



CLASSICS
913-864-3153
2083 Wescoe

April 18, 1979

Dear Louise:

Sorry this is later than I promised. I'm returning the photographs and sending you a copy of the poems as I have arranged them. I don't think we should use these photographs: they were taken without the poems in mind and they do not suit the poems either in content or in style. If photographs are to be used I think they should be taken by someone who is familiar with Soen Sa Nim and his poetry. Maybe that someone is Loris L. She seems also to know about book design and illustration. I think you should send her a copy of the poems and see what she comes up with. The book should be designed as a whole. It is not just a question of matching poems to photographs. My opinion is that the book should be illustrated very sparingly: some calligraphy and ink sketches perhaps, but S.S. seems to want photographs. Photographs could work, but certainly not these.

What I have done is to select 71 poems (not counting student poems) and arrange them in 4 thematic groups, provisionally calling these groups 1) enlightenment 2) travel 3) celebration 4) teaching. I've rewritten a few of the earlier poems, correcting grammar and dividing the lines into rhythmic units. Within each group I've arranged the poems as seemed appropriate, giving special attention to the first and last poems for a sense of introduction and of closure. I won't write an introduction until we see what sort of book this turns out to be, its design, audience, etc. The design is the main thing now. We may not want an introduction. Tell me what you folks think of the selection and arrangement I have made. Several other arrangements are possible; thematic groups are not necessary. What I envisioned was each section being preceded by a page with a quote from one of the poems and a bit of calligraphy. But let me know what you think.

Stan

October, 1974

Autumn leaves fall by the cold wind.
Is it right or wrong?
Here is a scripture
Which is not made of paper
And no letters are in it.
But it always sends forth rays
Thus illuminating the darkness.

Then

Mountain is mountain; river is river;
Red is red; white is white;
Everything is clear, as it is.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

POEMS - page 2

Last night falling, falling,
Much snow in Cambridge.
The tree is white, the road is white,
The house is white, everything is white.

Why are the rabbit's horns not white?
A car passes in front of the Zen Center.
Early morning.
There are two tire tracks through downtown.

December 21, 1975

Good and bad are good teachers.
Good and bad are very strong demons.
Originally there are no feelings, perceptions,
Impulses, consciousness.

If you keep it, you cannot attain it.
If you put it down, you also cannot attain it.

What can you do?

If you want to attain it,
You must ride the bone of space into the diamond eyes.
Be careful! Be careful!
The puppy is crying outside the door.
Do not kill it with kindness.

December 30, 1975

March, 1974

A valley filled with thick fog:
A bird flies in and can't find her nest.
If you open your eyes, you lose your way;
If you close your eyes, you lose your home.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

Two mud cows together sumo wrestling
Pull each other around, around, around,
And into the ocean.

Which is the winner? Which is the loser?
No news.

Seagulls are flying over the water.
The ocean is blue.

December 15, 1976

6

POEMS - page 3

Ten thousand fishing lines straight down.

One wave becomes ten thousand waves.

Deep quiet night and cold water,
So all fishes do not eat.

Empty ship returns
Only full of moonlight.

March 9, 1976

Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva
 Ten thousand hands, ten thousand eyes.
 Which one is the correct hand?
 Which one is the correct eye?
 Ten thousand mouths, ten thousand words,
 Where do they come from?

One, two, three, four.
 Who made this?

Is zero a number?
 If you understand zero,
 Then you understand all numbers.
 But, don't make zero.
 If you make zero,
 You will go to hell.

KATZ!

The snow melts -
 Drip, drip, drip.

March 11, 1976

8

Quiet night,
Only sitting in silence at the mountain cabin.

Everything is stillness.
Moonlight fills all space.

But why does the wind from the west
Shake the forest?

A bird shrieks;
The sound slowly fades
As it flies through the cold sky.

March 24, 1976

May, 1974

A great man goes on a 100-day retreat.
 He makes many demons, many gods, many animals, and many Buddhas.
 One hundred days are the same as the time of one breath.
 You have brushed off all dust, and have breathed in sky and
 ground.
 The Great Path is in the palm of your hand, and the Great
 Freedom is in your feet.
 Spring comes, flowers are blooming everywhere.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

A great man goes on a hundred day retreat.
 He makes many demons, many gods,
 Many animals, many Buddhas.
 One hundred days are the same as the time of one breath.
 You have brushed off all dust
 And have breathed in sky and ground.
 The Great Path is in the palm of your hand
 And the Great Freedom is in your feet.
 Spring comes, flowers are blooming everywhere.

August, 1973

Clapping my hands together, looking over the southern
mountain,
White clouds densely spreading out, making all kinds of
shapes, such as dog, tiger, man and finally Buddha.
And they, they alas! scattering around,
Disappear over the mountain.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

Clapping my hands together,
Looking over the southern mountain,
White clouds densely spreading out
Making all kinds of shapes,
Dog, tiger, man and finally Buddha.
And they, they alas! scattering around,
Disappear over the mountain.

From the first kong-an book of the Providence Zen Center

One-mind perceives infinite time.
One is all. Everything is one.
To let go one's hands when hanging over a cliff is to be
a great man.
Winter goes North, Spring comes from the South.

Soen Sa Nim

One-mind perceives infinite time.
One is all. Everything is one.
To let go one's hands when hanging over a cliff
Is to be a great man.
Winter goes North, Spring comes from the South.

Spring has beautiful flowers.
Summer has cool breezes.
Fall has bright leaves.
Winter has pure snow.

Is the world throwing me away?
Am I throwing away the world?
I lie around in the Dharma room;
I don't care about anything.

White clouds floating in the sky,
Clear water coming down to the ocean,
The wind passing the Pagoda,
I surrender my whole life to them.

April 15, 1976

The stone girl,
Walking around everywhere,
Wants to find her baby.
Sun shining but no shadow.

The wooden dog barking,
Mu, mu, mu.
The blue mountain
Puts on a white cloud hat.

July 14, 1976

Mind around around around around everywhere.
This everywhere place,
Completely just like this,
Lets go without checking inside and outside.
Ten thousand miles of cloudless sky,
Ten thousand miles of blue sky.

July 20, 1976

Where is my
head, where
is
my head?
Somebody loses his head.

What
am I, what am
I? Don't
know, somebody
loses his mind.

Want to find head
Want to find mind

Put it all down
Put it all
down

Then
just
like
this

True self clearly appears,
Not dependent on six roots, dusts, and consciousnesses.
Original body always remains clear;
Speech and words cannot hinder it.
True Nature has no smudge,
Originally complete itself.
Only without thinking,
Just like this is Buddha.

August 18, 1976

March 6, 1975

One sword which can revive people. One sword which kills.
When lightning flashes, here and there become clear.
The lion springs, and claws people.
The dog runs away with the bone.

S.S.

POEMS - page 4

Someone sent me an ignorance grass drawing.
Someone cut ignorance, became a monk.

Originally that ignorance comes from where?
Cut, not cut - which one is the correct way?

If you check your head, you have ignorance.
If you don't check your head, there is no ignorance.

Put it all down! Put it all down!
If you are thirsty, then go drink tea.

April 13, 1976

April 22, 1978 34

Poem from Soen Sa Nim to Janek

The red sun rising is heaven
Fog deeply, car slows down.
From Katowice arrive Warsaw
Many Buddhas, many Bodhisattvas.
Praying Dharma Will
Praying Great Vow.
Caught a glimpse, just like this
Let it be Buddha, Mind, anything.
Spring comes, green grass everywhere.
Bliss for you, for all beings.
No mouth ate no Buddha, no mind.
Please drink tea at Warsaw airport.

S.S.

Try! Try! Try!
Only go straight, — don't know
For 10,000 years nonstop.

London

April 30, 1978 35

"The sun never sets on the British Empire."
Once upon a time, the Great Robber's name.
Sphinx, mummy, Buddha, totam pole, all,
Crying, shouting, "Want to return to my home!"
Cause and effect -- very clear.
No arms, no legs, no eyes, no ears, no head!
Only heart working
Thump! Thump! Thump!
Gentleman, gentleman, gentleman
Holey pockets, rumpled hat,
Worn-out shoes, bright old necktie.
Stone lion, metal dragon
Fighting each other in the sky.
Red buses running on London Bridge.
Ships coming, going on the Thames River.

Amsterdam

May 5, 1978

Many windmills, canals -- freedom country.
See freedom, near freedom,
Touch freedom, everything freedom.
Money rolling, rolling --
Get everything.
Stone lion, wooden fox, steel snake, ice dog
Shaking the cage of freedom,
Singing a song together,
"Want to get out! Want to get out!"
Roar, roar! Yip, yip! Hiss, hiss! Woof, woof!
Never-moving vanes of windmills,
Sightseeing boat passing dancing buildings.

*Close other
version*

July, 1973

When a guest telling host what he had dreamed last night.
 Then the host told the guest about his. Who would tell
 these two that they themselves are in a dream?
 Originally there isn't anything and calm. Why does the
 wind blow down flowers?
 A dog is chasing after a bone.
 The goose was frightened and runs away saying, gaw, gaw, gaw....

Soen Sa Nim

A guest told his host about his dream last night.
 And the host told the guest about his.
 Who would tell these two
 That they themselves are in a dream?

Originally there isn't anything but calm.
 Why does the wind blow down the flowers?

A dog is chasing after a bone.
 The goose was frightened
 And runs away saying gaw, gaw, gaw...

Paris

May 10, 1978

Many heroes, many kings,
Where did they go?
Old shadow's tight chill.
The hero broke how many skulls?
The king drank how much blood, tears?
High buildings, wide rooms, only one man.
Samsara is clear,
Sun comes, dew disappears.
Place de la Concorde stained red.
Many original masters
Coming, going -- freedom.
Eiffel Tower, L'Arc de Triomph, Louvre, Versailles,
Stone tiger, ancient obelisk, winged victory
Singing a chorus of mirages.
Palace mind deeply, deeply sleeping --
Good time, good time, never wake up.
Shining, shining eastern sky.
Seine River flowing into the ocean.

5 /
May 5, 1978

"Amsterdam"

Many windmills, canals -- freedom country.
See freedom, hear freedom,
Touch freedom, everything freedom.
Money rolling, rolling --
Get everything.
Stone lion, wooden fox, steel snake, ice dog
Shaking the cage of freedom,
Singing a song of freedom,
Singing a song together,
"Want to get out! Want to get out!"
Roar, roar! Yip, yip! Hiss, hiss! Woof, woof!
Never-moving vanes of windmills,
Sightseeing boat passes dancing buildings.

Here is Jin, which is Truth.
Jin Song means True Pine Tree -
True Pine Tree has no roots.

Jin Kwang means True Light -
True Light has no shadow.

Jin Um means True Sound -
That is the sound of the flute with no holes.

What does it mean?

If you find the dragon's tooth hair,
Then show it to me;
Then I'll tell you that 1976
Is the year of the Dragon.

February 1, 1976

(Someone holding the Zen stick:)

39

What do you see?

(Hitting the Zen stick:)

What do you hear?

If you see something, you will become blind.
If you hear something, you will become deaf.

Why?

KATZ!

Today is Buddha's Enlightenment Day of 1975.

This is the usual action, the usual speech - not special.
What is Enlightenment?
Do you see teeth hair?
Do you find the tongue's bone?

In the sky there are many stars; in the world there are many words.

Now drink a cup of tea - better than seeing, better than hearing.

December 11, 1975

On the Anniversary of Buddha's Enlightenment

Buddha saw the star,
Attained enlightenment.

Seung Sahn saw the star,
Lost enlightenment.

The wind of KATZ
Blew away enlightenment and unenlightenment.

The Buddha is bright in the Dharma room.
The star is clear in the sky.

December 11, 1976

A Dream of Stars

An Ancient saw a star, got Enlightenment.
What can moderns see, get Enlightenment?
Can I also see a star, get Enlightenment?
There are many stars. Which one should I see?

Shining stars, singing stars, dancing stars,
Army Generals' stars, flags' stars, cookie stars,
Shooting stars, Star Wars stars, tree stars, river stars.
I want to see the true star.
Which one is true?

Where do all stars come from?
Where do all stars go?
Time flows by. How can you find them?
If you grab them, they take flight.
If you find them, there is nothing.
In a star is a star.
In this star is a star.
The star sees the star.
Stars singing star song.
Stars dancing star dance.

An eminent teacher asked, "What is your star?"
Student facing the ground, imitating a star-search.
Then, clapping hands, laughing, Transmission.
How wonderful it is!
Find a star in the ground, become a great man!

Do you want to pick a shining star?
Do you want to find a ground star?
Stone lion appears from the clouds.
All stars are afraid;
They hide in the tiger's shadow.

Where is North, South, East, West?
Don't know Heaven, don't know earth,
Don't know road, don't know house.
Don't know. Don't know. Dark. Dark.
Only don't know.

Cliff ... OUCH! ... Dead ... Wake up.
Heavenly star shining in the sky.
Two ground stars. Bright Dharma Room!

- Zen Master Seung Sahn
Buddha's Enlightenment Day
December 10, 1977

Buddha's Enlightenment Day
December 9, 1978
a poem by
Zen Master Seung Sahn

Truly seeing, the seer is lost.

True Enlightenment has no Enlightened one.

Seer, Enlightened one dance together

Beyond time and space.

Seeing the star, attaining Enlightenment --

What is it getting what?

That's funny!

What a fool it is!

Stone bear

Holding belly.

Great laughing

Ha ha ha ha!

Sun rising in the East.

10,000 miles no stars.

10,000 miles blue sky.

Green tree. Red flower.

Zen Master Seung Sahn's Buddha's Birthday Poem

1977

2,521st anniversary of Buddha's Birthday.

Happy Buddha's Birthday.

Someone said, "Before Buddha left the palace of heaven,
he had already saved all beings."

This is lightening in the blue sky without clouds.

The wooden dog is surprised,
runs into the silver mountain.

Buddha appeared in this world, tidal wave without wind.

Sky and ground, mountain and river,
everything loses light of form.

Stone girl holding a flower of wind,
fanny dancing everywhere.

Buddha said, "In heaven, in hell, only I am holy."

Un-mun said, "Hit and kill -- give to a hungry dog."

Head is like rocks, same as a bear.

Mind is like midnight, same as a masked robber.

When will you get out of the cow's stomach?

Do not be deceived! Do not be deceived!

Open your mouth, already mistake.

You and I cannot defend ourselves. Hit -- thirty times.

If you hear this, you become sick.

If you don't hear this, good medicine for you.

Eeeiii!

The altar Buddha is smiling. Candle light is shining everywhere.

Soen Sa Nim's

Buddha's Birthday Poem, 1978

Holy in the Holy
King in the King.
But Un Mun's stick
Stronger than Holy and King.
Also the stick kills Un Mun.

The stick able to do everything
Where does it come from?
Bigger than universe
Brighter than sun.
No shadow, no form.
Cannot see; cannot hold.

Only appear Buddha's Birthday.
Where is it?
Hit!
Did you get it?
If you get it, this stick
Will hit you thirty times.
If you did not get it, also
This stick will hit you thirty times.

Why?

KATZ!

2522 candles shining everywhere.

Zen Master Seung Sahn's New Year's Poem

1978

New Year said, "Merry Christmas."
Old Year said, "Happy New Year!"
Christ said, "God nature everywhere."
Ma Jo said, "Everything has Buddha-nature."

Sixth Patriarch said, "Originally nothing."
Bible said, "Be still; know that I am God."
Still is God; nothing is Buddha.
Still is nothing.
Is God Buddha? NO! NO!
No stillness, no nothing.
No God, no Buddha ... Then what?

Ice snake eats the sun.
Kapok horse crushes the earth.
God around, around, around 1978 times.
Buddha around, around, around 2522 times.

East window is bright.
West picture smiling is clear.

December 14, 1978

Thanksgiving to God.
No Thanksgiving to God.
Who says that?
God likes Great Love, Great Compassion.
People love wine and turkey.
Sing songs, dance.
Is that Thanksgiving day?
All turkeys cry, cry, cry
"No Thanksgiving day! No Thanksgiving day!"
If you are God, what do you think about that?
Sun shining everywhere.
Snow melts; water flows to the ocean.

New Haven Zen Center Opening Ceremony
Dedication Poem
by Zen Master Seung Sahn
December 16, 1978

Opening through the ten directions.
Somebody said that.
Everything changing, changing never ends.
Form is emptiness; emptiness is form.
What is opening? What is closing?

Opening appears.
All demons fight each other in New Heaven.
Closing appears.
All gods sleep in old Hell.
Who believes that?

Opening -- is it correct?
Closing -- is it correct?
If you open, lose your eyes, ears, tongue.
If you close, cannot find direction.
Why? KATZ!

See clearly blue ocean.
Hear clearly bird song.
Silence better than holiness.
Open the door. Runs away.
The dog east. Cat west.

Soen Sa Nim's Birthday Poem
August 5, 1978

How many times spring coming, fall going?
Spring, fall do not bind mind.
The stone lion eats spring, fall, mind, and says,
"Seven seven. Four nine. Add two."

In memory of the great Zen Master Cheon Kang Su Nim
1975

To the deceased Great Master:

In the Great Enlightenment achieved by one word,
Many blue-eyed disciples originate.
In the hairs which grow on teeth,
Many Buddhas and Bodhisattvas die and disappear.
The Great Zen Master, Cheon Kang Young Shin,
Where are you going?
KATZ!
Aigo, aigo, aigo.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

EULOGY FOR ZEN MASTER CHUNG SOENG SU NIM

September 21, 1977

Zen Master Chung Soen Su Nim, your KATZ
sometimes killed Buddha and Eminent Teacher
sometimes broke Heaven and Earth
sometimes made Buddha and Eminent Teacher
and sometimes created All Things.

Therefore, that is Freedom Master's KATZ.
It is able to do everything, and gives life and death.

You gave to us the Great Way with No Gate
and the Tongue with No Bone,
which is the step of a Man without hindrance.

KATZ and HIT in Chung Soeng (Spring Castle)
sees that the willow is green, flower is red,
and soon returns to this world
using Bodhi to save all people.

Facing the Sky - Ha-Ha, Ha-Ha, Ha-Ha.
Facing the Ground - Aigo! Aigo! Aigo!

New Year's Day Ceremony - 1979
December 30, 1978
a poem by
Zen Master Seung Sahn

Sunrise in the East in the morning.
Sunset in the West in the evening.
Earth rotates on its axis
And revolves around the sun.
One revolution, 365 rotations.

Does the sun make morning?
Does the earth make evening?
Which one is correst?
You? No! no!
I? No! no!

Do you know of snow in July?
Have you been swimming in the ocean in December?
If you are the sun,
Shine over the whole world all the time.
If you are the earth,
Always have ten directions, four seasons,
Daytime and nighttime.
Which one do you like?

Be careful!
Don't make one head and three horns.

Dol!

Sun is rising in the East
Opening the gate of 1979.
The horse takes his hat and goes out.
The sheep puts on his shoes and comes in.

February 27, 1978

In a house in the great city,
the master expounded the Dharma
as dogs barked and cars passed
in the night outside.

When I returned to my country home,
nothing had changed.
But the wild grasses bowed
over the chanting river.

Tom

March 10, 1978

Dogs barked and cars passed
in the night outside.
Speak Dharma already mistake, 10,000 miles
In a temple in the great city.

Wild grasses bowed
over the chanting river.
Changing, changing, just like this
When I returned to my original home.

Soen Sa Nim

March 11, 1978

The sun gives warmth - the sailboat is on the lake,
 The moon gives stillness - the lovers embrace,
 The rose gives perfume - the baby laughs.
 The air gives life - the squirrel nibbles a nut,
 The mountain gives grandeur - the lion roars;
 The waves meeting the shore is a symphony - the birds sing,
 All is as it should be.
 The sky is high - the earth is low,
 All is, as it always has been,
 You are you and I am me,
 We are where we should be,
 Nothing really changes,
 Everything is in its rightful place.

Norm

March 22, 1978

The sun gives cold - the sailboat has no bottom.
 The moon gives noise - the lovers quarrel.
 The rose has thorns - the baby cries.
 The air gives death - the squirrel bites the cat.
 The mountain gives goosebumps - the lion cowers.
 The waves take away direction - the bird cannot find its nest.
 All not as it should be is as it should be.
 No sky, no earth.
 All always remains still.
 No yours, no mine, no I, my, me.
 Don't check, don't check, don't check.
 Nothing really changes.
 Spring comes. The willow is green; the flower is red.

Soen Sa Nim

May 30, 1978

Sitting in a park.
 Head aches.
 Birds chirp loud.
 Traffic Vrrmmmm....

So.
 But not just so.

Cause mind hurts
 with thinking and desire.
 So.
 Mirror mirror Zen Master mirror:
 What is this?

Shana

June 9, 1978

Sitting in the park
 No head,
 No eyes, no ears,
 No bird, no chirp.

So.
 No not just so.
 Originally nothing.
 Thinking, desire come from where?

So.
 No mirror, no Zen Master --
 Then what?
 No hindrance,
 No problem.

The road outside the gate
 Passes through downtown.

Soen Sa Nim

June 3, 1978

The crook-ed pine
on the garden path,
gentle breeze.

Ned

June 10, 1978

Who made the crooked pine?
How many trees are on the garden path?
How much does the gentle breeze help you?

Soen Sa Nim

57
Tahl Mah Sah is made of sawdust
Buzzing saw cuts off all thinking

Hammers are hammering away

The moktak bird is singing
Shin Myo Chung Ko Tae Ta Rani

The sun is coming out
The rain dries up and disappears

James

March 22, 1978

The world is already sawdust.
Originally nothing. Don't cut.
When you hit, only hit.
The moktak dancing
Kills all Buddhas and eminent teachers.
The sun is setting in the West.
The moon is rising in the East.

Soen Sa Nim

53
November 22, 1977

Dear Soen Sa Nim,

Some days the wind blows fiercely.
Some days not even a leaf moves.

Liang Wu Ti build many Buddhist temples.
Bodhidharma wasn't impressed.

Soen Sa Nim is building many Zen Centers.
I am impressed.

When the Dharma came from India,
Endless pages of gobbledeegook bacame "KATZ!!!"

Now that KATZ!! has come to America,
What will it become?

This is crappy poetry but you understand my meaning.

Your friend,

An Hanh

December 1, 1977

Dear An Hanh,

Some days mist rises from the ocean floor.
Some days rocks hail from the sky.

Bodhidharma doesn't know anything.
Liang Wu Ti understands happiness.

You make me a builder of Zen Centers.
I only have two empty hands.

Originally, no Dharma, no coming, no India.
Lose tongue, there is no bone.

In America, already everything is complete.
All mountains are high. All rivers flow to the ocean.

Your poem is very very wonderful. Even Buddha doesn't understand.
How can I understand your meaning?

Yours in the Dharma,

S.S.

Student's poem:

For one hundred lives
I have looked for the
nose on my face,
and
only this morning
did I find a mirror!
The earth smells damp
in this September rain.

Soen Sa Nim's poem:

A man for one hundred lives
Was looking for his nose.
Finally, he got nose is high,
Mouth is low.
The mouth says Katz!
The nose says Acchhew!

October 5, 1977

Dear Seung Sahn Soen Sa Nim,

Here is a poem for you:

Enlightenment is nothing special,
Inside and outside are one,
The deer with no nostrils eats trees and leaps over hills,
This fall, the maple leaves are red and yellow.

Sang Jin,
Lawlor

October 27, 1977

Dear Lawlor,

How are you and Sherry? Thank you for your wonderful poem.

Here is a poem for you:

Enlightenment is special.
Inside and outside are empty.
The deer's snot melts the universe.
Only yellow leaves hang from the maple tree.

Your poem and my poem: Which one do you like?

Yours in the Dharma,

S.S.

September, 1978

A friend brings some tea
"Are you going to India, Dave?"
She sadly leaves without an answer.
My warm bed
At day's end
Is a dream.
A cup of tea
A wooden flute
Too many choices
One mind to make them
No confirmation.....

Dave

October 28, 1978

Someone asked JoJu
What is Buddha?
JoJu answered,
Go drink tea!
Your tea change to JoJu's tea
Go to India not necessary!
Then she very happy
All universe very happy.

Wake up!
Your mind not clear.

Hot tea not necessary
One cup of cold water
You must drink!

S.S.

January, 1974

One evening, after a talk at the Boston Dharmadhatu, a student handed Seung Sahn Soen Sa the following note:

The kid makes one slide down the icy hill and runs away.
The hill belongs to someone else.
To whom does the hill belong?
Where is this magic hill?

The next day Soen Sa Nim wrote the following answer:

Who makes the kid?
Who makes the hill?
Who makes the magic?
If you open your mouth, I will hit you thirty times.
I don't tell dreams to a fool.
If you are hungry, you must eat. If you are tired, you
must sleep.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

September 24, 1978

Morning river
 Many trees, green, yellow, red
 Very clear.

Gloop. Gloop.
 River rises on rocks.
 Winds come.
 Green, yellow, red disappear.

Where are the trees?
 Appear? Disappear?
 SHHH! SHHH! SHHH!

Half moon floats near.
 Catch it! Catch it!
 Sun rises.
 Time for morning bows.

*

*

*

Round yellow mushrooms,
 Red leaves falling
 Geese crying in the cold air --
 Is this not enough?

KATZ!
 Mouse runs by --
 Move your foot.

Sherry

October 29, 1978

Very clear everything
 Green, yellow, red disappear
 Shhh, shhh, shhh!
 Sun rises
 Time for morning bows.

* |

*

*

Not enough!
 Not enough!
 Not enough!
 What more do you want?
 The mouse bites your toe!
 OUCH!!

Soen Sa Nim

June 24, 1978

Mouse Eats Cat Food From Broken Bowl

The bowl breaks,
The food spills into space.
This mouse is enormous:
One whisker stretches to the moon,
Its silver teeth shine like stars.

Stanley

July 24, 1978

Who broke the cat bowl?
What is cat bowl?
A quarter is twenty-five cents.
Twenty-five cents is ice cream.
Ice cream already into stomach.
Very good feeling.
Only wonderful.

Soen Sa Nim

63

Through the window, there is only snow tonight.
On the ground, only snow
In the air, only snow:
Is it falling to the ground
Or to the sky?
In my eyes, only snow
And in every snowflake
I see you
Me
Everyone!
Falling into drifts,
Sparkling in the lights,
Cold and wet on my face.

- Do Mi, Barbara

Snow is white
Sky is white
Ground is white
The moon is white
Mind is white
Everything is white.

Snow makes everything
Sky makes everything
Ground makes everything
The moon makes everything
The mind makes everything
Everything makes everything.

The white dog playing
Playing on the snow
Snow is dog; dog is snow.
Dog and snow become one.
Where is dog? Cannot find!!

Somebody said, "Originally nothing."
The snow, the sky, the ground,
the moon, the mind
the everything comes from where?

WHITE?
Who made white?
You? I? No, No!!
No you, no I.

Snowman Dharma said, "Don't check anything."
Snow is white.

- Soen Sa Nim, Jan. 2, 1978

66
March 17, 1978

Just like this is here, now....

is running in warm winter rains on Maui...
is eating strawberry papaya....
is awareness of God's perfection in all things....
is the joy of loving God
is God loving God....
is Love loving Love.....
is IS

Bruce

April 6, 1978

no running in warm winter no rains on Maui...
no eating enough mind strawberry papaya wonderful...
no awareness of God; everything is still and perfectly complete...
no joy of Great Love, Great Compassion, Great Bodhisattva Way...
no God true God...
no love, Great Love...
No NO....

Soen Sa Nim

March 21, 1978

83,000 miles in ONE instant,
ONE Buddha,
ONE JoJu,
ONE "Mu!"
ONE Answer,
KATZ!

Winter is barely over
And already Spring arrives.

Ned

April 6, 1978

Infinite time in the moment,
Numberless Buddhas,
Numberless JoJus.
Mu, Mu, Mu, Mu, Mu.
84,000 answers.
HIT!

Wooden dog barking in the cloud.
Car running - South, North, West, East.

Soen Sa Nim

68
August 28, 1978

Hard training is not difficult --
Beginner's training is not easy.
A hundred-day retreat is a pile of shit
And a monastery is useless.
A single thought?
The sound of typewriter keys!

Stephen

September 8, 1978

Hard training -- very difficult!
Beginner's training -- not difficult.
Don't make difficult. Don't make easy.
Not only a hundred days -- whole life, bullshit!
Attain bullshit; whole universe, wonderful monastery.
A single thought? Big mistake.
KATZ!
Clack, clack, clack, clack -- the typewriter.

Soen Sa Nim

From Dropping Ashes

February, 1975

Without special purpose
my life is complete
In the cave at midnight
there is still some light
But if the mind moves one inch
incense ash falls like thunder
Katz!
How much does it weigh?
You must bring the scales.

Stephen

The snowman Bodhidharma sweats and grows smaller, smaller.
The sound of his heartbeat shatters heaven and hell.
His eyebrows drop off, then his eyes, then his carrot nose.
A child shouts, "Bodhidharma is dying!"

S.S.

November, 1978

The thin sun of fall comes through the bushes.
Winter is approaching.

Carole

November 23, 1978

The thick sun shines through the ignorance bush.
Leaves fall to the ground.

S.S.

June 29, 1978

Waves that talk for hours to the beach
say nothing.
Wind that moves tree boughs back and forth
does nothing.
Sunlight gilds the world without a sound,
and still the world is never silent.
In all this vast space,
empty sea, sand, and sky for miles and miles,
only I am confused,
walking the beach for hours,
foolishly searching,
looking for truth (or something),
missing, in front of me,
the shells, the sand,
the sound of waves.

Tom

July 6, 1978

Originally nothing. But waves always talk
to each other.
Originally emptiness. Always, wind and trees
are wrestling.
Sunlight is without color. But all things make
the colors they like.
Very, very quiet.
Somebody has eyes, so is confused.
If you have no eyes, then vast space, blue sea,
white sand, ten miles of no clouds, ten miles of clear sky.
Sun is setting in the West.
Shell's shadow grows longer and longer.

Soen Sa Nim

(about mouse-eats-cat-food kong-an)

December 21, 1974

Original face is clear
on the green pine and white rocks.
If you want to understand what this means
you must understand that a quarter is twenty-five cents.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

(about mouse-eats-cat-food kong-an)

December 22, 1974

A dog barks looking at the moon.
A man shouts at the dog and he becomes quiet.
Light comes, use light; sound comes, use sound.
If you understand this, you understand that four quarters
are a dollar.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

August, 1973

So much suffering in Nirvana castles.
 So joyous to sink into this world.
 When you call yourself with old clothes Buddha,
 What do you call yourself with silk clothes?
 Wooden man went out with shoes at night
 Stone woman came back with hat in the morning.
 You for the first time can perceive when you take up the
 moon three times which floats in a pond.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

So much suffering in Nirvana castles.
 So joyous to sink into this world.
 When you call yourself with old clothes Buddha,
 What do you call yourself with silk clothes?
 Wooden man went out with shoes at night
 Stone woman came back with hat in morning.
 You for the first time can perceive
 When you
 Take up the moon three times
 Which floats in a pond.

June 17, 1975

Dream is not-dream; not-dream is dream.
Who made dream? Who made not-dream?
One mind is clear; infinite time.
The sun is shining everywhere and all the time.

S.S.

"GO STRAIGHT, NOT KNOWING,
KEEPING CLEAR MIND"
Much or nothing depends on this
Supreme delight
Old man and George and LKW

All these things come from where?
Do they exist, or are they emptiness?
If you open your mouth, I will hit you thirty times.
If you do not open your mouth, I will still hit you thirty times.
What can you do?

Don't hold the stone cow's tail
When the stone cow is running.
Then you will understand
The sky is blue, the tree is green.

June 11, 1976

January 15, 1975

Blue mountain and green woods
This is eminent teachers clear face.
Do you understand this face?
A quarter is twenty-five cents.

Seung Sahn Soen Sa

23

The cat only looks at the mouse hole.
A crying boy only calls for his mother.
Originally there is nothing.

Why does the wind shake the tree?
The sun sets on the Eastern mountain.

November 12, 1975

A man took off all of his clothes and went running down the street.
This mouth said, "Crazy,"
That mouth said, "Crazy."
"You're crazy, I'm not crazy."

The tree penetrates through the sun.
The stone boy eats the moon.
Who fixed the sun and moon?
In a nest, baby birds are cheeping for their mother's mouth.

November 13, 1975

Great mountain into the ocean.
Great ground appears from the ocean.
Great ocean makes everything.
But, great ocean is dependent on earth.
The earth has everything.
But, it has no weight.
No direction. No time.
Only dependent on emptiness.
So, emptiness is everything; everything is empty.
Who made this emptiness?
Emptiness made emptiness.
Attain emptiness.
Everything is there.
The seed is at play with the tree.
The sky is at play with the stars.

- August 12, 1977

Rome

April 12, 1978

This is Rome --
God and man almost touching.
Don't make God,
Don't make man,
Already become One.
Where does One come from?
KATZ!
Here sky is also blue.

This is the Coliseum.
Appearing, disappearing,
Everything like this.
Appearing, disappearing disappear,
Like this is truth:
Sky is blue, building is brown.

Venice

April 14, 1978

29

Water city Venice.
Station in the water,
Roads in the water,
Houses in the water,
Earth in the water,
Heaven in the water,
Rain in the water.
Is this a dream or not?
EEEEEE!! Cold!!
Water taxi runs West, East, North, South.

Switzerland

April 16, 1978

Paradise -- Switzerland
Head is white-capped,
Blue jacket, flowered skirt.
Summer, Spring, Winter together.
When do you finish drinking lakes' wine?
Wake up! Wake up!
Dog barking. Woof! Woof!

Poland

April 21, 1978

30

Perceive world sound --
Korean Heart Sutra,
English Heart Sutra,
Polish Heart Sutra,
Indian Great Dharani.
Kwan Seum Bosal, Kwan Seum Bosal.
Many Bodhisattvas, many Buddhas
Completely disappear, become one,
Which is clear like space.
Spring comes, green grass everywhere.

Frankfurt/Mainz

April 23, 1978

Rhine River flowing,
 Past and present unchanging.
 Bone of the souls of ancient kings
 Still many traces on the peaks.
 How many hundreds of years
 Have they received people's fingers?
 When does water become tainted?

Name is wonderful!
 Beautiful singing disappears --
 Only motors. Putt! Putt! Putt!
 Mountain and river all blemished.
 Lorelei, pretty girl, where does she sleep?
 Camera eyes see only beauty --
 The castle:
 A tattered hat,
 A red, white and green spring skirt.

West Berlin

April 26, 1978

East and West, a blinding wall
 Very difficult to breathe in, breathe out.
 Who is striking a nail into the heart?
 West only has a high lookout tower.
 Space has no East or West.
 The bird doesn't make anything.
 Freedom -- coming, going.
 Mind appears,
 Whole world upside down.
 Mind disappears,
 No East, no West, no South, no North.
 Who will listen to these words?
 Only facing blue sky --
 Laughing. Ha! Ha! Ha!

April 22, 1978

Poem from Janek in Warsaw to Soen Sa Nim

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Caught a glimpse of the vastness
 On the other side.
 Yet slipped off the summit
 With one step to go.
 At the foot of a glacier
 In a lake of bliss
 The radiant moon
 Not a trace of mist.
 Sweet water all around me
 And I have no mouth!

Commentary: What a pity!
 What a pity!
 Fresh breeze rising with every step!