
急は暗
公らんとして
善の所

The pit
of angry apathy
has to stop



Spring

To Zen Sensei Kōmei (G. Inō)
April 15, 1915

Yesterday I returned home after a month
away and enjoyed reading your description
of Zen monastery life. I had much interest
in it because it is unfamiliar to me.

Chōhō's admonition is very good.
I have memorized some of Daiō's and
Mushō's writings, but I can't tell which is
which. I remember Chōhō's poem on the
importance of birth and death. I'm no Zen
scholar, but I have read some Dharma
poems and essays (especially those written
in Japanese). I regret, however, that I can-
not enter the Zen world, remaining as yet
a mere beginner...

TO ZEN MONK TOMIZAWA KEIHO
APRIL 23, 1955

I don't know how many years older I am than you, but I do wish I could live until you become a respected Zen master and I attend your Zen lecture. Should I be dead by that time, please chant a sutra in front of my tomb. Should you arrive in time for my funeral ceremony, please address to my spirit words of guidance into the other world. Although I have no specific religion, I would appreciate a sutra chanted by a noble Zen priest who favors me.

I am heartily grateful to Mr. Kimura, who wrote for me, even in spite of his tight schedule, a long introduction to everyday life at the Zen monastery

Under the plum tree,
Meeting and passing each other,
Exchanging no words

Head tilted up
A reed-hatted man's
Flower viewing.

The fish
All struggling upstream
River in spring.

The rain is over:
South Mountain puffs out
Spring clouds.

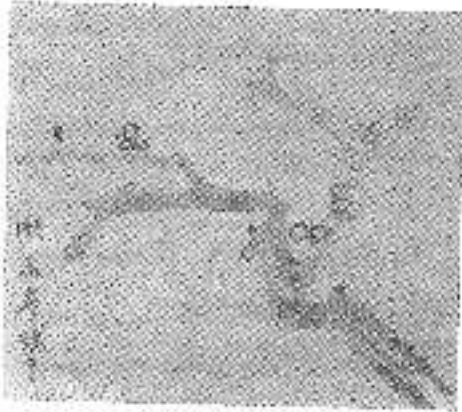
One house stands
In the midst of
Spring wind and spring water.

Plum blossoms far and near:
My routine these days
Is strolling under them.

Someone may live
Beyond the plum bush:
Shimmering light.

Plum flower temple:
Voices rise
From the family ll.

From *Manyō* by Saka



Nodding with crowiness
On horseback.
Journey in spring.

The retreat of the tub
Dying on the hedge.
Spring sunshine.

Wish I could be
Reborn as small & sweet
As a violet.

Draped with haze,
The vermilion-lacquered bridge
Disappears.

My one hand these days,
Not capping but clutching
A boulder at ebb tide.

The origin of 'stone of one hand clapping'
is one of the most famous koans of Zen.

A ruttng cat
Has grown so thin:
Almost nothing but eyes.

East winds blowing,
Cloud shadows wrapping
The entire mountain.

A sparrow on a plum twig:
Silhouette of the blossoms on
The sliding paper screen—shaking.

The spring winds must show
Why Bodhidharma
Visited China.

"What is Bodhidharma's mission in coming to
China?" is a good phrase to use. "What is it that is
so difficult to experience? What is there?"



In its fall
Trapping a worm:
A camellia blossom.

Up the hill of pine trees,
Rushing to worship:
Sunrise on New Year's Day.

Falling
Down into the heavens:
A skylark.

Seung-oh Lee by Seoh

Bamboo woven
Into a fence
A spring hut

Bodhidharma kite
Hissing against the wind
With dignity

Toward a Zen monk
The flag flapping;
Spring wind—

From a poem by the Chinese poet Chuang-tzu. A flag flapping in the breeze, one monk opined that the flag itself was moving, while another monk believed it was the wind that moved. The Sixth Patriarch concluded: "It is neither the wind nor the flag; it is your mind that moves."

After the butterfly's gone
It settles down:
A kitten.

The moon is up:
Flau blossom shadows
Fall on my pillow.

Somewhere
Someone calls my name:
A spring mountain.

Crazy butterfly
Flirting with flowers
Honoring the dead.

An inch of weight
On the nandina:
Spring snow.

Flourishing of bamboo by State



Dry grass burrowing over
This fall and dirt field:
Pheasants' cries.

New Year's dream:
Not about finding money,
Or about death.

A lower shrike
Creeps and overlaps
A beauty's.

Warbler eating flowers:
Are its droppings also
Red?



Spring rain
Lying flat on the mat to see
The plum trunk level.

Spring rain
Clinging to each other
Under one umbrella

Spring rain
Come inside my nightgown
You nightingale, too

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Spring creek
Flowing,
Embracing the rock.

Huge Mount Fuji, reflected
On the balls of my eyes;
Spring pavilion.

You rude plum,
Suddenly appearing before me
On the cliff corner

Fluttering in ones,
Next moment as ones:
Butterflies.

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