and flowers, roots and trees,
Can you honestly say there are no teachers of Chan?

Ekai Uji Laurie Senauke

CASE 54

YUNYAN'S "GREAT COMPASSION"

Open the night eye, the all-gathering in eye
Of the yawning heart of this world -
Grove with the night hand, the transparent lotus hand
With all sentient beings already held on its palm.

Charlie Pokorny

CASE 55

XUEFENG, THE RICE COOK

Hey Deshan! "What? Huh?"
No trace of those lofty heights.
Emptiness is taught for the stuck and staid.
A toothless tiger yawns on the high seat.

Charlie Pokorny

CASE 56

SPIRITUAL UNCLE MI AND THE RABBIT

Words like frogs singing—
empty them of meaning.
Remember from what you are fallen.
Quick—is it by error or design,
vow or consequence?
In the small rabbit see the great,
invisible beyond it—
beyond it, no beyond,
no great or small,
no error—just this.

Catherine Gammon

CASE 57

YANYANG'S "THING"

Today, I thought I knew you.
But now, my eyes water in the stench of rotting flesh.
And yet, if I try to forget you,
The moon and stars cry out "False! False!"

Believing is for children and politicians.
When the king gives up the throne,
True peace covers the land.

Susan O'Connell

CASE 58

THE *DIAMOND SCRIPTURE'S* "REVILEMENT"

Turning around once
Sit thee down and
There's no turning back

In a previous embodiment there were consequential hindrances
All my ancient twisted karma
Revealing continuous merit and fault
From beginningless greed hate and delusion
Inextricable cause and effect
I now fully avow
Today accepting and upholding the scripture
Not holding to so much as the letter "A"
It turns the serious back into light
Embracing completely who you are
Taking time to bow without hurry
Leaves a traceless residue

Sonya Gardenswartz

CASE 59

QINGLIN'S "DEAD SNAKE"

Dead snake on highway 1
broken
Can't be found or fixed

We need your help teacher

Snake survives but acts like she doesn't
sheds skin and slithers away

"I don't want to be part of any of it" says Clay from the shore on the floor

Wake up and die

A person has only so much space while sleeping

behind him stretches snake
snapping scissors
at me

Jennifer Birkett

CASE 59

QINGLIN'S "DEAD SNAKE"

The Boatman

Facing each other over the ancient divide,
Mutual inquiry softens the danger.
But the wise teacher, adorned like a bride
in spring's blossoms, powered by spring,
Welcomes the stranger with playful phrases.

These two are one
Their lives, too short,
Their job soon done.

Gaelyn Godwin

CASE 60

IRON GRINDER, THE COW

Seasoned old hands

Like apes grooming each other

The old ones don't talk so much as
They romp and sprawl

In the land with no signs

Ryan Ginn

JIANFENG'S "ONE"

Old Jianfeng points, and Yunmen describes:
If you see yourself now you are wise beyond wise,
and you know Yunmen's dumb and Jianfeng's without eyes.

Andy Ferguson

MI HU'S "ENLIGHTENMENT OR NOT?"

Thinking there is enlightenment – it is needed,
Desperately.

Here, between things
Even a bird flying high in full view would fail to find it.

Would the moon still be reflected in that dewdrop?
BIRD BEWARE.

Anonymous

Case 62

CASE 63

ZHAOZHOU ASKS ABOUT DEATH

open hand
open heart
open gate
please enter
the way

Susan Griffin-Black

Case 63

CASE 64

ZIZHAO'S SUCCESSION

The light of the causal nebula shining
One body revealing
Myriad faces expressing
The class the koan settling

Charlie Pokorny

Case 64

CASE 65

SHOUSHAN'S "NEW BRIDE"

Lotus Blue Eyes
Send Love
Through
All Generations
"BLIND!"
Only can the Mother-In-Law
Lead us Ass-Backwards

Max Swanger

Case 65

CASE 66

JIUFENG'S "HEAD AND TAIL"

How is it

When after all

You see

The clear

morning star is

And you get up

To fulfill the tasks

Joyfully

Shoho Kuebast

Case 66

CASE 67

THE *FLOWER ORNAMENT SCRIPTURE'S* "WISDOM"

Wisdom and virtues are all-pervading, every single soul fully endowed.
Opening up the nature's source, old Zhaozhou has never been mystified.
But blocked resolutely by false notions and attachments,
How amazing that confused folks can't just get up and dance,
And wallowing in sorrow, don't dare behold their eyeballs.
Thus noble caring Buddhas are moved to melodious talk,
Sharing inner dignity, kindness deep inside the upright rock,
Let everyone know, just chew threw and swallow your vegetable stalk.

Taigen Shizan

Case 67

CASE 68

JIASHAN "SWINGIN G THE SWORD"

Respecting our ancestors, respecting others,

For this case, Aitken-roshi's cautions, for all the Whole Works.

In times of warlords, obeying Jiashan, swords remaining buried,

With Guishan, Shishuang, Shunryu, and Trudy, practicing every day
new with rice and insects, going out the gate, already it's grass.

Margery Gibbons Farrar
Dragon Soaring Great Joy

NANQUAN'S "CATS AND COWS"

Cats lick their fur and purr; cows chew their cud contented.

Such different kinds just see how It Is,

Just like this and here replete; satisfied wearing horns and fur.

While all poor beknighted buddhas and ancestors

Remain stuck in not knowing; the shame of the house.

Poor Daowu's finger bleeds with pain at noble Yunyan's sheer obtuseness.

Willingly transgressing he lingers with water buffaloes down the hill,

And enjoys taking the kids on yet another visit to the petting zoo.

Taigen Shizan

Case 69

CASE 70

JINSHAN ASKS ABOUT NATURE

eucalyptus dissolved in fog
this rushing muddy stream
petals on the path already trampled

I am just this way—

across the dry ridge
above a glassy ocean
two crows come flying

Catherine Gammon

Case 70

CASE 71

CUIYAN'S EYEBROWS

Cuíyán's eyebrows fall out but they stick to his face,
then the monks are unsure if they're in the right place.
So they ask him to shave all his head and the rest,
but he forgets to shave hairs that are stuck to his chest.

Andy Ferguson

ZHONGYI'S "MONKEY"

Lulled by the pearly spell of a question
His puddle of words needed some splashing
Obliging the whippersnapper jumped in
The Monkey Master Meeting is Buddha Nature

Charlie Pokorny

Case 72

CASE 73

CAOSHAN'S FULFILLMENT OF FILIAL PIETY

If you are like Caoshan in filial clothes,
you'll pay careful attention and not pick your nose,
but as for silk robes, a black skirt or a tie,
You leave them behind and you understand why.

Andy Ferguson

Case 73

CASE 74

FAYAN'S "SUBSTANCE AND NAME"

Keep on bumping into things
Even while it hurts - the house of cards folds
This can be hard to take
Highways in outspace have no lanes

Charlie Pokorny

Case 74

CASE 75

RUIYAN'S "CONSTANT PRINCIPLE"

Why worry about walking,
when standing on nothing is the Way?

Falling off the cliff,
His body shatters
 into a hundred-thousand diamonds.
Auspicious joy fills the world.

This is what friends are for.

Susan O'Connell

Case 75

CASE 76

SHOUSHAN'S THREE PHRASES

Making Noodles with Shoushan

First, moons set out at every place
Knead until smooth

At midnight, give it a rest
Dusting as you go

Indeed the whole body is free from dust
Roll widely, inside and outside of the entire universe

Cut thinly, with a very sharp blade
The smell of the old master's broth
Going through the marketplace.

Jesse Wiens

Case 76

CASE 77

YANGSHAN'S "ENOUGH"

the circle
drawn on the bald head with lipstick
is unprecedented in this world

the symbols have all been thoroughly corrupted
throughout history

“Relax!” cries the Racika
surely Vernon needed nothing more than to have his hair braided
in this class
at this time

Sarah Emerson

Case 77

CASE 78

YUNMEN'S "SESAME CAKE"

The monks are upset cause his cakes are not sweet,
Why does he pass out such a poisonous treat?
One bite, lose your life, two bites – see his wrath!
Then ancestors are gone, you're unseen on the path.

Andy Ferguson

Case 78

CASE 79

CHANGSHA ADVANCING A STEP

Old Changsha exclaimed, take one step and advance,
you've heard this before but you're still in a trance,
so I'll do him one better if you're willing to hear,
at the top of the pole take one step to the rear.

Andy Ferguson

Case 79

CASE 80

LONGYA PASSES THE BRACE

In this branch of the stream no one breaks the taboo,
the monks like to try but they never break through,
If you've burned all the sutras and the buddhas are broken,
it won't make a dent cause the taboo's unspoken.

Andy Ferguson

Case 80

CASE 81

XUANSHA COMES TO THE DISTRICT

Twas the night of my 40th birthday, one November evening in 2001
The only place I wanted to be was Koan class with the beauty of darkness
outside, not the sun

Number 81 was continued that eve and the lessons of non-grasping, non-
seeking, interdependence and fear touched my being
The koan went on to teach that no matter what happens - ask self if we are
awake and are we happy...and stop asking "what is the meaning"

To begin my 40th year in this life with these lessons, led by my injured,
loved teacher that night -
I recall feeling that happiness, awareness and experiences present no need
to fright

It is all about a Dharma lesson...that was my experience from case #81 that
eve
To experience this Koan I was filled with appreciation, gratitude and love -
and reminded that turning to Dharma lessons is something to live and
weave

Susan Gonzales

Case 81

CASE 81

XUANSHA COMES TO THE DISTRICT

Completely loving Xuansha,
Xiaotang throws in the towel.
Not interested in discourse,
Xuansha crosses bridges in the dark.

Can we stand the silence?
The slightest sound, and the sky bleeds.

Side by side, still,
Not focused on faces or names,
What remains is to hold hands.

Susan O'Connell

Case 81

CASE 82

YUNMEN'S "SOUND AND FORM"

Xuansha's commotion is never connected,
a thing in itself just can't be dissected,
if you're still linking diamonds in Indra's great net,
you'll be shocked to discover old Xuansha's upset.

Andy Ferguson

Case 82

CASE 83

DAOWU TENDS THE SICK

Song of the Great Physician

In the mess and fuss of the sickroom a pearl rolls under the bed.
When the parade stops the brassy sound pours out of aching knees.
Myriad hands and arms function, though I've burned the patient's chart.
In the humming center of the existent, emptiness begs for a backrub.
Over the lush thrum of the non-existent, a chiropractor cracks a back.
Don't say life & death are two when living nurses tend dead bodies;
Don't make slush out of the grave distinctions carved into headstones.
It takes a cold pond to skate this blade: I float over nothing and serenely
bite frost.

Roberta Werdinger

Case 83

CASE 84

JUDI'S "ONE FINGER"

IRON OX, IRON OX

“When removed, the impression remains.”
Please leave, so I can love you.

“When left there, the impression is ruined.”
The bait rotting on the hook.

The mountain tells us not to move.
What is the flavor of the one-tasted dharma?

I say freshness.

Susan O’Connell

Case 84

CASE 84

JUDI’S “ONE FINGER”

Foghorn through fog and arugula.

Two sharp clangs meaning,

Next. Bow and I go in.

Meaning

always fails here. Or meaning, points,

but fails where it means.

Vernon Small

Case 84

CASE 85

THE APPEARANCE OF THE NATIONAL TEACHER'S MONUMENT

Shoho Kuebast made a painting which is in the book.

Case 85

CASE 86

LINJI'S GREAT ENLIGHTENMENT

Quiet.

Back and forth he goes.

Swoosh

Flash

Phoenix rising

Thousand-mile colt.

Norbert Holter

Case 86

CASE 87

SUSHAN'S "EXISTENCE AND NONEXISTENCE"

Okay, you may think, that Sushan had his day,
and saw swords in the laughter that haunted his way,
but the lesson he learned, surprising to say?
– is that selling cloth mats is what's really okay.

Andy Ferguson

Case 87

CASE 88

THE *SURANGAMA*'S NOT SEEING

Seeing the distant jewel mountains through a clear window,
the window is not seen;
as an ant crawls across the window carrying a thread,
now the window is seen.
Meanwhile the ant is passing the thread through a hole
of many bends in the one bright jewel,
thinking only of the sweet taste of honey.

Luminous Owl

Case 88

CASE 89

DONGSHAN'S "NO GRASS"

Grass inside the gate—

inside the inside

boundless

No grass—where?

Just here just now—

just the other side of one thin blade

Catherine Gammon

Case 89

CASE 90

YANGSHAN'S DECLARATION

Nothing can be said
Nothing can be not said

The old question:
How can I be your student?

In a jikido dream I dreamed I knew I was dreaming
and I was pleased with myself
and went on dreaming
until I woke suddenly in terror
at seeing daylight and being told
it was already after five

In the zendo it was night
the darkness clouded with the shadows of dreaming
and I was awake in time to light the lanterns

When the storm was breaking
I dreamed a message taken by Meiya—
a color xerox photo of the new No Abode
with Taj Mahal pillars and a pink-flamingo lawn chair
and telling her the dream a few hours later
I knew I was staying for guest season at Tassajara

Now, nothing I can say
and nothing I can not-say
in daylight leaking
in darkness cloudy with the shadows of dreams
and the old question—
how am I your student?

Now, done with knowing
nothing to say or not say
not even the old question

Seven days of sun
On the eighth day, rain

Catherine Gammon

Case 90

CASE 91

NANQUAN'S "PEONY"

In the dream, a peony

In the peony, no dream

No dream, no peony

Just dream and peony together

—howling through the silent moony night

Catherine Gammon

Case 91

CASE 92

YUNMEN'S "JEWEL"

Sweeping with a moon broom

Swinging on a lamp gate
The dancer's jeweled necklace
Breaks open, scatters
Infinite reflections
Settle the matter.

Martha de Barros

Case 92

CASE 92

YUNMEN'S "JEWEL"

(Poem #1)

Standing outside words, there is still longing.
Hanging our mouths on the wall, about to be executed.
She knows the jewel is near, for she does not know the jewel.
Slipping on dead fish, refusing to drown,
The Emperor of Emptiness takes away her fishing pole.

“Water doesn’t wash water, gold isn’t changed for gold.”
A newborn baby girl cries out. Our breasts fill with milk.
Where do we meet?
Turn around.

(Poem #2)

Returning to the Buddha’s shrine,
Circumambulating Yunmen mountain three times,
Lubricating the hinges of the gate with spit,
Trying to see the light with the light,
What time is it?

Susan O’Connell

Case 92

CASE 93

LUZU’S NOT UNDERSTANDING

In your hand you hold nothing, or maybe a jewel,
could open China like Nevada with a word, maybe two,
pull out a rabbit with one glance from your eyes,

step inside a dewdrop as your brilliant disguise.
Doubtful, I sit here as a hungry guest
But I would be ready, were you ever to say "Yes!"

John Sheehy

Case 93

CASE 94

DONGSHAN IS UNWELL

when the practice is so vast
that the sick guy tends to the one who is not ill,
the bloodline waters the ground
beneath

the dead tree in which the dragon howls

Still

Having

Joy

we are prepared to die with dignity

Sarah Emerson

Case 94

CASE 95

LINJI'S ONE STROKE

Zendog

Fox, coyote,

firedog, sundog, fogdog, dog dog,

wolf! - following the tracks home,
the book falls open and hits the mark.
Ryokan's moon a torch to see
shining on the snow, a diamond blade
of hoar grass.

What person? What world?
A gourd dipper on a branch *click, clack*.
"It's you, it's you!"

Sue Austin

Case 95

CASE 96

JIUFENG'S DISAGREEMENT

Edmund Gwenn, *Dying*

(when the Great Actor was unwell)

his friend paid him a visit.
“dying is hard,” said the friend
“no, said the Master, “dying is easy...”
“... playing comedy is hard.”)

It's wonderful to die in purity,
but more difficult to live in the truth.
The teaching of great compassion, hiding in plain sight –
Ancient offering pots
sing children's songs;
My gray winter garden
Ablaze with camellias.

Albert Kutchins

Case 96

CASE 97

EMPEROR TONGGUANG'S HAT

Tongguan had a jewel that was hid in his hat,
don't stop at his hair, you must go beyond that,
surprising to say if you reach his jewels lair,
it's brilliant and bright and yet nothing is there.

Andy Ferguson

Case 97

CASE 98

DONGSHAN'S "ALWAYS CLOSE"

The Buddha Body Going Beyond Stagelessness

Not entering the world- pure through and through. Where is the technique to help people?

Not following conditions- you should know there is one who is not busy.

In the emptiness of the pot of ages- from an empty pot how can we satisfy hunger? It is always thus.

There's a family tradition- are we born into it or do we marry into it?

White duckweeds, breeze gentle- swaying so peaceful. The answer my friend is blowing in the wind. Is this a breeze that follows conditions?

Evening on an autumn river- day's end, year's end; such sweet sorrow, the unique breeze of reality.

An ancient embankment the boat returns- the other shore is so familiar. The weary boatman gladly poles the barge upriver again.

A single stretch of haze- feet on the shore, head in the clouds, the solitary embankment evaporates, too. An exhale on a chill autumn morning reaches out to greet the next of kin.

Taigen Shizan

Case 98

CASE 99

YUNMEN'S "BOWL AND BUCKET"

INSIDE CANDLE LIGHT
SOFT TONES; OUTSIDE
GRAY BLUE GREEN
DREAMS OF WIND

RAIN POURS DOWN

FROGS AROUND THE POND
WILD CROAKING CHANTS
EVERYWHERE IS DRINK

Alejandro

Case 99

CASE 100

LANGYA'S "MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS"

Purity is originally so,
Why does it suddenly produce 100 stories?
Years and years of classes,
And it still hasn't stopped being new.
The pages don't stop turning.
Heaven's truth is truly natural –
A wonderful gift for all of us.

Thank you thank you thank you.

Charlie Pokorny

Case 100