

 Bird Publisher



10 Bulls
Centering
101 Zen Stories
The Gateless Gate
Zen Flesh, Zen Bones

Paul Reps, Nyogen Senzaki

Title

ZEN FLESH, ZEN BONES

Compiled by
Paul Reps and Nyogen Senzaki

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About this eBook

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Foreword

This eBook includes four books:

101 Zen Stories was first published in 1919 by Rider and Company, London, and David McKay Company, Philadelphia. These stories recount actual experiences of Chinese and Japanese Zen teachers over a period of more than five centuries.

The Gateless Gate was first published in 1934 by John Murray, Los Angeles. It is a collection of problems, called *koan* that Zen teachers use in guiding their students toward release, first recorded by a Chinese master in the year 1228.

10 Bulls is a translation from the Chinese of a famous twelfth century commentary upon the stages of awareness leading to enlightenment.

Centering, a transcription of ancient Sanskrit manuscripts. It presents in ancient teaching, still alive in Kashmir and parts of India after more than four thousand years that may well be the roots of Zen.

Most of all am I grateful to Nyogen Senzaki, 'homeless monk' exemplar-friend collaborator, who so delighted with me in transcribing the first three books, even as that prescient man of Kashmir, Lakshmanjoo, did on the fourth.

The first Zen patriarch Bodhidharma brought Zen to China from India in the sixth century. According to his biography recorded in the year 1004 by the Chinese teacher Dogen after nine years in China Bodhidharma wished to go home and gathered his disciples about him to test their apperception.

Dofuku said: 'In my opinion truth is beyond affirmation or negation, for this is the way it moves.'

Bodhidharma replied: 'You have my skin.'

The nun Soji said: 'In my view, it is like Ananda's sight of the Buddha-land – seen once and for ever.'

Bodhidharma answered: 'You have my flesh.'

Dofuku said: 'The four elements of light, airiness, fluidity, and solidity are empty (i.e. inclusive) and the five skandhas are No-things. In my opinion, No-thing (i.e. spirit) is reality.'

Bodhidharma commented: 'You have my bones.'

Finally Eka bowed before the master - and remained silent.

Bodhidharma said: 'You have my marrow.'

Old Zen was so fresh it became treasured and remembered. Here are fragments of its skin flesh bones but not its marrow – never found in words.

The directness of Zen has led many to believe it stemmed from sources before the time of Buddha, 500 BC. The reader may judge for himself, for he has here for the first time in one book the experiences of Zen, the mind problems, the stages of awareness and a similar teaching predating Zen by centuries.

The problem of our mind, relating conscious to preconscious awareness takes us deep into everyday living. Dare we open our doors to the source of am being? What are flesh and bones for?

Paul Reps

101 Zen Stories

Transcribed by Nyogen Senzaki and Paul Reps

These stories were transcribed into English from a book called the Shaseki-shu (Collection of Stone and Sand), written late in the thirteenth century by the Japanese Zen teacher Muju (the 'non-dweller'), and from anecdotes of Zen monks taken from various books published in Japan around the turn of the present century.

For Orientals, more interested in being than in business the self-discovered man has been the most worthy of respect. Such a man proposes to open his consciousness just as the Buddha did.

These are stories about such self-discoveries.

The following is adapted from the preface to the first edition of these stories in English.

Zen might be called the inner art and design of the Orient. It was rooted in China by Bodhidharma, who came from India in the sixth century, and was carried eastward into Japan by the twelfth century. It has been described as: 'A special teaching without scriptures, beyond words and letters, pointing to the mind essence of man seeing directly into one's nature, attaining enlightenment.'

Zen was known as Ch'an in China. The Ch'an-Zen masters, instead of being followers of the Buddha, aspire to be his friends and to place themselves in the same responsive relationship with the universe, as did Buddha and Jesus. Zen is not a sect but an experience.

The Zen habit of self-searching through meditation to realize one's true nature, with disregard of formalism, with insistence on self-discipline and simplicity of living, ultimately won the support of the nobility and ruling classes in Japan and the profound respect of all levels of philosophical thought in the Orient.

The Noh dramas are Zen stories. Zen spirit has come to mean not only peace and understanding, but devotion to art and to work, the rich unfolding of contentment, opening the door to insight, the expression of innate beauty, the intangible charm of incompleteness. Zen carries many meanings, none of them, entirely definable. If they are defined they are not Zen.

It has been said that if you have Zen in your life, you have no fear, no doubt, no unnecessary craving, and no extreme emotion. Neither illiberal attitudes nor egotistical actions trouble you. You serve humanity humbly, fulfilling your presence in this world with loving-kindness and observing your passing as a petal falling from a flower. Serene you enjoy life in blissful tranquillity. Such is the spirit of Zen, whose venture is thousands of temples in China and Japan, priests and monks, wealth and prestige, and often the very formalism it would itself transcend.

To study Zen, the flowering of one's nature, is no easy task in any age or civilization. Many teachers, true and false, have purposed to assist others in this accomplishment. It is from innumerable and actual adventures in Zen that these stories have evolved. May the reader in turn realize them in living experience today.

1. A Cup of Tea

Nan-in, a Japanese master during the Meiji era (1868-1912) received a university professor who came to inquire about Zen.

Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor's cup full, and then kept on pouring.

The professor watched the overflow until he no longer could restrain himself. 'It is overfull. No more will go in!'

'Like this cup,' Nan-in said. 'You are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?'

2. Finding a Diamond on a Muddy Road

Gudo was the emperor's teacher of his time. Nevertheless, he used to travel alone as a wandering mendicant. Once when he was on his way to Edo, the cultural and political center of the shogunate, he approached a little village named Takenaka. It was evening and a heavy rain was falling. Gudo was thoroughly wet. His straw sandals were in pieces. At a farmhouse near the village he noticed four or five pairs of sandals in the window and decided to buy some dry ones.

The woman who offered him the sandals, seeing how wet he was, invited him to remain for the night in her home. Gudo accepted, thanking her. He entered and recited a sutra before the family shrine. He then was introduced to the woman's mother, and to her children. Observing that the entire family was depressed, Gudo asked what was wrong.

'My husband is a gambler and a drunkard,' the housewife told him. 'When he happens to win he drinks and becomes abusive. When he loses he borrows money from others. Sometimes when he becomes thoroughly drunk he does not come home at all. What can I do?'

'I will help him,' said Gudo. 'Here is some money. Get me a gallon of fine wine and something good to eat. Then you may retire. I will meditate before the shrine.'

When the man of the house returned about midnight, quite drunk; he bellowed: 'Hey, wife I am home. Have you something for me eat?'

'I have something for you,' said Gudo. 'I happened to be caught in the rain and your wife kindly asked me to remain here for the night. In return I have bought some wine and fish. You might as well have them.'

The man was delighted. He drank the wine at once and laid himself down on the floor. Gudo sat in meditation beside him.

In the morning when the husband awoke he had forgotten about the previous night. 'Who are you? Where do you come from?' he asked Gudo, who still was meditating.

'I am Gudo of Kyoto and I am going on to Edo,' replied the Zen master.

The man was utterly ashamed. He apologized profusely to the teacher of his emperor.

Gudo smiled. 'Everything in this life is impermanent' he explained. 'Life is very brief. If you keep on gambling and drinking you will have no time left to accomplish anything else, and you will cause your family to suffer too.'

The perception of the husband awoke as if from a dream. 'You are right,' he declared. 'How can I ever repay you for this wonderful teaching! Let me see you off and carry your things a little way.'

'If you wish,' assented Gudo.

The two started out. After they had gone three miles Gudo told him to return. 'Just another five miles,' he begged Gudo. They continued on.

'You may return now,' suggested Gudo.

'After another ten miles,' the man replied.

'Return now,' said Gudo, when the ten miles had been passed.

'I am going to follow you all the rest of my life,' declared the man.

Modern Zen teachers in Japan spring from the lineage of a famous master who was the successor of Gudo. His name was Mu-nan, the man who never returned back.

3. Is That So?

The Zen master Hakuin was praised by his neighbours as one living a pure life.

A beautiful Japanese girl whose parents owned a food store lived near him. Suddenly, without any warning her parents discovered she was with child.

This made her parents angry. She would not confess who the man was, but after much harassment at last named Hakuin.

In great anger the parents went to the master. 'Is that so?' was all he would say.

After the child was born it was brought to Hakuin. By this time he had lost his reputation, which did not trouble him, but he took very good care of the child. He obtained milk from his neighbours and everything else the little one needed.

A year later the girl-mother could stand it no longer. She told her parents the truth - that the real father of the child was young man who worked in the fishmarket.

The mother and father of the girl at once went to Hakuin to ask his forgiveness, to apologize at length, and to get the child back again.

Hakuin was willing. In yielding the child, all he said was, 'Is that so?'

4. Obedience

The master Bankei's talks were attended not only by Zen students but by persons of all ranks and sects. He never quoted sutras nor indulged in scholastic dissertations. Instead his words were spoken directly from his heart to the hearts of his listeners.

His large audiences angered a priest of the Nichiren sect because the adherents had left to hear about Zen. The self-centered Nichiren priest came to the temple, determined to debate with Bankei.

'Hey, Zen teacher,' he called out. 'Wait a minute. Whoever respects you will obey what you say, but a man like myself does not respect you. Can you make me obey you?'

'Come up beside me and I will show you,' said Bankei.

Proudly the priest pushed his way through the crowd to the teacher.

Bankei smiled. 'Come over to my left side.'

The priest obeyed.

'No,' said Bankei, 'we may talk better if you are on the right side. Step over here.'

The priest proudly stepped over to the right.

'You see,' observed Bankei, 'you are obeying me and I think you are a very gentle person. Now sit down and listen.'

5. If You Love, Love Openly

Twenty monks and one nun, who was named Eshun, were practicing meditation with a certain Zen master.

Eshun was very pretty even though her head was shaved and her dress plain. Several monks secretly fell in love with her. One of them wrote her a love letter, insisting upon a private meeting.

Eshun did not reply. The following day the master gave a lecture to the group, and when it was over, Eshun arose. Addressing the one who had written her, she said: 'If you really love me so much, come and embrace me now.'

6. No Loving-Kindness

There was an old woman in China who had supported a monk for over twenty years. She had built a little hut for him and fed him while he was meditating. Finally she wondered just what progress he had made in all this time.

To find out, she obtained the help of a girl rich in desire. 'Go and embrace him,' she told her; 'and then ask him suddenly: 'What now?''

The girl called upon the monk and without much ado caressed him, asking him what he was going to do about it.

‘An old tree grows on a cold rock in winter,’ replied the monk somewhat poetically. ‘Nowhere is there any warmth.’

The girl returned and related what he had said.

‘To think I fed that fellow for twenty years!’ exclaimed the old woman in anger. ‘He showed no consideration for your need, no disposition to explain your condition. He need not have responded to passion, but at last he should have evidenced some compassion.’

She at once went to the hut of the monk and burned it down.

7. Announcement

Tanzan wrote sixty postal cards on the last day of his life, and asked an attendant to mail them. Then he passed away.

The cards read:

I am departing from this world.

This is my last announcement.

Tanzan

27 July 1892.

8. Great Waves

In the early days of the Meiji era there lived a well-known wrestler called O-nami, Great Waves.

O-nami was immensely strong and knew the art of wrestling. In his private bouts he defeated even his teacher, but in public he was so bashful that his own pupils threw him.

O-nami felt he should go to a Zen master for help. Hakuju, a wandering teacher, was stopping in a little temple nearby, so O-nami went to see him and told him of his trouble.

‘Great Waves is your name,’ the teacher advised, ‘so stay in this temple tonight. Imagine that you are those billows. You are no longer a wrestler who is afraid. You are those huge waves sweeping everything before them, swallowing all in their path. Do this and you will be the greatest wrestler in the land.’

The teacher retired. O-nami sat in meditation trying to imagine himself as waves. He thought of many different things. Then gradually he turned more and more to the feelings of the waves. As the night advanced the waves became larger and larger. They swept away the flowers in their vases. Even the Buddha in the shrine was inundated. Before dawn the temple was nothing but the ebb and flow of an immense sea.

In the morning the teacher found O-nami meditating, a faint smile on his face. He patted the wrestler's shoulder. ‘Now nothing can disturb you.’ he said. ‘You are the waves. You will sweep everything before you.’

The same day O-nami entered the wrestling contests and won. After that, no one in Japan was able to defeat him.

9. The Moon Cannot Be Stolen

Ryokan, a Zen master, lived the simplest kind of life in a little hut at the foot of a mountain. One evening a thief visited the hut only to discover there was nothing in it to steal.

Ryokan returned and caught him. ‘You may have come a long way to visit me,’ he told the prowler, ‘and you should not return empty-handed. Please take my clothes as a gift.’

The thief was bewildered. He took the clothes and slunk away.

Ryokan sat naked, watching the moon. ‘Poor fellow,’ he mused, ‘I wish I could give him this beautiful moon.’

10. The Last Poem of Hoshin

The Zen master Hoshin lived in China many years. Then he returned to the northeastern part of Japan, where he taught his disciples. When he was getting very old, he told them a story he had heard in China.

This is the story:

One year on the twenty-fifth of December, Tokufu, who was very old, said to his disciples: 'I am not going to be alive next year so you fellows should treat me well this year.'

The pupils thought he was joking, but since he was a great-hearted teacher each of them in turn treated him to a feast on succeeding days of the departing year.

On the eve of the New Year, Tokufu concluded: 'You have been good to me. I shall leave you tomorrow afternoon when the snow has stopped.'

The disciples laughed, thinking he was aging and talking nonsense since the night was clear and without snow. But at midnight snow began to fall, and the next day they did not find their teacher about. They went to the meditation hall. There he had passed on.

Hoshin, who related this story, told his disciples: 'It is not necessary for a Zen master to predict his passing, but if he really wishes to do so, he can.'

'Can you?' someone asked.

'Yes,' answered Hoshin. 'I will show you what I can do seven days from now.'

None of the disciple's believed him, and most of them had even forgotten the conversation when Hoshin next called them together.

'Seven days ago,' he remarked, 'I said I was going to leave you. It is customary to write a farewell poem, but I am neither poet nor calligrapher. Let one of you inscribe my last words.'

His followers thought he was joking, but one of them started to write.

'Are you ready?' Hoshin asked.

'Yes, sir,' replied the writer.

Then Hoshin dictated:

*I came from brilliancy
And return to brilliancy.
What is this?*

The poem was one line short of the customary four, so the disciple said: 'Master, we are one line short.'

Hoshin, with the roar of a conquering lion, shouted 'Kaa!' and was gone.

11. The Story of Shunkai

The exquisite Shunkai whose other name was Suzu was compelled to marry against her wishes when she was quite young. Later, after this marriage had ended, she attended the university, where she studied philosophy.

To see Shunkai was to fall in love with her. Moreover, wherever she went, she herself fell in love with others. Love was with her at the university, and afterwards, when philosophy did not satisfy her and she visited a temple to learn about Zen, the Zen students fell in love with her. Shunkai's whole life was saturated with love.

At last in Kyoto she became a real student of Zen. Her brothers in the sub-temple of Kennin praised her sincerity. One of them proved to be a congenial spirit and assisted her in the mastery of Zen.

The abbot of Kennin, Mokurai, Silent Thunder, was severe. He kept the precepts himself and expected his priests to do so. In modern Japan whatever zeal these priests have lost for Buddhism they seem to have gained for having wives. Mokurai used to take a broom and chase the women away when he found them in any of his temples, but the more wives he swept out, the more seemed to come back.

In this particular temple the wife of the head priest became jealous of Shunkai's earnestness and beauty. Hearing the students praise her serious Zen made this wife squirm and itch. Finally she spread a rumour about Shunkai and the young man who was now her friend. As a consequence he was expelled and Shunkai was removed from the temple.

'I may have made the mistake of love,' thought Shunkai, 'but the priest's wife shall not remain in the temple either if my friend is to be treated so unjustly.'

Shunkai the same night with a can of kerosene set fire to the five hundred year old temple and burned it to the ground. In the morning she found herself in the hands of the police.

A young lawyer became interested in her and endeavored to make her sentence lighter. 'Do not help me,' she told him. 'I might decide to do something else which would only imprison me again.'

At last a sentence of seven years was completed, and Shunkai was released from the prison, where the sixty-year-old warden also had become enamored of her.

But now everyone looked upon her as a 'jailbird'. No one would associate with her. Even the Zen people, who are supposed to believe in enlightenment in this life and with this body, shunned her. Zen, Shunkai found, was one thing and the followers of Zen quite another. Her relatives would have nothing to do with her. She grew sick, poor, and weak.

She met a Shinshu priest who taught her the name of the Buddha of Love, and in this Shunkai found some solace and peace of mind. She passed away when she was still exquisitely beautiful and hardly thirty years old.

She wrote her own story in a futile endeavor to support herself and some of it she told to a woman writer. So it reached the Japanese people. Those who rejected Shunkai, those who slandered and hated her, now read of her life with tears of remorse.

12. Happy Chinaman

Anyone walking about Chinatowns in America will observe statues of a stout fellow carrying a linen sack. Chinese merchants call him Happy Chinaman or Laughing Buddha.

This Hotei lived in the T'ang dynasty. He had no desire to call himself a Zen master or to gather many disciples about him. Instead he walked the streets with a big sack into which he would put gifts of candy, fruit, or doughnuts. These he would give to children who gathered around him in play. He established a kindergarten of the streets.

Whenever he met a Zen devotee he would extend his hand and say: 'Give me one penny.' And if anyone asked him to return to a temple to teach others, again he would reply: 'Give me one penny.'

Once as he was about his play work another Zen master happened along and inquired: 'What is the significance of Zen?'

Hotei immediately plopped his sack down on the ground in silent answer.

'Then,' asked the other, 'what is the actualization of Zen?'

At once the Happy Chinaman swung the sack over his shoulder and continued on his way.

13. A Buddha

In Tokyo in the Meiji era there lived two prominent teachers of opposite characteristics. One, Unsho, an instructor in Shingon, kept Buddha's precepts scrupulously. He never drank intoxicants, nor did he eat after eleven o'clock in the morning.

The other teacher, Tanzan, a professor of philosophy at the Imperial University, never observed the precepts. When he felt like eating he ate, and when he felt like sleeping in the daytime he slept.

One day Unsho visited Tanzan, who was drinking wine at the time, not even a drop of which is supposed to touch the tongue of a Buddhist.

‘Hello, brother,’ Tanzan greeted him. ‘Won't you have a drink?’

‘I never drink!’ exclaimed Unsho solemnly.

‘One who does not drink is not even human,’ said Tanzan.

‘Do you mean to call me inhuman just because I do not indulge in intoxicating liquids!’ exclaimed Unsho in anger. ‘Then if I am not human, what am I?’

‘A Buddha.’ answered Tanzan.

14. Muddy Road

Tanzan and Ekido were once traveling together down a muddy road. A heavy rain was still falling.

Coming around a bend, they met a lovely girl in a silk kimono and sash, unable to cross the intersection.

‘Come on, girl,’ said Tanzan at once. Lifting her in his arms, he carried her over the mud.

Ekido did not speak again until that night when they reached a lodging temple. Then he no longer could restrain himself. ‘We monks don't go near females.’ He told Tanzan, ‘especially not young and lovely ones. It is dangerous. Why did you do that?’

‘We monks don't go near females.’ He told Tanzan, ‘especially not young and lovely ones. It is dangerous. Why did you do that?’

‘I left the girl there,’ said Tanzan. ‘Are you still carrying her?’

15. Shoun and His Mother

Shoun became a teacher of Soto Zen. When he was still a student his father passed away, leaving him to care for his old mother.

Whenever Shoun went to a meditation hall he always took his mother with him. Since she accompanied him, when he visited monasteries he could not live with the monks. So he would build a little house and care for her there. He would copy sutras, Buddhist verses and in this manner receive a few coins for food.

When Shoun bought fish for his mother, the people would scoff at him, for a monk is not supposed to eat fish. But Shoun did not mind. His mother, however, was hurt to see others laugh at her son. Finally she told Shoun: ‘I think I will become a nun. I can be a vegetarian too.’

She did and they studied together. Shoun was fond of music and was a master of the harp, which his mother also played. On full-moon nights they used to play together.

One night a young lady passed by their house and heard music. Deeply touched, she invited Shoun to visit her the next evening and play. He accepted the invitation. A few days later he met the young lady on the street and thanked her for her hospitality. Others laughed at him. He had visited the home of a woman of the streets.

One day Shoun left a distant temple to deliver a lecture. A few months afterwards he returned home to find his mother dead. Friends had not known where to reach him, so the funeral was then in progress.

Shoun walked up and hit the coffin with his staff. ‘Mother, your son has returned,’ he said.

‘I am glad to see you have returned son,’ he answered for his mother.

‘I'm glad too,’ Shoun responded. Then he announced to the people about him: ‘The funeral ceremony is over. You may bury the body.’

When Shoun was old he knew his end was approaching. He asked his disciples to gather around him in the morning telling them he was going to pass on at noon. Burning incense before the picture of his mother and his old teacher, he wrote a poem:

*For fifty-six years I lived as best I could,
Making my way in this world.
Now the rain has ended, the clouds are clearing,
The blue sky has a full moon.*

His disciples gathered about him, reciting a sutra, and Shoun passed on during the invocation.

16. Not Far from Buddhahood

A university student while visiting Gasan asked him: 'Have you ever read the Christian Bible?'

'No, read it to me,' said Gasan. The student opened the Bible and read from St Matthew: 'And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ...Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.'

Gasan said: 'Whoever uttered those words I consider an enlightened man.'

The student continued reading: 'Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.'

Gasan remarked: 'That is excellent. Whoever said that is not far from Buddhahood.'

17. Stingy in Teaching

A young physician in Tokyo named Kusuda met a college friend who had been studying Zen. The young doctor asked him what Zen was.

'I cannot tell you what it is,' the friend replied, 'but one thing is certain. If you understand Zen, you will not be afraid to die.'

That's fine: said Kusuda. 'I will try it. Where can I find a teacher?'

'Go to the master Nan-in,' the friend told him.

So Kusuda went to call on Nan-in. He carried a dagger nine and a half inches long to determine whether or not the teacher himself was afraid to die.

When Nan-in saw Kusuda he exclaimed: 'Hello, friend. How are you? We haven't seen each other for a long time!'

This perplexed Kusuda, who replied: 'We have never met before.'

'That's right,' answered Nan-in. 'I mistook you for another physician who is receiving instruction here.'

With such a beginning, Kusuda lost his chance to test the master, so reluctantly he asked if he might receive Zen instruction.

Nan-in said: 'Zen is not a difficult task. If you are a physician, treat your patients with kindness. That is Zen.'

Kusuda visited Nan-in three times. Each time Nan-in told him the same thing. 'A physician should not waste time around here. Go home and take care of your patients.'

It was not yet clear to Kusuda how such teaching could remove the fear of death. So on his fourth visit he complained: 'My friend told me when one learns Zen one loses his fear of death. Each time I come here all you tell me is to take care of my patients. I know that much. If that is your so-called Zen, I am not going to visit you anymore.'

Nan-in smiled and patted the doctor. 'I have been too strict with you. Let me give you a koan.' He presented Kusuda with Joshu's Mu to work over, which is the first mind-enlightening problem in the book called *The Gateless Gate*.

Kusuda pondered this problem of Mu (No-thing) for two years. At length he thought he had reached certainty of mind. But his teacher commented: 'You are not in yet.'

Kusuda continued in concentration for another year and a half. His mind became placid. Problems dissolved. No-thing became the truth. He served his patients well and, without even knowing it, he was free from concern over life and death.

Then when he visited Nan-in his old teacher just smiled.

18. A Parable

Buddha told a parable in a sutra: A man traveling across a field encountered a tiger. He fled, the tiger after him. Coming to a precipice, he caught hold of the root of a wild vine and swung himself down over the edge. The tiger sniffed at him from above. Trembling, the man looked down to where, far below, mother tiger was waiting to eat him. Only the vine sustained him.

Two mice one white and one black, little by little started to gnaw away the vine. The man saw a luscious strawberry near him. Grasping the vine with one hand, he plucked the strawberry with the other. How sweet it tasted!

19. The First Principle

When one goes to Obaku temple in Kyoto one sees carved over the gate the words 'The First principle'. The letters are unusually large, and those who appreciate calligraphy always admire them as being a masterpiece. They were drawn by Kosen two hundred years ago.

When the master drew them he did so on paper, from which workmen made the larger carving in wood. As Kosen sketched the letters a bold pupil was with him who had made several gallons of ink for the calligraphy and who never failed to criticize his master's work.

'That is not good,' he told Kosen after the first effort.

'How is that one?'

'Poor. Worse than before,' pronounced the pupil.

Kosen patiently wrote one sheet after another until eighty-four First Principles had accumulated, still without the approval of the pupil.

Then, when the young man stepped outside for a few moments, Kosen thought: 'Now is my chance to escape his keen eye,' and he wrote hurriedly, with a mind free from distraction: 'The First principle.'

'A masterpiece,' pronounced the pupil.

20. A Mother's Advice

Jiun, a Shingon master, was a well-known Sanskrit scholar of the Tokugawa era. When he was young he used to deliver lectures to his brother students.

His mother heard about this and wrote him a letter:

'Son, I do not think you become a devotee of the Buddha because you desire to turn into a walking dictionary for others. There is no end to information and commentation, glory and honor. I wish you would stop this lecture business. Shut yourself up in a little temple in a remote part of the mountain. Devote your time to meditation and in this way attain hue realization.'

21. The Sound of One Hand

The masts of Kennin temple was Mokurai, Silent Thunder. He had a little protégé named Toyo who was only twelve years old. Toyo saw the olds disciples visit the master's room each morning and evening to receive instruction in sanzen or personal guidance in which they were given koans to stop mind-wandering.

Toro wished to do sanzen also.

'Wait a while,' said Mokurai. 'You are too young.'

But the child insisted, so the teacher finally consented.

In the evening little Toyo went at the props time to the threshold of Mokurai's sanzen room. He struck the gong to announce his presence, bowed respectfully three times outside the door, and went to sit before the master in respectful silence.

'You can hear the sound of two hands when they clap together,' said Mokurai. 'Now show me the sound of one hand.'

Toyo bowed and went to his room to consider this problem. From his window he could hear the music of the geishas.

'Ah, I have it!' he proclaimed.

The next evening, when his teacher asked him to illustrate the sound of one hand, Toyo began to play the music of the geishas.

'No, no,' said Mokurai. 'That will never do. That is not the sound of one hand. You've not got it at all.'

Thinking that such music might interrupt, Toyo moved his abode to a quiet place. He meditated again. 'What can the sound of one hand be?' He happened to hear some water dripping. 'I have it,' imagined Toyo.

When he next appeared before his teacher, Toyo imitated dripping water.

'What is that?' asked Mokurai. 'That is the sound of dripping water, but not the sound of one hand. Try again.'

In vain Toyo meditated to hear the sound of one hand. He heard the sighing of the wind. But the sound was rejected.

He heard the cry of an owl. This also was refused.

The sound of one hand was not the locusts.

For more than ten times Toyo visited Mokurai with different sounds. All were wrong. For almost a year he pondered what the sound of one hand might be.

At last little Toyo entered true meditation and transcended all sounds. 'I could collect no more,' he explained later, 'so reached the soundless sound.'

Toyo had realized the sound of one hand.

22. My Heart Burns Like Fire

Soyen Shaku, the first Zen teacher to come to America, said: 'My heart burns like fire but my eyes are as cold as dead ashes.' He made the following rules, which he practiced every day of his life. In the morning before dressing, light incense and meditate.

Retire at a regular hour. Partake of food at regular intervals. Eat with moderation and never to the point of satisfaction.

Receive a guest with the same attitude you have when alone. When alone, maintain the same attitude you have in receiving guests.

Watch what you say, and whatever you say, practice it.

When an opportunity comes do not let it pass by, yet always think twice before acting.

Do not regret the past. Look to the future.

Have the fearless attitude of a hero and the loving heart of a child.