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Wild Ivy

The Spiritual Autobiography of Hakuin Ekaku

Part 2

Translated by Norman Waddell

In the temple kitchen, piled with greens, the chopping blade is thin and worn. By the furnace-side, at the autumn burning, the fire tongs are busy.

After taking our leave of Shōju, my companions and I pursued our journey for several days, tramping over rugged stretches of precipitous mountain trail. It was an arduous trip, but at length we arrived back in our home province. I went to Nyoka Roshi's bedside and began ministering to his

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* Part 2 of *Wild Ivy* (Japan. *Itsumadegusa*) continues Hakuin's account of his pilgrimage around the country which broke off at the end of the first part with his leave-taking from his teacher Shōju Rōjin (*Eastern Buddhist* xv, 2). In this second part, he describes the "Zen sickness" he contracted, and his attempts, eventually successful, to cure himself. Again, as in part 1, he punctuates the narrative with frequent attacks on false Zen teachers and stories of practicers who exemplify the true Zen spirit. The autobiographical portion of *Wild Ivy* virtually ends with this installment, as Hakuin completes his pilgrimage and returns home to reside at the Shōin-ji in Hara. The rest of his life is summed up in a final few pages, and brings the story up to the time of his writing. The third and final part of the work is in fact a kind of appendix; it contains, in a slightly revised form, the text of *Yasen-kanna*, Hakuin's most popular work.

needs.[1] But even as I nursed him, I complied faithfully with the injunction Shōju had given me when we had parted at the foot of the mountains. Never for a moment was I remiss. Regularly and without fail, I continued my zazen—eight sticks of incense each night.[2]

While crossing through the mountainous terrain of Echigo and Shinano provinces, and for the rest of the trip on to southern Suruga, I experienced large satoris and small satoris in numbers I cannot even remember. Unfortunately, an unnatural heat had taken hold unnoticed in my heart, sending my blood up; the fever affected my lungs, drying up their essential fluids.[3] Before I knew it, I had developed an incurable condition of the heart.

Now, whether active or at rest, I became extremely fearful and despondent. I grew weak and cowardly in mind and body. My sides under my arms were constantly wet with perspiration. I found it impossible to concentrate on what I was doing. I sought out dark, gloomy places where I could be alone, and there I sat like a dead man. Acupuncture, moxacautery, and medicinal potions brought me no help at all.

In my present state, I was much too ashamed to return and show my face at Shōju's. I wanted to go out and comb the country until I found a wise teacher who could offer me some means of relief from my condition. But that was out of the question. I couldn't leave the master's sickbed even for a short time. I tried praying to the gods and buddhas, but that didn't do me any good either.

As I was busy cudgeling my brain trying to come up with some way out of my predicament, a wonderful thing happened. News of the roshi's illness came to the attention of a brother monk of mine many provinces distant in the Kanto area. This fellow, who was named Hotsu (he later became Priest Setten and resided in the Ryōun-ji),[4] now returned all the way from Kanto and asked me personally to let him take over the task of caring

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[1] Nyoka 如何. The Zen master whom Hakuin served as attendant from his 14th through his 18th years. See part I, fn. 33. The Kanto area: Edo (Tokyo) and surrounding districts.

[2] One stick of incense burns for roughly 30 to 35 minutes.

[3] Fire or heat was regarded as the inherent property of the heart organ. Normally, this heat should move downwards; in a Zen practicer, to a center of strength below the navel. This and other medical aspects of Hakuin's Zen sickness are the subject of part three of *Wild Ivy*.

[4] Hotsu Setten 發雲店 of the Ryōun-ji 龍雲寺.

for the roshi.

I was elated. Obtaining permission from the master, I quietly gathered my belongings together into a travelling pack and left the temple, headed for Ise province. My destination was a place called Yamada,[5] where I was going on the pretext of attending a lecture-meeting on the *Sayings of Kidō* which had been scheduled by a priest named Jōzan.[6]

Travelling with the *Zenkan Sakushin* as my constant companion,[7] I stopped and paid visits to prominent Zen teachers along the way. I told them of the trouble I was having and asked them for their assistance. They all told me the same thing. I was suffering from "Zen sickness." None of them offered to give me any help.

The last stop I made was to see old Egoku Oshō in Izumi province.[8]

"If you attempt to cure Zen sickness," he said, "you will only make it worse. Find the quietest, most peaceful spot you can. Go there, and wither away together with the mountain trees and grasses. Don't spend the rest of your life running all over the country trying to find someone to help you."

But in spite of this advice I went to a Sōtō temple, the Inryō-ji in Shinoda,[9] and stayed for a while in the Zen hall there so I could be near Egoku and have an occasional interview with him.

I shared the Zen hall with more than fifty other monks. On the seat next to mine was a man by the name of Jukaku Shōza.[10] Jukaku was a superior monk with a genuine aspiration for the Way. We found that our minds were in perfect agreement. It was as though we had known each other for many years.

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[5] Ise province: present Mie prefecture. Yamada is part of the present city of Ise.

[6] *Kidō-roku* in Japanese; Chin. *Hsu-t'ang-lu*. The works and life records of the Chinese Sung Zen master Kidō Chigu (Hsu-t'ang Chih-yu, 1185–1269). An important text in Japanese Rinzai Zen. Jōzan: probably Jōzan Jakuji 定山寂而, 1676–1736; of the Kenkoku-ji 建国寺 in Yamada. *Hakuin Zenji Nempu* (pub. by the Ryūtaku-ji in Mishima, 1967), p. 43.

[7] Chin. *Ch'an-kuan Ts'e-chin*, "Spurring Students Through the Zen Barrier." See part 1, p. 89.

[8] Egoku Dōmyō 慧極道明, 1624–1713? was a leading master of the Ōbaku Zen school that was introduced into Japan by Ming priests in the mid-17th century. Hakuin probably visited Egoku at the Hōun-ji 法雲寺 in Kawachi (part of present Osaka prefecture). See part 1, fn. 57.

[9] Inryō-ji 蔭涼寺, located in the city of Izumi, Izumi province (part of present Osaka prefecture), about twenty kilometers from the Hōun-ji.

[10] Jukaku Shōza 寿鶴上座, n.d.

On one occasion, we made a vow to engage in a practice session for seven days and nights. No sleep or repose at all. We cut a section of bamboo three feet long, and fashioned it into a kind of slat. We sat facing each other, the bamboo placed on the ground between us. We agreed that if either one saw the other's eyelids drop, even for a split-second, he would grab the slat and crack him with it between the eyes.

We sat ramrod straight, teeth clenched tightly. We continued that way in total silence for seven days. Between us, not so much as an eyelash quivered. Right through to the end of the seventh night, neither of us had reason to reach for that cudgel.

One night the area was blanketed by a heavy snowfall. The dull, muffled thudding of snow falling from the branches of the trees instilled everything with an overpowering sense of stillness and purity. I made an attempt at a poem to describe the joy I felt.

If only you could hear
  The sound of snow
Falling late at night
  From the trees
Of the old temple
  In Shinoda.

About that time, the abbot of the Inryō-ji, deliberating with his senior monks, decided to invite me to stay on as his successor. Their temple lands included some rich, productive fields, making it possible for the Inryō-ji to provide for forty or fifty visiting monks at annual summer retreats. What was on my mind at the time, however, was a trip to Hyūga in Kyushu; I had been wanting to go there and visit Kogetsu Roshi.[11] Consequently I hesitated in coming to a decision. I left the temple soon after that and struck out alone for Kyoto. Jukaku slipped away from the assembly and walked along with me for several leagues before turning back.

Not long after that, a violent storm set in. Rain poured in sheets. The road turned to mud, sucking at my ankles as I walked. But I didn't even notice. I pushed forward into the mists and pelting rains, humming as I went.

[11] Kogetsu Zaikō (also Zenzai) 古月材公(禅材), 1667–1751; of the Daikō-ji 大光寺 in Hyūga province (present Miyazaki prefecture). It was said that the Zen world of the time was divided between "Hakuin in the east and Kogetsu in the west." Many of Hakuin's finest disciples started their practice with the older master.

Then, suddenly, I found that I had penetrated a verse by the Sung master Daie—"Lotus leaves, perfect discs, rounder than mirrors; water chestnuts, needle-sharp, sharper than gimlets."[12]

There it was the dead of night, yet it was as though I was seeing a glorious sunrise. Overcome with joy, I tripped, stumbled, and plunged headlong into the mud. All my robes were soaked through. "What are clothes," I told myself, "set against this great, incomparable joy." Rolling over onto my back, I just lay without moving, wallowing in the mire.

There were several other travellers on the road. They rushed up, staring with expressions of great surprise and alarm at the figure lying dead in the mud. Hands grabbed at me and raised me up. "Have you passed out?" they cried. Someone said, "Is he dead?"

Coming to my senses, I began clapping my hands together with delight and shouting out loud bursts of laughter. They started backing away from me with doubtful grins on their faces. Then they broke and ran, yelling back "Crazy monk." "Crazy monk." (It was a repeat performance of the events which had taken place some years before in the village below Iiyama Castle.) Altogether that same overpowering satori experience must have happened to me eighteen times.

I recommenced my journey, stepping buoyantly down the road with a blissful smile on my face. I was plastered with mud from top to toe. I was so happy I began laughing and weeping at the same time. Although I was in no particular hurry to reach my destination, I soon found myself walking through the gates of the capital.

"Those who meet must part; those who part will meet again"—according to that familiar rule of life, I now ran into three or four old comrades just returned from a visit to Kogetsu's temple in Hyūga. We joined hands in joyful greeting. When I asked them how the "giving and taking," "holding on and letting go" had been at Kogetsu's, they were unanimous in their endorsement of the master.

"Kogetsu is the kind of man who appears in the world once in five hundred years."

"An udumbara blossom that won't be seen again for a thousand years!"

"It's especially regrettable that you haven't been to see him yet," they told me.

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[12] Lines from a versified comment by Daie Sōkō 大慧宗杲 (Chin. Ta-hui Tsung-kao, 1089–1163) on Jōshū's *Mu* koan; in the *Daie Fusetsu* 大慧普説 (Chin. *Ta-hui P'u-shuo*) *ch.* 3, a collection of Daie's Zen discourses.

Another monk, standing nearby, broke in to say,

"I know nothing about udumbara flowers and miraculous appearances of that sort, but I do know an old priest in Wakasa province named Tetsudō.[13] He lives at the Enshō-ji near Obama. He was for many years a personal attendant of Sekiin Roshi, who was an heir of National Master Daien Hōkan.[14] Tetsudō is a great man of the Way—he has a will of iron. There's not another one like him anywhere. People from all ranks of life come from far and near to pay homage to him. Their trust in him, their veneration for him, is very great indeed."

By the time he had finished saying this, my excitement had risen to a considerable pitch. There was no doubt about it, Sekiin, the priest he described, was a Dharma-uncle of Shōju Roshi in Iiyama! Any plans to visit other parts would have to wait till later.

Whether the Dharma path be far or near, I know not, but my mind now was set for the byways of Wakasa. The mind of man is a black valley; polished, it may one day turn into a pure white stream. So helpless and forlorn, like a frail bamboo-leaf boat, floating, sinking, I drifted yearning on and on, until I reached the city of Obama.[15]

But I couldn't stop there, so after asking around for directions, I continued my journey, and finally trudged through the entrance of the old Enshō-ji in Ozaki. Following an interview with Tetsudō Roshi, I was admitted as a visiting monk, and hung up my travelling staff to stay.

After I had been there for a time, I began to mull over again the counsel Egoku Roshi had given me about finding a retreat away from the world and taking things easy. I remembered a thatch hut located deep in the mountainous country near Sugeya, in Mino province.

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[13] Wakasa: western part of present Fukui prefecture. Tetsudō Genchi 鐵堂玄智 d. 1730; third abbot and restorer of the Enshō-ji 圓照寺.

[14] Sekiin Sōun (石隠宗薀 n.d.), actually succeeded not Daien Hōkan but Yūgan Sogin (幽巖祖岑 n.d.). Daien Hōkan is the posthumous title of Gudō Tōshoku (愚堂東寔, 1579–1661), the master of Shōju's master Shidō Munan. Gudō was credited by Hakuin with reviving the spiritual traditions of Rinzai Zen at a time when they were in danger of disappearing.

[15] Hakuin in narrating his travels frequently breaks into a type of writing closer to poetry than prose; usually only for a phrase or two, it sometimes continues for several sentences. These longer passages, one here, and two more later, are indicated by the use of italic type.

At the close of the summer retreat I obtained permission from the roshi to leave. Strapping on my travelling pack, the temple gates were soon behind me.

Still I walked with troubled steps crossing the roads of Ōmi;[16] *without a ray of hope I entered Mino, swallowing back the bitter tears, and skulked my way to Sugeya, deep amid the mountains of Horato.*[17]

Being unsure about the hermitage, I made inquiries here and there, only to discover, to my deep disappointment, that after the death of the old resident monk, it had fallen into decay. Nothing now remained. There was only a field of waving grain.

At that point, my extremity was very great; I didn't know what I should do. In the end, I made for Iwasaki and took up residence in the Zen hall of the Reishō-in.[18] I found a large contingent of over fifty monks in training there, but, sad to say, they were all pursuing the dry, sterile sitting style of the quietistic Unborn Zen so fashionable in recent times. They did a good job on their morning and midday meals, but for the rest, the old monks and young monks alike spent their days seated like lumps in long, lifeless ranks, nodding away like oarsmen. At night, they waited with their ears pricked up to hear the bell that announced the end of sitting. They then lined their pillows up for sleep and laid themselves down in long rows. As they did they began uttering loud cries to one another,

"*Great Comfort!*"

"*Great Comfort!*"[19]

I alone summoned up a great burning resolve. I swore not to lie down even for rest, and never once did I allow myself to doze off. Looking back, I think those nightly choruses of "Great Comfort!" worked to good purpose by strengthening my determination to forgo all sleep or rest.

Later, I overheard a small group of the monks discussing something in hushed voices.

"It's a shame about someone like that. The great, ignorant oaf. He still

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[16] Ōmi province: present Shiga prefecture.

[17] Sugeya 菅谷. Horato 洞戸 is a village about 20 kilometers directly north of the present city of Gifu. Hakuin has referred to it before; part 1, fn. 45.

[18] The Reishō-in 靈松院. A Rinzai temple in the northern part of the present city of Gifu.

[19] Great Comfort. *Daianraku* 大安楽.

doesn't know the first thing about the great vehicle and the secret of Great Comfort to be found in the Unborn. That's the reason he's always so troubled, moaning and griping like he does. You can't help feeling sorry for him."

Once, when I was in the head priest's chambers, I brought the matter up with him.

"I've observed the way my brethren in the Zen hall seem to make 'withered sitting,' and 'seated sleep' the most urgent concerns of their lives here. I can see no way for them to avoid falling into an extremely dismal existence when they die—it's certain to be either the Black-shackle Hell or the Mountain-crusher Hell for them. Don't you think when that happens they will hate you bitterly?"

He told me everything that I was saying was "simply meddling." "Don't meddle," he said.

"Does that mean, master, that you opened your eye by doing what they are doing?"

"Don't bother about my eye, either," he said.

"But you are an example for me. A model to observe and follow," I replied. "How can I do that if I don't concern myself with your eye?"

"In the past," he said, "I used to believe that there would be a time when a great breakthrough would come. I went through much hardship trying to achieve it."

"Then why," I replied, "won't you accept that your pupils might also achieve such a breakthrough at some point, and make them struggle to open up *their* eyes? If you leave them to themselves and allow them to go on as they are, it is clear that they will never open their eyes as long as they live. If they die in that state, they will unquestionably fall into the Black-shackle Hell. They will most assuredly resent you then."

"Concentrate on your own eye. That's all you need to worry about," he said. "Forget about other people's eyes."

"*My eye*," I said. "Listen, you could take a hundred stone-breaking mallets, sledge and bludgeon day and night without ever laying them down, but you still couldn't scratch the outer surface of my eye."[20]

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[20] Hakuin is declaring that his eye is as hard as the perfectly enlightened Diamond Eye, which is said to be capable of penetrating all things while itself remaining indestructible.

The master gave a faint smile and brought the discussion to a close.[21]

There was another old priest living in those parts. He went by the name of Tarōmaru Sokai.[22] He was another muddle-headed member of the Unborn tribe. One day he dropped by the temple to give the brotherhood a talk on the Dharma.

> Years ago, the National Master Musō decided that he would spend a summer retreat alone in a mountain hermitage in order to concentrate himself on a regimen of rigorous austerity.[23] Emptyhanded, save for a single skewer of dried persimmons, he journeyed into the province of Kai and ascended the heights of Mount Kentoku.[24] He took up residence in a tiny hut, pledging firmly to eat only one dried persimmon each day, instead of the allowed twice-daily meals.
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> Suddenly, out of nowhere, there appeared a young monk, about fourteen or fifteen years of age. He came up and addressed Musō. He asked his permission to stay and serve as his attendant through the summer retreat.
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> "What an uncommon request to hear in this day and age, and from a boy of your years," said Musō, admiringly. "But you see, I plan to live here on only one dried persimmon a day. I won't be having the regular two meals. I'm afraid there won't be any food for you."
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> "Give me half of your persimmon, then," the young boy said.
>
> Musō didn't know exactly how to reply to this request. As he was contemplating a response, the boy continued,
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> "Here a little fellow like me is asking to serve you, and do it on only half a persimmon. What could there be to consider, master?"
>
> Musō reflected to himself: "He says that. But he can't possibly

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[21] This priest was probably Bankyū Echō (万休慧長, n.d.), restorer of the Reishō-in, who studied with Bankei Yōtaku. *Nempu*, p. 18. Part 1, fn. 19.

[22] Tarōmaru Sokai (太郎丸祖海, n.d.). Presumably Emon Sokai (慧門祖海), who appears as an exponent of "do-nothing" Zen in Tōrei Enji's chronological life of Hakuin. *Nempu*, pp. 17–8.

[23] Musō Soseki 夢窓疎石, 1275–1351, founder of the Tenryū-ji in Kyoto.

[24] Kai: present Yamanashi prefecture. Mount Kentoku 恵徳山 is located in the northern part of the prefecture.

stick out the whole retreat on only a few bites of dried persimmon once a day. He'll be around a day or so, then he'll disappear."

With that in mind, Musō agreed to allow the youth's request.

One month passed. Two months. But, lo and behold, the youth showed not the slightest inclination to run off. Everything that he did, both in his ordinary daily activities and in his religious duties, reading and chanting sutras, he exerted himself with unabated effort until the very end of the retreat. What is more, he showed no sign at all of lack of nourishment. He swept. He drew water. He worked hard and well.

On the morning on which the retreat was to end, Musō summoned the young monk.

"You have done an excellent job! Excellent!" he told him. "You have served me admirably all summer long. It contributed immensely to my practice of the Way. This isn't much of a gift. But I want you to have it in appreciation of what you have done for me this summer."

Musō took the surplice he was wearing from around his shoulders and handed it to the boy, who received it, raised it up three times in veneration, and then put it over his own shoulders.

"Master," he said, "when you leave this morning, you will come to a small hamlet at the foot of the mountain. On the left hand side of the path you will see a house that has been recently rebuilt. A kinsman of mine lives there. I am going to go down ahead of you now and ask him to prepare some food for your midday meal. But you should take your time and make your way down slowly."

Pressing his forehead to the earth, he made his parting bows, and then sped off down the mountain path, covering the ground as though he were flying.

Musō slowly and feebly worked his way step by step down the mountainside with the aid of a bamboo staff. It was nearly noon when he reached the hamlet. Looking around, he soon spied the newly-built farmhouse that the boy had described to him. As he did, a man emerged from the entrance and hurried quickly over to where he stood. Bowing deeply to Musō, he said:

"I'm very glad and relieved to see you, master. You were so late I was about to start up the mountain to look for you. Please,

come into my house."

Musō then asked after the young monk.

"I was wondering where he was myself," the farmer replied. "He was right here only a minute ago."

As the farmer stepped outside again to see if he could catch sight of the boy, he encountered one of his neighbors.

"The strangest thing has just happened," said the man. "I saw a young monk—why he couldn't have been more than fourteen or so—fly right through the lattice-work of those doors on that shrine over there. It was incredible! No mortal could have done that! I walked over and pushed aside some planks so I could look inside the shrine. But I couldn't see a sign of anyone inside. It certainly is strange. I don't know what to make of it."

Musō's host was as amazed as his neighbor. He pushed open the lattices, went inside the shrine and searched it thoroughly, but found nothing. Then he paused, as a three-foot statue of Jizō Bodhisattva, standing with an otherworldly calm against one of the walls, caught his eye.[25] The damask surplice hanging around its neck was the very same that he had seen earlier worn by the little monk.

"It's uncanny," he said to himself. "It makes my flesh creep."

Meanwhile Musō learned what had transpired and rushed over to the shrine. He entered, took one look at the statue of Jizō, and immediately placed his palms together before him in homage. Then, bursting into tears, he dropped to the floor and made a deep bow. The villagers who were clustered around the doorway were all sobbing too. They prostrated themselves in veneration, the scene indelibly impressed on their minds.

When Musō was finally able to suppress his tears, he exclaimed, "I can hardly believe it! My old surplice. I wore it for years. I gave it to that young monk just this morning to thank him for helping me during the retreat. Look at the face! And the rest of the appearance too! Everything about it is exactly like that young monk! Exactly! How unworthy I am! I had no idea

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[25] Jizō Bodhisattva, the Bodhisattva who appears in the world between the time of Shakamuni Buddha and the future Buddha Maitreya to help sentient beings reach enlightenment. He is said to appear in the form of a monk.

that he was Jizō! I had him doing my bidding all summer long. Ah! the awesome extent of the Dharma's unknown working!"

He then slumped to the ground in a renewed outpouring of tears. A great wave of excitement quickly spread through the village, filling everyone with wonder.

"He was Jizō Bodhisattva!" they said. "That young monk we saw around the mountain this summer was really Jizō Bodhisattva!"

People from all over the district began to come, the young and old, men and women, priests and laymen, representing every variety of rank in the social scale. For nine full days an unbroken stream of pilgrims thronged to the shrine. To a person, they all became Musō's devoted followers. The story has become a legend. It has been passed down from generation to generation on the lips of village elders far around.

When Tarōmaru finished telling his story, the sleeves of all the monks' robes were dripping with their tears. "What a wonderful story!" they proclaimed. "What a wonderful story!"

But I thought to myself: "What that old man reveres and admires, what all those pilgrims came to worship too—that is not what I aspire to. To me, what is valuable is Musō's deep faith and steadfastness of purpose. I envy his pure unswerving dedication to the Way.

"My desire now is to go and find a pure, consecrated spot, quiet and secluded, where no one ever comes. I don't know if I am up to living on only a morsel of dried persimmon. But if I could have a fistful of rice that I could boil up into a daily bowl of gruel, I would like to spend a summer and discover just how strong my own dedication to the Way is."

I waited until the retreat was over, then went privately to the abbot and asked to leave. I set out with no fixed destination in mind, in the general direction of Mount Kokei.[26] I wandered through wild and desolate moorlands barren of all human habitation. It was difficult travelling by myself, with no companion beside me with whom I could exchange words. When I reached the relay-station at Ōta,[27] I was more troubled and

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[26] Mount Kokei 虎渓山, just north of the city of Seto.

[27] Ōta 太田, an important relay-station in the Tokugawa period; now incorporated into the city of Mino-Kamo.

miserable than ever. Some distance to the left of the road, I saw a Zen temple standing pure and unprofaned. It was already well past noon. I decided to beg some tea at the temple to have with my meal. I bent my steps to the entrance and called out, "Could I have a cup of tea, please?" Then I removed my sedge hat and stepped inside. The incumbent of the temple (the Manshaku-ji[28]), it turned out, was one Chin Shuza,[29] a great friend of mine from former days.

This chance meeting was a great surprise for us both. We grabbed hands with tears of joy. We spent the afternoon talking over old times, and comparing our hopes for the future. That night I put up at the temple.

I told Chin that I would be leaving the following morning for Kokei.

"Now that you're here, what do you want to go to Kokei for?" he said.

So I told him briefly and candidly what was in my thoughts, and my reasons for not stopping with him.

"Well," he said, "if you don't find the mountains at Kokei to your liking, be sure to come back. I have some ideas of my own for you."

The following morning we parted, reluctantly, with tears in our eyes.

Wandering along forlornly, "withering away with the mountain trees and grasses," I was now made to realize all the more keenly the extent of old Shōju's grief when he sighed to me about "looking for the Dipper at noon on a bright day."[30] *So I just kept on trudging along unknown roads, my thoughts moving with the wind that whips the white seas and threshes through the pine forests. I came to an area which for its singular beauty and glorious mountain foliage, and for sanctity of setting, could not be matched anywhere, either in this country or across the seas in China.*

As I hunted around trying to locate a place to stay, I ran into another of my former comrades. He was now the priest of a small mountain temple. For two or three days, we discoursed long and deep about matters of the Way. But after taking exhaustive stock of each other's views, it was clear that we had little in common.

I returned to Ōta in fallen spirits. I was greeted by Chin.

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[28] The Manshaku-ji 満釈寺; located in Ōta.

[29] Beyond this nothing is known of Chin Shuza 陳首座. See *Nempu*, p. 48.

[30] According to Hakuin, Shōju was constantly lamenting the fact that he was the only teacher in Japan or China who could teach the true Zen Dharma. Hakuin quotes a similar saying by Shōju in part 1, p. 98.

"I thought you would be back," he said. "The other day, I located the very sanctuary you have been looking for. Completely cut off from the dust of the world. Quiet as samadhi. It's in the mountains about a league north of here, at a place called Iwataki.[31] It's being offered by a elderly gentleman named Shikano Tokugen. Tokugen has a deep personal interest in religion, and a great deal of wealth and influence at his disposal.

"I've already taken the liberty of telling him about you and your career. As a first step, he will have a small hermitage built for you to reside in. Meantime, while it's being built, you can go and seclude yourself at a place not far from here called Kaho. As soon as the hermitage is ready, I'll come and get you."

After I was little over a month in Kaho, Chin appeared and took me to Tokugen's residence. The next day I moved into the new hermitage, the Iwataki-an.

The old layman instructed his eldest son and heir, Kano Kanji, to accompany me and show me the way to the hermitage. A servant followed behind us, carrying a wooden bucket of the kind used to contain a five-bushel load of rice. After a walk of a league or so, we arrived at the hermitage.

The first thing I did was to make an offering of incense and perform my bows. That done, I sat silent and motionless. Kanji pressed his palms together and bowed to me—then he headed home, leaving me alone.

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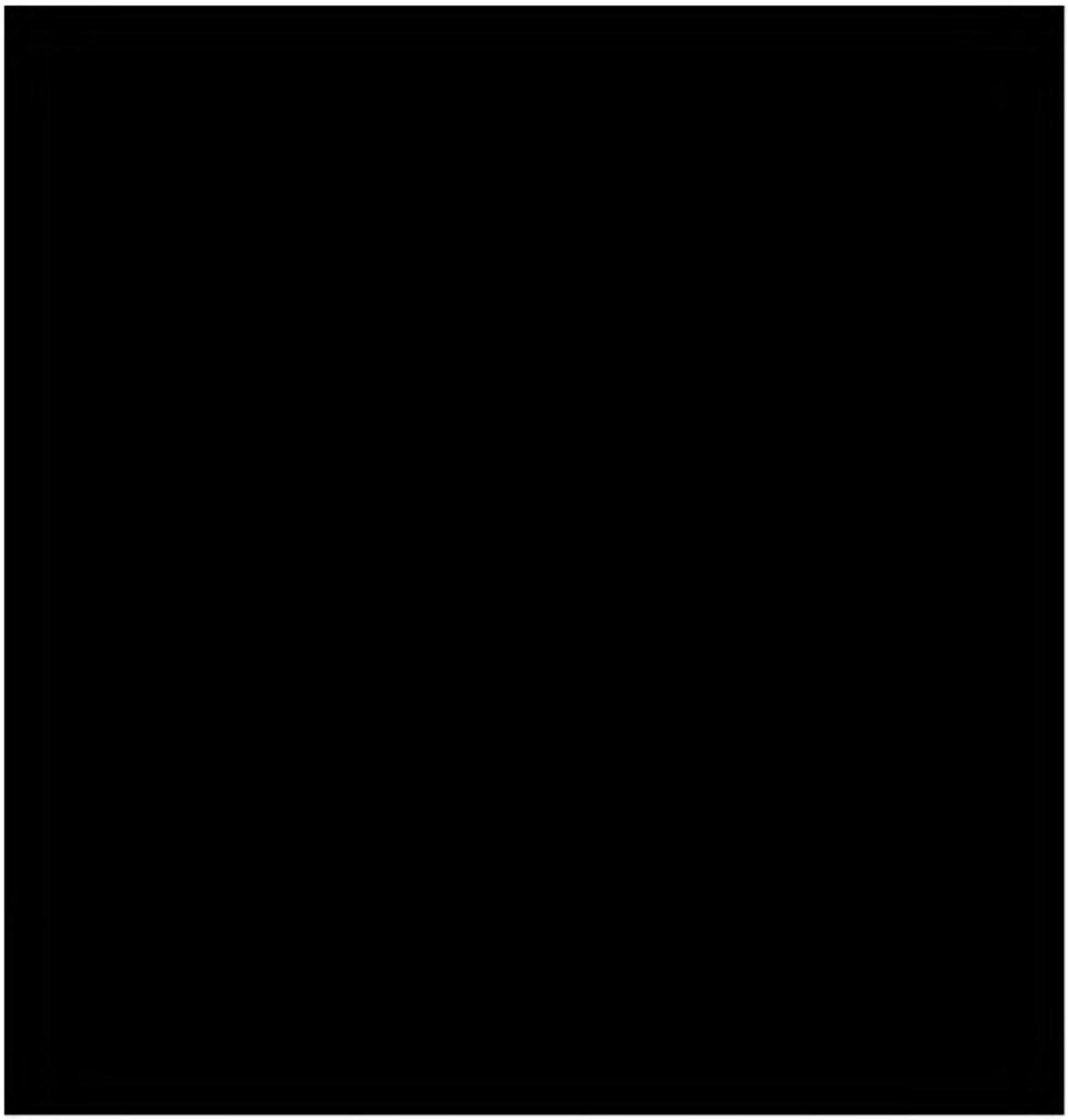
[31] Iwataki 岩瀧 is several kilometers north of Ōta. *Hakuin Oshō Shōden* (Rikugawa Taiun, Tokyo, 1963), pp. 386–91. Shikano Tokugen 鹿野徳源: *Hakuin Shōden*, p. 386; *Nempu*, p. 51. A brief biographical notice of Tokugen by Hakuin is given in Hakuin's Zen records (*goroku*), *Keisō-dokuzui*, *kan* 5.



Sketch Map Showing Places Mentioned in *Wild Ivy*

Alone in the hut, I thrust my spine up stiff and straight, and sat right through until dawn. All night the room was haunted by a strange demonic presence. But I hate to swell the narrative with such details, so I won't even describe it here.

In the morning, I opened up the rice pail, dipped inside with my left hand, and grasped a bare fistful of the grains. These I boiled up into a bowl of gruel, which I ate for my only meal of the day.

The same pattern was repeated every day. I wonder, was my regimen

less demanding than Musō's, with his shared persimmons?

After more than a month of this, I had still not experienced a single pang of hunger. On the contrary, both my body and mind were fired with a great surge of spirit and resolve. My days were practice. My nights were practice. I never let up. During this period there were minor satoris and major satoris in numbers beyond count. How many were the times I danced up and capered around with joy! No longer had I any doubts at all about the truth of Daie's eighteen great satoris and countless small satoris.[32] How grievously sad, to think that people today have discarded this Way as if it were dirt!

As for sitting, that is something which *must* include fits of ecstatic, blissful laughter—brayings that will make you slump to the ground clutching your belly, and even after that passes and you struggle to your feet, will make you fall anew in further contortions of sidesplitting mirth.[33]

But for a hundred years now, since the passing of National Master Hōkan,[34] blind, fossil-dry silent illumination Zennists of the Rinzai, Sōtō, and Ōbaku schools,[35] banding together in spots all over the country, have been flicking their fingers contemptuously, pishing and pughing:

"*Great satori—eighteen times! Small satoris beyond count!* Hah! It's ludicrous. If you're enlightened, you're enlightened. If you're not, you're not. Satori is the one great matter of human life. It cuts life off at its source. Brings instant freedom from the clutches of birth-and-death. How can anyone count the number of times it happens—like a man complaining of a bad diarrhea?

"The reason Daie makes such statements is that he is totally ignorant of supreme, sublime, 'upward-striving' Zen. Supreme 'upward-striving' Zen does not belong to a region that human thought at any level can perceive. We are all Buddhas just as we are, 'covered bowls of unstained wood'[36]—

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[32] I have been unable to find this statement in Daie's works.

[33] I.e., the breakthrough into enlightenment should be accompanied, as it was in Hakuin's own case, by such overwhelming joy as to make one laugh and dance wildly about.

[34] Gudō Tōshoku, see fn. 14.

[35] Hakuin as usual lumps into this category all practicers who do not make the breakthrough into *kenshō* the most urgent concern of their religious quest.

[36] *Shiraki gōshi* 白木合子; a plain wooden soup bowl with cover, i.e., without the usual lacquer finish. The term was used to describe something in a state of native purity; here, to the priests who use it, it means a state of no-mind, the mind as it really is prior to the arising of thought discriminations.

that is man's Great Comfort, the great Liberation. Cease the mind from running after things; whatever happens, do not interfere. Do not meddle in the least. This perpetual mindlessness devoid of all thought—that is the highest and ultimate attainment."

Saying this, they do not do a single thing. They do not nurture even a scrap of wisdom. They just waste their time dozing away like comatose badgers, useless to their contemporaries while they live, completely forgotten by everyone after they die. They are incapable of leaving even a word or two of their own behind them to repay their profound debt to the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

They maintain, come hell or high water, "*We are Buddhas as we are.*" "*We are plain, covered bowls.*" They consume heaping portions of rice day after day, then disburden themselves of great loads of manure—copious pillows of horseflop. Beyond that, they are incapable of doing much else. They are unable to help others to awakening. They are even unable to repay their debts to their own parents. To them, a saying such as "If one child enters the priesthood, his kinsmen will be born in the deva realms for nine generations" is just so much nonsense.

But surely they must know that from the first step to Buddhahood, when the religious mind begins to stir, up until the final two supreme stages of enlightenment, there are fifty-two different stages in the process through which a Bodhisattva becomes a Buddha. There are some Bodhisattvas who attain enlightenment abruptly and some who attain it gradually; some whose attainment is complete and some whose attainment is partial. If their so-called 'plain, covered-bowl as-it-is-ness' is right, then the ranks and classes which were set forth in the past are all wrong. If the old ranks and stages are right, then 'covered-bowl as-it-is-ness' is wrong. The Buddha once told his disciples that he would rather see them reborn as old, cankered foxes than for them ever to become followers of the two vehicles. But the followers of the two vehicles are nothing compared to you, you ignorant, shameless, unconscionable, self-indulgent pack of scoundrels!

There was Sanuki, a disciple of the priest Ronshikibō of Ikoma. His tormented spirit recently took possession of his younger sister who lives in Tōtōmi province. After telling her about the terrible sufferings of hell, he begged her for her help. Another learned priest, because of the karmic obstacles he had created for himself by spreading the teaching of Unborn Zen, became a white fox spirit and took possession of the head priest of

one of our large and important Shinto shrines. After Shōgetsu Shōnin died, he turned into an excellent horse. After that, he became a turtle. You can find him now paddling in the Nagara River.

Then there was an old woman in Kyoto, who died not long ago. She started out her life a deeply religious person. Her concern over her future existence was second to none. But then she took to believing a false Dharma: the Unborn, the doctrine that life ends with death.[37] Before she knew it, she had begun to cheat her customers by using a false measure. When she died, the bad karma she had worked up caused her to fall into the terrible realms of hell. Last summer, somewhere in Kyoto, she took possession of the young daughter of a very wealthy man. She described to her in great detail the painful retribution she was undergoing. Then she told her:

"I have nothing at all against you or your family. While I was alive, I tried my best to escape hell by reciting sutras. I concentrated on it very hard. But then one day I heard the teaching of a learned priest. 'You shouldn't chant sutras,' he said. 'You shouldn't do zazen. You are Buddhas just the way you are now. After you die and your remains are consumed by the flames, what future life could there be for you then?' It was my great misfortune that when I heard him say that I stopped doing all the good deeds which until that very moment I had been performing so earnestly. How could I have dreamed that I would turn to cheating people with false measures, and would wind up here in hell as a consequence?

"I set about trying to find someone to whom I could turn for assistance. But since none of my own relations was suitable, I was forced to look elsewhere. That is when I happened to notice the prosperous-looking residence where you and your wealthy family live. Even though I had no feelings one way or the other toward any of you, I decided to take possession of the family's pride and joy, their precious young daughter, in order that I might appeal to her and enlist her aid to help get me out of this horrible place.

"I want you to locate the most learned priest of the day. Visit him. Take donations to offer to the Buddhas. Donate meals for the priests. Please do what you can to save me from this endless and unspeakable agony!"

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[37] A non-Buddhist doctrine which holds that everything ends with death, thus denying the Buddhist principle of rebirth.

A meeting was being held at the time at the Tōfuku-ji in Kyoto, at which the Zen priest Daikyū was delivering a series of lectures on the *Records of Bushun.*[38] The young girl went to the Tōfuku-ji, told Daikyū her story, and begged him to lend his assistence. After conferring with other senior priests, he decided that a *Suiriku-e* should be held.[39] Daikyū presided at the service himself. He offered incense and read out a religious verse he had composed for the release of the tormented spirit. Soon after, the spirit revealed that it had attained release immediately, and had gone to a joyous rebirth in the deva realms.

See what an immense difference separates the true from the false! False Dharmas are truly to be feared; the true Dharma must always be observed with great care. One priest, by preaching a false Dharma and telling people to sit lifelessly in the Unborn, instilled them with the notion that everything ends with death, and was the direct cause of sending a devout laywoman straight into rebirth in the three paths and hell when she died. Another, on the strength of but a few lines of verse, was able to free her instantly from the incessant agonies of the burning hells. The true is more distant from the false than heaven is from earth!

An elderly student of mine once came to me for an interview, bowed low with great reverence, and said,

"One is supposed to be better off saying nothing unless one says something which will benefit others. Good medicine, while beneficial, is bitter; it is bitter, yet still has the virtue of relieving illness. Good advice may strike the ear harshly, yet still bring improvement in one's conduct.

"Master, I have been afraid certain words of advice I have wanted to give you would sound harsh to your ears, so for a long time I have kept my counsel. In my heart, however, I have felt that I was being disloyal in not telling you. What do you think?"

"If I were ill," I said, "would you shun good medicine that could cure me because it was bitter?"

He was delighted to hear me say that, and forthwith told me the following:

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[38] Daikyū 大休. The Records of Bushun (*Bushun-roku* 無準錄; Chin. *Wu-chun lu*), the sayings of the Sung priest Bushun Shihan (無準師範 Wu-chun Shin-fan, 1177–1249).

[39] The *Suiriku-e* is a religious service performed for the purpose of liberating all beings in the water (*sui*) and on land (*riku*).

"You have always abhorred the one-sided, dry and lifeless sitting practices of the Unborn Zennists. You have abused them as if they were wretched curs covered with running sores. You have reviled them as if they were clods of matted filth. But if you continue your attacks on those unpriestly bands of silent-illumination bonzes, they will come to look upon you as their bitter enemy. Before long, they are sure to dream up perverse and unwarranted criticisms to level at you, to hatch clever plots of various kinds, and to use them to besmirch your reputation as a great and virtuous priest. Think what a loss that would be for the Buddha Dharma!

"You ought to be aware of this danger, master, and leave those dried-up gangs of false Unborn Zennists to themselves. Don't even bother with the quietistic dimwits. You shouldn't give them a thought. Why is this?

The abandoned
Long-lost Dharma path,
A rush-choked field
Trod open anew
By this old man.

"The National Master Hōkan wrote that verse about himself as an inscription for one of his portraits. But master, I think that you too should write about yourself:

The abandoned
Long-lost Dharma path,
A rush-choked field
Trod open yet again
By this old man.

For truthfully, a hundred years after the National Master's passing, the authentic spirit and traditions of the sect had died out so completely that not a sound or smell remained of them. Thirty or forty years ago they were summoned back once again. And it is you and you alone who is responsible for that! You have played the same role that Chang Liang and Ch'en P'ing[40] played for the Chinese people. Had either of those men met with misfortune, wouldn't the country have been placed in great peril? Indeed, the very survival of the nation itself would have been at stake.

"So too with the Dharma. Master, were some misfortune to befall you,

[40] Two great heroes of ancient China.

the wind of the true Zen spirit and tradition would fall to the earth again. False Dharmas would rise up and take over as before. The Buddha's Dharma would sink and vanish into the dust.

"At such a time, could anyone who regards himself as a child of the Buddhas bear to sit by and just gaze upon the ruin and desolation? That is the reason I have spoken out so recklessly, without stopping to consider the deadly risk I was running. Please master," he went on, pressing his forehead to the floor in obeisance, "take into account the motive I had for speaking out, and overlook my impudence."

Excellent! Excellent! I told him. You are a true retainer, one of the "unswervingly loyal and dutiful." Who could find fault with the words of such a person! I myself am not altogether unaware of the matters you speak of. But even if I should encounter difficulties of some kind, everything I do has always been for the sake of the Dharma—how could I begrudge that? All the more so now, since I have already pushed past eighty. The end is close at hand.

It's not worth bothering about the time I may have left. A few hours more or less—they're not even worth discussing. Besides, even a life eight hundred years long, like P'eng Tsu's,[41] could never take the place of the First Principle handed down by the thirty-four Zen patriarchs of India and China. It's like a single loyal and upright man who will sacrifice all he owns and life and limb together for the sake of his native land.

I am not without a few such notions of my own. For even if I should be visited by trouble, I will continue to place my trust in that benevolent god who guards and protects the Dharma, so that I might repay the long-standing debt I owe the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

To that benevolent god, with great respect, I confer the name *Wild Ivy Deity*. So long as he remains firmly established in the world, the true wind of our sect's spirit and traditions will never sink into the dust—even if the unpriestly priesthood who sit like zombies in the Unborn should spread and infest every corner of the land. Indeed, this is also the great, ocean-vast vow that I am solemnly pledged to realize.

What is the "true wind" of our sect?—the spirit and tradition which has remained for incalculable ages without ever once falling to the earth? It is the One Great Matter—the fierce, courageous will to push forward and penetrate the great Barrier into *kenshō*. An ancient has said that "the

[41] The Chinese Methuselah.

practice of Zen demands three essentials. First, a great root of faith. Second, a great compelling doubt. Third, a great burning aspiration. Lacking any one of these, you are like a three-legged cauldron with one of its legs broken off."[42]

Among the three, greatest importance is given to the great burning aspiration. You may possess an abundance of deep-rooted faith and driving doubt, but if the ingredient of burning desire is not present, the great healing power does not emerge, and you are incapable of extending help to sentient beings and curing the illnesses of mankind. The besetting illnesses of mankind are ignorance, the passions, and birth-and-death—the very sources of karma.

What is "great burning aspiration"? Intense arousing of the mind in a fearless determination to move forward to deliverance. Hence it is said that "for sentient beings who are fearless and intrepid, attainment of Buddhahood comes in one instant of thought. For those who are indolent and slothful, the passage to Nirvana covers a time-span three kalpas long." What is "indolence and slothfulness"? It is, in a word, the sleep demon of silent illumination, the great and powerful enemy of all pilgrims who aspire to perfect themselves in the practice of the three vehicles.[43]

It is for this reason that the Tathagata himself engaged in a great deal of "involvement" and "interference". When his disciple Aniruddha was constantly bent to submission by the sleep demon, the Buddha admonished him, telling him, "Shellfish such as conchs and clams doze off into naps of a thousand years, and they thereby lose the opportunity of encountering a Tathagata when he appears in the world."

Thereupon, Aniruddha kindled a great burning aspiration. For seven days and seven nights he did not lie down for sleep or repose. Then all of a sudden, the great eye of wisdom blazed forth. He was temporarily deprived of the faculty of sight. But he gained a reward greater even than that of being born in the world of men or the realm of devas.

Now if the Buddha's remonstration was correct, those sleep-happy sitters of today are wrong. If the sleep-happy sitters of today are right, the Buddha was wrong. Patricians of the secret depths! You should make three bows and give his words careful thought and deep contemplation.

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[42] A statement by the Yuan master Kōhō Gemmyō (高峰原妙 Kao-feng Yuan-miao, 1238–1295), found in *Kōhō Oshō Zen'yō* (高峰禪要 Chin. *Kao-feng ho-shang ch'an-yao*).

[43] That is, all Buddhist practicers.

Strive diligently, all of you! Do not allow yourselves to be content with paltry gains. If you ascend a mountain, climb it to the very summit! If you enter a river, plumb it to its bottom!

You will still come upon some final, difficult Barriers: in particular, Sozan's Memorial Tower, Nansen's Death, The Thousand Snow-capped Mountains, Gantō's Ancient Sail, The Ox and the Lattice Window, Jōshū's Mu, The Three Invalids, The Two Kinds of Light, The Beldame Burns the Hermitage, Jōshū Sees Through the Old Woman, Seishu's Hemp Robe, The Lady Enters Dhyana, The Rhinoceros Fan, and Nansen Cuts the Cat.[44]

These koans are called the Poison Teeth and Talons of the Dharma Cave. They are called Life-robbing Talismans. Once they have been passed, one by one, your after-satori practice still remains. *Never be satisfied with small gains!*

Be like the National Master Hōkan. Years ago, upon completion of his pilgrimage around the country, he paid a visit to Yōzan Roshi of the Shōtaku line of the Myōshin-ji.[45] During the questions and answers he exchanged with Yōzan, he felt tight and hampered. Yōzan reviled him angrily, pelting him with loud scolding shouts.

Furious at this unexpected lack of freedom in himself, Yōzan stalked away into the mountains behind the temple, He found a large rock and sat there, still as death. Mosquitoes soon began gathering in large swarms, distracting his mind and impeding his pursuit of the Way. He stripped off all his garments until he was completely naked. Then, without a stitch on his back, he sat firm and immovable. Mosquitoes from every part of the mountain descended on him in great black clouds. They pierced his skin and sucked up his blood, subjecting him to inexpressible agony. But that just made him stretch his backbone up straight as a ridgepole and sit all the more resolutely. It was like one man battling a host of ten thousand. Then, all at once, he suddenly died the Great Death. His body and mind fell completely away. He arrived at the great Emancipation.

Dawn broke. He opened his eyes. The entire surface of his body, every

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[44] The names of koans.

[45] Daien Hōkan (Gudō Tōshoku's posthumous title) was an heir of Yōzan Keiyō (鷹山景鷹) 1559–1626 of the Shōtaku-in subtemple of the Myōshin-ji in Kyoto. The Shōtaku-in 聖沢院 is the head temple of the Shōtaku Myōshin-ji line, which, especially since the Tokugawa period, has been historically the most vigorous single line of Japanese Rinzai Zen.

last pore, was covered with mosquitoes. The color of his skin could not be seen under them. Calmly, he brushed them off; they dropped to the ground and lay about him like a thick carpet of crimson red cherries. He began clapping his hands together wildly, beside himself with joy. He danced madly about as though stepping on air.

He returned to Yōzan and told him all about the realization that had come to him. The master was overjoyed. Patting him gently on the back, he confirmed his understanding.

In the years that followed, Hōkan served as abbot at the Shōden-ji, the Daisen-ji, and a number of other important Zen temples.[46] He raised up the winds of the sect and promoted its true spirit and traditions to great prosperity. He was a solitary peak towering abruptly over his contemporaries. Superior monks in great numbers—gallant good men and heroes all—issued from his forge. There was one of them in particular, an even more illustrious son of an illustrious father—his name was Shidō Munan Anju.

Munan produced three sons of his own: Shōju Anju Tan, the old sage of Iiyama, Shinano province; Tetsuzui Oshō, of the Zenkai-ji in Matsuzaki, Izu province; and Chōmon Oshō, of the Bodaiju-in in Sumpu.[47]

One of the ancient worthies has said, "The painful struggle undertaken by men of the past is a radiant light whose brilliance will unquestionably grow and spread."[48] Words of indisputable truth! How could the National Master have realized all his great and meritorious achievements had he not encountered the venomous teeth of those blood-thirsty insects? He established temples too numerous to mention. If the painful struggle those of former times undertook is right, the sleepy, do-nothing sitters of today with their "silent illumination" and "Great Comfort" are dead wrong.

Take someone like my own master Shōju, the old sage of Iiyama. In his time, a woodcutter in the vicinity of Narasawa[49] happened upon a

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[46] 正伝寺; 大仙寺 both in Mino province (present Gifu prefecture).

[47] Shidō Munan Anju 至道無難庵主 1603–1676. In Tōrei Enji's religious biography of Munan (see the *Eastern Buddhist* III, 1, June 1970, for a translation of this work), Tetsuzui Genshō (鐵髄玄紹; 1640–1745) and Chōmon Zen'a (頂門禪亜; 1661–1714) are not mentioned among Munan's disciples. According to Hakuin's biography (*nempu*), also by Tōrei, Hakuin visited Chōmon at age twenty-four (*Shōden*, p. 411), and Tetsuzui at age twenty-six (ibid. p. 414). Sumpu: the former name of the city of Shizuoka.

[48] Sekisō Soen (i.e. Jimyō Oshō); Chin. Shih-shuang Ch'u-yuan. See part 1, fn. 3.

[49] Narasawa is the name of a section of Iiyama. Part 1, fn. 68.

wolf cub in one of his trips into the mountain forests. He carried it back home with him, set out food for it, and soon became very attached to the little animal. One day he headed into the mountains to fell a large tree, followed devotedly by the young wolf. The wolf lay down nearby as the woodcutter set about his work. But by mischance, the tree toppled suddenly and landed directly on top of the wolf, crushing him flat. The woodcutter, looking helplessly on, was overwhelmed with grief and regret. Yet there was nothing for him to do but to dispose sadly of the lifeless remains and return home.

Beginning that very night, however, wolves assembled from all over the province. They surged over the countryside in packs, dashing wildly here and there. They entered Iiyama each night burning fiercely with anger and resentment. The village streets were alive with wolves. They stole into peoples' houses. They dragged children of four, five, six, even seven years of age outside, where the pack set upon them and tore them to pieces, leaving parts of their bodies strewn about the streets. Their vengeance knew no bounds. At the first sign of darkness, all the inhabitants of the village shut themselves up inside their houses and secured their doors and windows. No one dared venture outside. All coming and going ceased.

In the midst of this, Shōju recalled the life of self-abnegation that the great Shūhō Myōchō had experienced on the river banks near the Shijō bridge in Kyoto.[50]

"A good chance," he thought to himself, "for me to test myself and find just how strong my religious purpose is."

Selecting a spot in the village cemetery, because there the wolves congregated in greatest numbers, he prepared a seat of grasses and sat down upon it, vowing to remain seated for a seven-night session of rigorous self-discipline.

When darkness fell, wolves in untold numbers came crowding into the cemetery where he sat. They padded around him on all sides. Suddenly, two or three, breaking away from the rest, hurtled over his head. Wolves sniffed at his throat, butted and poked at his back; he felt warm snouts muzzling up and down his legs and around the soles of his feet. His liver froze, his knees trembled, as the beasts probed and tested in a thousand different ways. But never once through it all did his mind waver. He

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[50] Shūhō Myōchō 宗峰妙超 is the posthumous title of Daitō Kokushi, 1282–1338, founder of the Daitoku-ji in Kyoto.

even sensed a secret joy at the strength he felt within him. He continued sitting that way unharmed right through the end of the seventh night. I heard this story from Shōju himself during a tea-break one night.

And what about Myōchō's life of self-denial on the banks of the Kamo River? Each night, in order to try the strength of his religious purpose, he went to the neighborhood of the Shijō Bridge and sat in zazen on a seat of grasses. At the time, the young street ruffians of the capital were a particular menace. Gathering in groups of three or four, they would begin arguing the merits of the swords they carried; then, to test their cutting edges, they would proceed to the broad banks of the Kamo river, and dash around cutting down the hapless beggars and outcasts whom they found there. Great numbers fell victim to their blades.

A band of these scoundrels stole unperceived into the area near Shijō Bridge and came upon Myōchō meditating on his grass seat. He seemed an ideal victim.

"I'll strike the first blow with my long sword," one of them called out. "You can take your turns next."

The villains pressed toward the seated figure, threatening him this way and that with raised weapons.

But Myōchō showed not the slightest sign of fear. He just sat, bolt upright, with a calm and blissful unconcern.

Then one of the ruffians paused, looked long and hard at him, and all at once pressed his palms together before him in veneration.

"Even if we did cause the death of this excellent priest, it wouldn't really prove the sharpness of our blades," he said. "And think what terrible karma such an act would bring upon us!"

With that, they dropped their swords and fled. Myōchō has a poem about this.[51]

Hardships still come
One upon another—
Now I'll see if my mind
Truly has cast off
This world or not.

[51] This poem is not included among the waka collection published under Daitō's name in the 17th century.

The story which occasioned these lines should inspire men for a thousand years. The illustrious Daitoku-ji he established, the exceptional and lasting brilliance of his radiant virtue through the years—all is a consequence of the hard, merciless perseverance of his practice. If the extraordinary exertion of men in the past such as this was right, then the "Great Comfort" of present-day priests must be wrong.

The elder priests who trained under the tutelage of National Master Hōkan often engaged in week-long practice sessions of concentrated zazen. No sleep or repose for seven days and seven nights. During one of these practice sessions, Tetsuzui Rōkan dozed off momentarily in spite of himself.[52] A venerable rat scurrying along a shelf nudged an old pot, sending it clattering to the floor. The noise woke Tetsuzui. Rising, he turned to the rat and made three deep bows.

"Well done! Well done!" he said. "Thanks to your admonishment, I have driven the sleep demon right off." Later, he began nodding again. This time he was startled into instant wakefulness by the noise of a kitten chasing a baby rat. Again he got up, and made three bows to the kitten.

"Well done! Well done! Thanks to your admonishment, I have caught the sleep demon red-handed and made him my prisoner."

This is the reason why Tetsuzui had such deep understanding. His penetrating eye could not be matched by a single priest in all the five provinces.[53]

As for Chōkan Roshi, many times while we were having tea he would tell us of his younger days. As a young monk, he absolutely would not allow the sleep demon to approach him. Whenever they tried, he would burn his flesh with moxa at the *sanri* and *kyokuchi* points.[54]

The zealous dedication of the ancients' practice is truly to be cherished! Not a man today in any of the temples or monasteries in this country bears them even a distant resemblance. How deeply it grieves me to witness such deterioration and ruin in the halls of Zen! And do you know who is to

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[52] Above, Hakuin has just stated that Tetsuzui was a disciple of Shidō Munan (fn. 47). Tetsuzui (born 1640) may possibly have studied under Hōkan (d. 1661) as a young novice.

[53] The provinces of Izu, Kai, Tōtōmi, Shinano, and Suruga.

[54] *Sanri* 三里 and *Kyokuchi* 曲池; names of two strategic points on the body at which moxa is placed and burnt in moxabustion therapy. The *sanri* is located just below the outer base of the kneecap; the *kyokuchi* is located near the lateral crease of the elbow, when the arm is bent.

blame? It results from the preachings and teachings perpetrated by bogus teachers of Zen, and from no other cause.

Someone said, "Master, a while ago you were kind enough to teach us about the three kinds of succession.[55] I can't figure which of those categories a priest such as yourself would belong to. Did you succeed to your enemy, your benefactor, or to a man of power?"

"It's a long story," I said. "To put it briefly, I belong to the mediocre group. I succeeded my benefactor."

"Tell us about it," he said.

"Well, to confess the truth, my late master Nyoka Rōkan was a follower of the blind and feckless Unborn Zen of recent times. He didn't give a thought to mundane things. He hadn't a speck of interest in the affairs of the world. It was always just

Covered bowls of wood
Plain and unfinished—
With no lacquer to put on
No color to come off.

Nothing but 'you are all Buddhas just the way you are.' Everything else was left unregarded. Consequently, the old Shōin-ji[56] where he lived was thoroughly run-down, impoverished, debt-ridden. Leaky roofs. Floors damp and rotten.

"That was the period when I was living by myself in the mountains of Iwataki. An elderly servant named Yobakari Shichibei, who had served my beloved father, Layman Heishin Sōi, and also his father and his father's father before that, came to Iwataki looking for me.[57] He had made a journey of over a hundred leagues, much of it through steep, arduous mountain country. He told me about the Shōin-ji:

'The temple is totally impoverished; there are no funds at all. Its roofs and walls are cracking apart and falling down. Three shabby tatami mats are all that are left on the floors; and there are no straw coverings at all. Whenever it rains, you need a sedge rainhat to move between the abbot's room and the monk's quarters. Your father was deeply distressed by this situation. He summoned me and told me:

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[55] See part 1, fn. 79.

[56] The Shōin-ji 松蔭寺 in Hara became the center of Hakuin's teaching activities.

[57] Yobakari (Yake) Shichibei 夜計七兵衛. Heishin Sōi 平心宗彝; Hakuin is using his father's posthumous religious name.

"Did you know, Shichibei, it was my uncle Daizui Rōjin who restored the old Shōin-ji many years ago?[58] Even as I speak its walls again crumble and disintegrate. There's nothing remotely to match it anywhere else in the country. Before long the remains will be plowed under. A patch of wild barley will be growing there. How can I just sit idly by and watch that happen? The time is critical. There is only one man for the Shōin-ji now: my son Kaku Jōza.[59] If Kaku were to return and reside in it, I am certain that the Shōin-ji would soon be back to what it used to be.

"Since things have come to this pass, Yobakari, I have no one to turn to but you, despite your advanced years. You are the only person who can make the long journey and fetch my son back. I want you to go and find him and make him return to the Shōin-ji. It will take a great burden off me, and enable me to end my days with an easy mind."

'And that,' explained Yobakari, tears streaming down his face, 'is why I have come all this way looking for you. I hope that you will do as your father wishes and return home with me.'

I was silent for some moments, a saying of one of the wise ancients passing through my mind: "Don't enter a state that is in danger. Don't remain in a state that is in turmoil."[60] If I give up the pure and peaceful life I now enjoy to enter in the midst of those dangers and turmoils, I reasoned, I will be acting directly counter to the sage counsel of that ancient teacher. Yet if I don't go, I will disappoint my aging father's deeply cherished hopes.

After some hard pondering, I resolved to go to the Shōin-ji and reside there for as long as my father lived; I could always leave later, after he passed away. So, with Yobakari at my side, I quit Iwataki. We stopped off so that I could say goodbye to old Tokugen, and then we headed directly for home.

Once I was ensconced in the Shōin-ji, I gave no thought to either its destitute financial condition or to the appalling state of its ramshackle walls. Life was simple and severe. I fashioned a basket out of green bamboo, climbed inside, and spent my time in meditation. I worked with the methods of Zen and the methods of Introspection; I practiced them both together.

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[58] Daizui Rōjin 大瑞老人, d. 1660.

[59] Hakuin.

[60] The *Analects* of Confucius.

Thanks to the valuable techniques of Introspective Meditation, all the troubles and indispositions which had plagued me so much in the past began to clear up. The illness ran its course and my health returned to normal.

Invigorated and free of care, I felt vastly better than I had back in the days at Iwataki. I was totally unconcerned with poverty and wealth. It was just as if I was living in a place which was barren of men for thousands of leagues around. The wealth of ten thousand daimyos could have added nothing to the joy I felt. What need had I now to seek the reward of rebirth as a man or deva? There at that way-station on the main eastern highroad, an island afloat in the defilements of the impure world, a chaotic mixture of rich and poor, right and wrong in clamorous strife, the din and clatter and constant movement of men and beasts—who would have ever believed me if I had told them that life in such a setting could seem comparable to the solitude I had known far from human society among the cliffs and crags of Iwataki? And how, but for the hardships I had experienced during that period when I subsisted on a daily handful of rice, could I ever have known the great exultant joy which filled me then!

Shōtō Rōkan, a Zen teacher of past years from the city of Sendai,[61] and a fine calligrapher, was constantly beseiged by requests for specimens of his writing. He always wrote the same six characters to give petitioners: "*Pleasure is the source of suffering. Suffering is the source of pleasure.*" Were they not treasures truly to be cherished!

Then, after long deliberation, I came to conclude that even though I had given up the idea of living alone in the mountains, if I just continued this kind of life in the Shōin-ji devoting myself constantly to the life-nurturing practices of Introspection,[62] though I lived for eight hundred years, like P'eng Tsu, I would be no different from a sleepy old polecat napping away in an old den.

I decided that from then on it would be far better for me to follow the parting advice old Shōju had given me: to devote my energies to the countless suffering sentient beings of the world by giving them the great gift of the Dharma and helping them to reach salvation; to assemble a few monks capable of passing the Barrier to true *kenshō*; to devote my

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[61] Shōtō Rōkan 小島老漢.

[62] *Naikan* 内観. The methods of nurturing and prolonging life which Hakuin learned from the hermit Hakuyūshi. The subject of part three of *Wild Ivy*.

efforts to creating conditions for the creation of a Buddha-land on earth; and to acquire the dignified comportment of the Bodhisattvas.

By thus laying the groundwork for greatness in the future, and sending forth a handful of genuine monks who have advanced beyond the Barrier, I could repay the immense debt I owed to the Buddhas and Patriarchs.

Little by little I worked out methods for imparting the Dharma gift. At the beginning, I had only two or three monks with me. Later, others began to come, like attracting like; eventually their number reached a hundred and fifty. Now I always have about three hundred monks living here.

Through all those years, in response to circumstances, in answer to requests, I have travelled widely in many different provinces. I have been to dozens of places, carrying out my mission of imparting the Dharma wherever I went. I can't even remember all the many temples, monasteries, and laymen's houses I have visited.

I've gone across to southern Izu four or five times. I've made the same number of trips to southern Kai. I've travelled north all the way to Kiso and Hida, and south as far as Bizen and Bitchū.[63] I've been to Edo four or five different times. At the lecture-meetings that were held during those visits, I have given *teishō*[64] on a great many texts: four or five times each on the *Lotus*, *Surangama*, and *Vimalakirti* sutras; six or seven times on the *Blue Cliff Records* and the *Records of Kidō*; two or three times each on the *Eulogies of the Five Houses of Zen* and the *Three Sutras of the Buddha-patriarchs*; more times than I can remember on the *Kannon Sutra*. In addition, I have lectured on the *Records of Rinzai; Daie's Letters*, the *Records of Daitō*, *Goso*, *Shōgen*, and *Bukkō*; the *Soei Collection*; the *Poems of Kanzan; Spurring Students Through the Zen Barrier*; the *4-Part Collection; Daie's Arsenal; Manjusri's Held-in-Hand Sutra;* the *Song of the Treasure-Mirror Samadhi; Dream-Words from the Land of Dreams; Poison Stamens from the Thicket of Thorns*; the *Records of Daitō*; the *Song of the Mind-King*, and others too numerous for me to remember.[65]

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[63] Kiso: the southwestern part of Nagano prefecture. Hida: the eastern part of present Gifu prefecture. Bizen and Bitchū: neighboring provinces in Honshū bordering the Inland Sea; included in present Okayama prefecture.

[64] Zen lectures.

[65] The Japanese (and Chinese) titles of these texts are, beginning with the *Blue Cliff Records* (*Hekiganroku; Pi-yen lu*): *Kidō-roku* (see footnote 5): *Goke Shōshū-san*

"A superior man," the old saying goes, "utters a thousand words and makes only one mistake; an inferior man uses a thousand words and achieves but a single benefit." If from this rambling nonsense of mine a single benefit does come, that slight Dharma gift may do some small bit of good.

My writings are gross-grained, the strokes of my brush a thick, vulgar chickenscratch, and both of them are riddled with mistakes and blunders. Miswritten characters. One word mistaken for another. I just scribble the words down, and make them a "fair copy." They engrave it on wooden blocks, and then it's printed off. Altogether, I must have written twenty volumes like that. No matter. Any wise man who claps eyes on them will fling them to the ground in disgust, and spew them contemptuously with spit.

My literary labours: *Poison Stamens from the Thicket of Thorns*, *Hōkan's Enduring Radiance*, *Idle Talks on a Boat at Night*, *My Tea Kettle*, *A Weed-choked Field of Words*, *Goose Grass*, *Grain-grinding Song*, *A Record of Four Filial Young Girls*, *A Childhood Tale*, *Yūkichi's Tale*, *Dream Words from the Land of Dreams*, *Usenshikō*, *Moxa*, *Snake Strawberries*, *A Record of Sendai's Comments on Kanzan's Poems*, *Horse Thistles*, *Discourses on the Sokkō Records*, and *Wild Ivy*.[66] And that is still only a rough list. As

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(part 1, fn. 37): *Busso Sankyō* (part 1, fn. 52): *Kannon-kyō*: *Rinzai-roku* (the records of Rinzai Gigen; Lin-chi I-hsuan, d. 866): *Daie-sho* (the religious letters of Daie Sōkō; Ta-hui Tsung-kao, 1089–1163): *Daitō-roku* (records of Daitō Kokushi, 1282–1338): *Goso-roku* (records of Goso Hōen; Wu-tsu Fa-yen, 1024?–1104): *Shōgen-roku* (records of Shōgen Sūgaku; Sung-yuan Ch'ung-yueh, 1139–1209): *Bukkō-roku* (records of Bukkō Kokushi, Mugaku Sogen; Wu-hsueh Tsu-yuan, 1226–1286): *Soei-shū* (collection of verses by Setchō Jūken; Hsueh-tou Ch'ung-hsien, 980–1052): *Kanzan-shi*: *Zenkan-Sakushin* (collection of anecdotes and quotations relating to meditation study, by Unsei Shukō; Yun-ch'i Chu-hung, 1535–1615): *Shibu-roku* (a Japanese collection of four Chinese works; *Shinjin-mei*, *Shōdō-ka*, the *Ten Ox-Taming Pictures*, and *Zazen-gi*): *Daie Buko* (Daie's comments on the words and deeds of other Zen masters): *Monju Shunai kyō* (a title invented by Hakuin?): *Hōkyō-zammai* (a poem by Tōzan Ryōkai, Tung-shan Liang-chieh, 807–869): *Kaian-kokugo* (Hakuin's own prose and verse commentary on the records of Daitō Kokushi): *Keisō Dokuzui*, Hakuin's Zen records (*goroku*) in Chinese: *Daiō-roku* (records of Daiō Kokushi, Nampō Jōmyō, 1235–1309): *Shinnō-mei* (a poem attributed to Fu Daishi, 497–569).

[66] *Keisō-dokuzui* 荊叢毒蘂; *Hōkan-ishō* 寶鑑馳照; *Yasen-kanna* 夜船閑話; *Oratagama* 遠羅天金; *Kana-mugura* 假名莚; *Yaemugura* 八重莚; *Kohiki-uta* 粉引歌; *Shijōkōki* 四娘孝記 (the 1st *kan* of *Yaemugura*); *Osana-monogatari* 幼稚物語 (3rd *kan* of *Yaemu-*

old and forgetful as I've become, I just can't remember all the others.

A layman spoke up. "What a great stroke of luck for us. To be given the essentials of so true and genuine a Dharma in this degenerate latter day! Such favorable karmic fortune could only come but once in many rebirths! And now, master, I'm hoping very much to hear you tell us something about Introspective Meditation."[67]

"Good!" I said. "I can see that you are a man who likes to ask questions. But I always grow tired when I talk a lot. So come back tomorrow and ask me again."

He pressed his hands together, bowed deeply, and then he was gone.

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gura); *Yūkichi-monogatari* 勇吉物語 (appended to the 3rd *kan* of *Yaemugura*); *Kaian-kokugo* 槐安国語; *Usen-shikō* 兎専使稿; *Sashi-mogusa* 左之母草; *Hebi-ichigo* 蛇苺; *Sendai-kimon* 闡提記聞; *Oni-azami* 鬼薊; *Sokkō-roku Kaien-fusetsu* 息耕録開筵普説; *Itsumadegusa* 壁生草. Bibliographical notes on these works may be found in Philip Yampolsky's *Zen Master Hakuin* (Columbia Press, New York, 1971).

[67] Hakuin's answer to this question forms the third and final part of *Wild Ivy*.