

JELLYFISH BONES



The Humor of Zen

by Zen Master Don Gilbert



Lightner June '90



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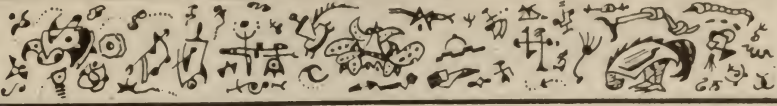
Jellyfish Bones
Inner Valley
PoJo & the Circle Teachings

}
Zen Master
Ta Hui
(Donald Gilbert)

Chants — a Zen Wind
Organic Music
Poems of Illumination!
Mystic Roots

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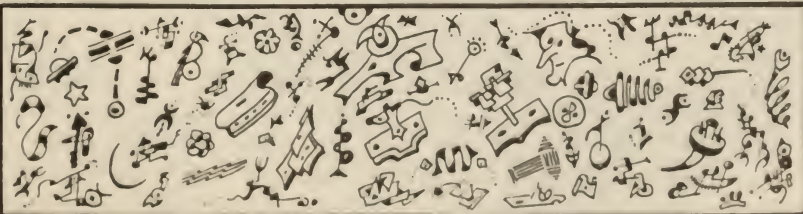
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BLUE DRAGON

In the West, the Dragon is considered to be evil. This is not so in the Eastern tradition. The Dragon is an ancient Chinese symbol which represents good fortune and prosperity. The Dragon also represents the infinite power of the Universe. The Blue Dragon is said to reside in the depths of the Earth during winter, and when springtime comes he rises to the sky and brings the rains needed to replenish life. The Dragon is also a symbol of Great Wisdom. In the I-Ching, it is one of the four auspicious symbols, in which it represents the first hexagram (the Creative) which exemplifies the meaning of Dragon power.

—Zen Master Ta Hui (Donald Gilbert)





SOME "ZEN TRACES"

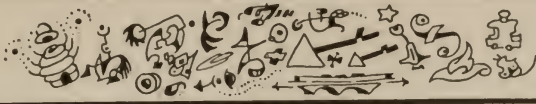
“. . . even though Zen is considered Buddhistic, a Zen Buddhist is the follower of the Buddha in that, like the Buddha, he is completely free in his search for truth.

"Zen is beyond affirmation and denial. When one lives in wholeness, in creativity, one now is "being". Zen is saying "be".

"Zen is not trying to accumulate followers but to matriculate them to their own wholeness and creative freedom of being."

—Zen Master Ta Hui (Donald Gilbert)



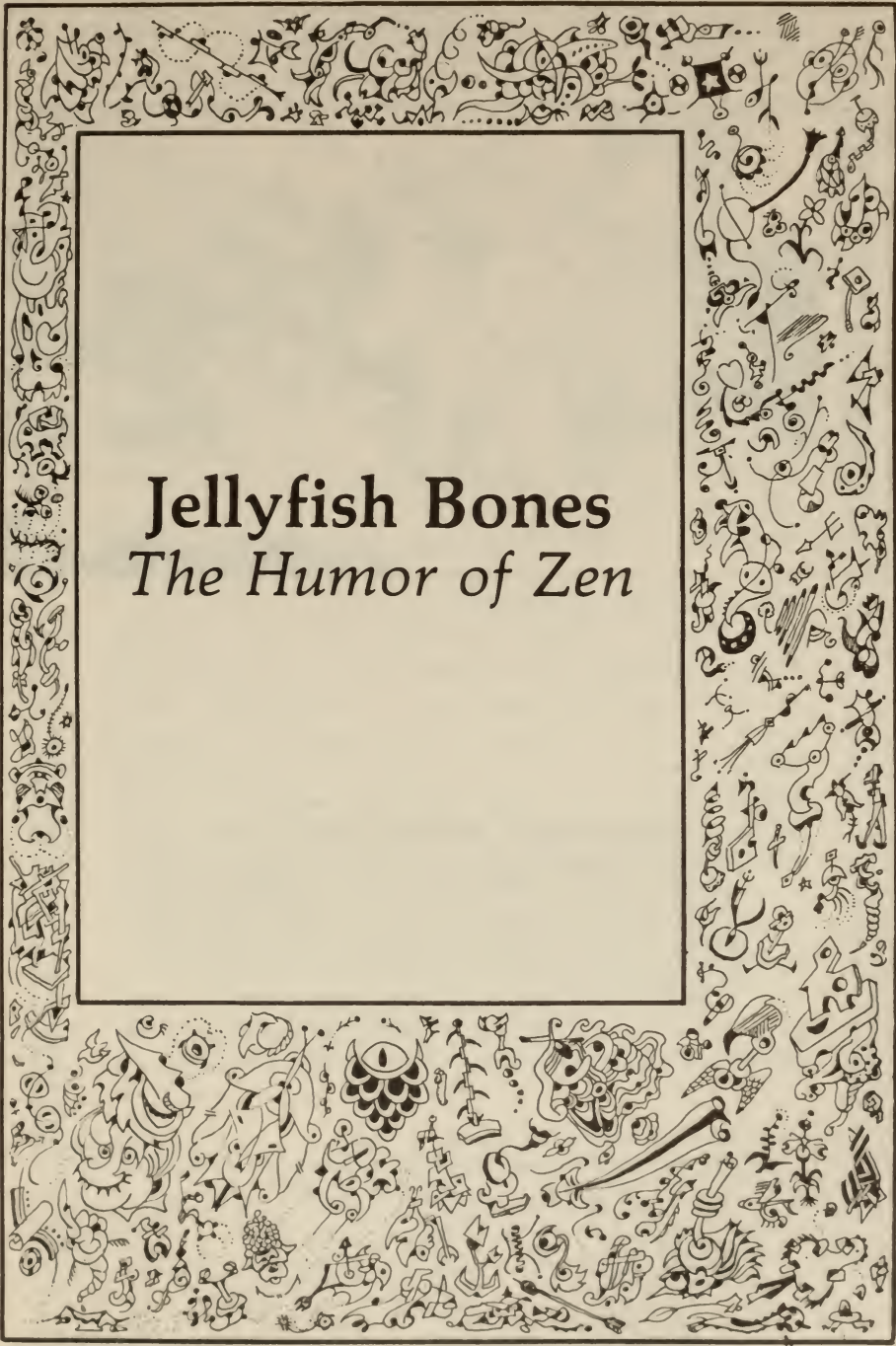


ZEN MASTER TA HUI (DONALD GILBERT)

Zen Master Ta Hui (Donald Gilbert) was designated as Dharma Successor in the United States to the Venerable Korean Zen Master Il Bung Seo, Kyung Bo in July, 1973. Zen Master Gilbert is a member of the World Society for Zen Academy, and founder of the Blue Dragon School of Zen in the United States. His Dharma name, Ta Hui (after one of the great early Zen Masters in China, known for his use of koans), means "Great Wisdom".





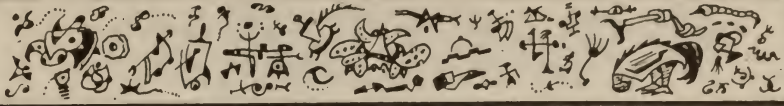


Jellyfish Bones
The Humor of Zen



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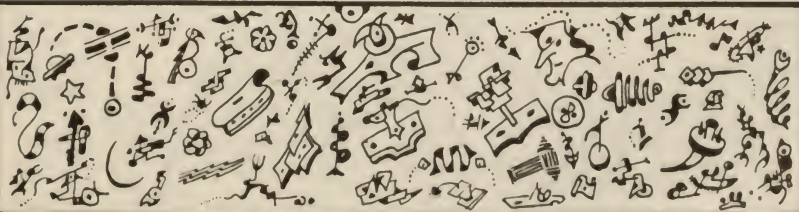


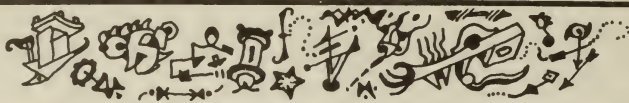
FOREWORD

Traditionally it is accepted that Bodhidharma, the first Zen Patriarch of China, brought the Mahayana Buddhist Teachings from India to China about the year 520 A.D. Although the Teachings of the Theravadins (the Teaching of the Elders) had been introduced into China much earlier, it did not prosper. However, the Mahayana School of Buddhism had much in common with the Tao teaching of China. Thus it was, that the Mahayana absorbed much from the teachings of Taoism and Buddhism flourished.

From this combination of Mahayana Buddhism and Taoism came the school of "Ch'an". Ch'an is a transliteration of the Sanscrit word "dhyāna", which means "Meditation". Later these teachings were introduced to Korea where it became known as "Son" (pronounced Sern). From there it was carried to Japan where it became known as "Zen". It was also called "Nsin Tsung", meaning Mind Doctrine—not ordinary mind as generally understood, but Buddha Mind or the Ultimate Mind.

In each of these transitions, of course, certain changes took place. Even though all these forms of Buddhism had a common root, they all varied somewhat. The Indian practice of dhyāna (meditation) cannot be fully equated with Ch'an, nor can Ch'an be fully equated with Son, or Son with Zen.





Generally it is said that Bodhidharma spoke thus of his teaching:

A special transmission outside the Scripture.

No dependence on words or letters.

Direct pointing at the mind of man.

Seeing into one's nature, and the attainment of Buddhahood.

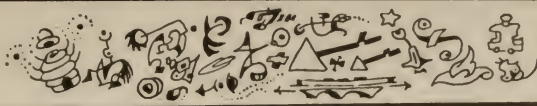
This clearly states that finite concepts are incapable of encompassing the infinity of Truth. Logical conclusions are by their very nature deadly traps. (Logic is our limitations, as provided by the extent of our concepts.) Zen then cannot be a philosophy, but is the very energy of life itself. Zen is "Infinite Consciousness" and not the "Limited Awareness" of a phenomenal sentient being.

Most of us are stuffed with words and ideas, and as a result we have developed a "Conceptual" paunch. In other words, we are so weighted down with words that we are unable to dance the dance of life.

As you read this little book, remember that Zen does not seek descriptions. Zen seeks the *living of life!*

Let us remember as we watch Unk in his search for Truth and Wisdom, that Wisdom is not intellect nor can intellect grasp the Truth. True Wisdom is intuitive, hence it is that Zen points to Satori, Satori being the awakening of prajna, true intuitive knowing. Zen practice cannot really begin until this awakening has occurred. For example, when the Zen Master whacks Unk with the stick, his teaching is both kindly and profound, for to describe Truth is to hide it.





In the Lankavatara Sutra it says:

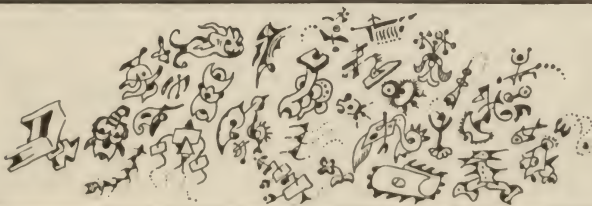
"The Ultimate Truth is mind itself which is free from all forms inner and outer. No words can describe mind—no discriminations reveal it."

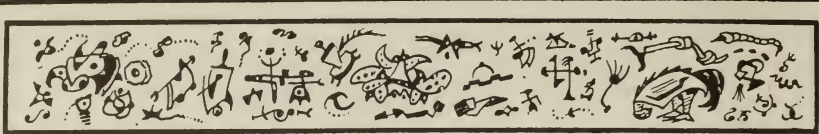
Here, in the Sutra, Mind does not refer to the ordinary mind, the area of discrimination and concepts. Nor does it indicate the logical thinking device or that area from which feelings emanate. Rather, Mind is the foundation beneath all thought and feeling.

Mind = Nature = Reality = Buddha (the basis of all things).

So, what is Zen? — You are Zen! The Zen approach is to strip away all accumulations. Zen requires that we be naked. The intent of Zen is to bring about a denuding. This calls for the complete destruction of the accumulations of little mind. Destruction in the sense that it will be revealed for what it is, an accumulation of concepts, and that we have accepted the accumulations as a real world.

Zen is aiming at intuitive knowing—not intuitive in the causal sense, that is, the world of knowing. Zen is aiming beyond all causal or logical limitations. Zen cannot be found by reason. Thus, the goal of Zen is that which is underlying all phenomenal appearances—prajna and Prajnaic function. This is the source and the foundation for the whole world of appearances, realized through Satori, which occurs when logic has been transcended.





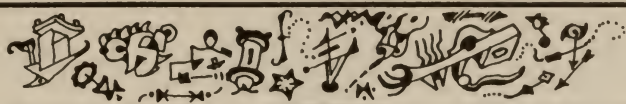
Unk must awaken to his own very nature. The nature of enlightenment is not limited by measurement and senses. It is neither a cause nor an effect. It cannot be said to be enlightening or enlightened. However, it can be revealed to Unk as the very nature of things as they are.

Unk sees the world as a world of phenomena. His limited view is one of objectivity. He sees all things as objects, including his own bodily appearance. He has a concept of what he is even when he thinks of himself as body and spirit. Unk then is clinging to the phenomenal. When the phenomenal is totally absent, "What is" (absolute noumenal presence) will be present. Enlightenment is simply living as "What is". Remember that this cannot be comprehended logically. To choose the phenomenal *or* noumenal is to maintain the duality. To choose the phenomenal *and* noumenal is still discrimination. "What is" is "What is" and is beyond description.

Whereas this little book is frivolous and light-hearted, it has its very roots in Zen. If it is wholly comprehended, perhaps the reader will "hear the sound of one hand clapping".

Zen says that the only *thing* that exists is Mind. All of the input of your senses and the apparent world it produces, plus all the feelings involved, are like dreams. Man has never seen a *thing*. All *things* are appearances in Mind-only. To most men however, this world appears real because man too is part of the dream. The

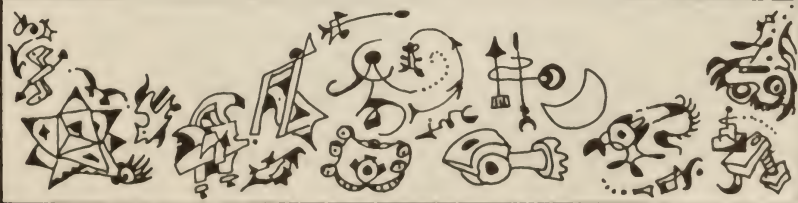


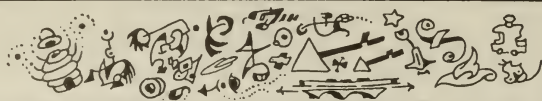


dream is that of a self which receives sensory input and translates it into images that correspond to outer objects. Thus is created the thief called "Self" that feels that it is living and directing the dream. This too is part of the dream. This self is the pseudo-self, and as long as the dream insists that this thief is living life, the dream is full of fears, frustrations and turbulence.

Satori shows the imposter—the pseudo-self—for what it truly is. There is no self dreaming, but rather, a recognition that there is a dreaming of Self. Not of a dreamer dreaming a dream—just dreaming. In other words, it is not that I live life, rather it is that life lives me. One does not wake up from the dream, but now the dream is fully experienced knowingly as a dream.

—Rev. Ta Hui, Zen Master
(Don Gilbert)





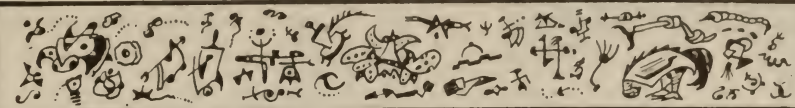
INTRODUCTION

In this delightful book *Jellyfish Bones*, with its beautiful illustrations and commentary, Zen Master Gilbert has vividly shown the Truth of Zen. To be "Zen" is to eat the food of the Spirit, be the food of the Spirit, and feed the Spirit with our being (with Christ, with Buddha, with Lao-tsu, with Muhammad, with all the Spirit-eaters). And we remember too that the Spirit is nourished by our existence.

Although Zen historically is an out-growth of Buddhism, in actuality it's an ancient Wisdom Teaching, and thus corresponds to that higher tradition within all faiths, all religions. Zen is not just intellectual study or psychological training, Zen is "Crazy Wisdom", an evolving living whole, subject to direct experience, which liberates the human spirit. Zen is an emotional feel, an intuitive grasp, an inspirational sense of being.

Heavy Symbols dominate our age. "God", Religion and Spirituality have become very solid, structured and categorized. In all this, where is our Creativity within Wonder? Where is the naked beauty of that which is you and not you—the "inner Expression" of your Heart and Mind (your "Whole Being")?





We are Naked, Truth

*Stars, energy—
sources of Light.*

*Fountains, life—
an infinite Well.*

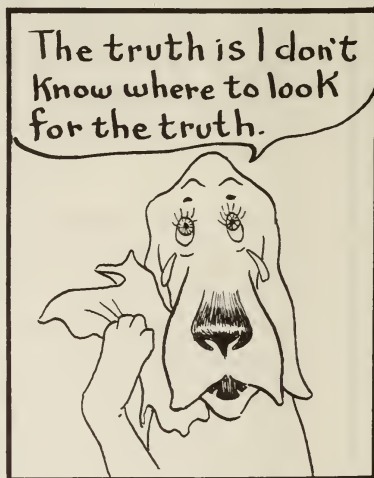
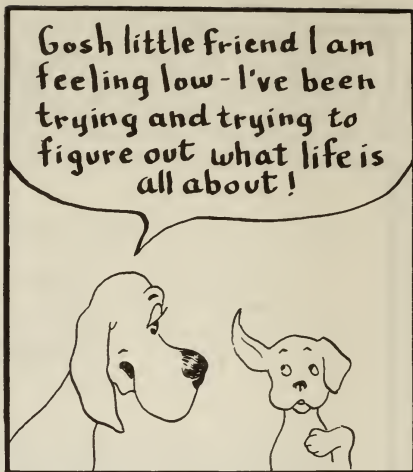
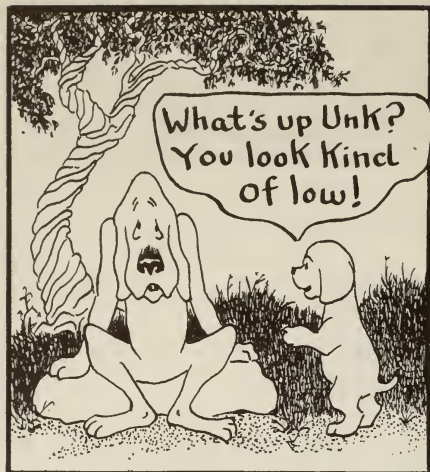
It's all this: Energy, energy, waves of Energy!—a Cosmic Wave! It's walking / being the edge, yet it's the edge of all Creation, unguarded by symbols. All that I am, it is That that I am—All a unique fountain of creative expression.

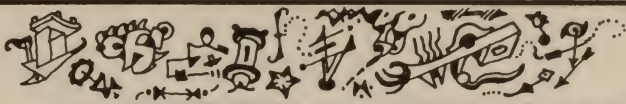


Zen Master Gilbert's American Zen School, the Blue Dragon Zen Academy, is a school of Creativity. It's not just an educational industry, a school of workshops where you learn "how to meditate" or "philosophy of Consciousness". It's not just a new type of Psychology, to gain an "Integrated Self". It's not just a school of "Mystic Seers with Cosmic Eyes". It's "the Cave of the Blue Dragon", a special Theater of Life, where you can "pop your cork", fall awake and be. —That's fabulous!

Richard Angilly
Editor, Blue Dragon Press







#1

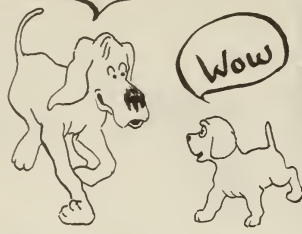
Can the Truth be sought somewhere else? Is the Truth not always present even though it may not be apparent? If one feels that the Truth is absent by what comparison would one judge the Truth? Can the Truth be judged by little mind with its limitation, its conditioning and its ignorance? If the Truth must be sought, is this not another way of denying the Truth?

What about the problem of the Seeker? Is there a Seeker? Is there a thing sought? Could it be that the Seeker must be absent for the Truth to be revealed?

Is the Truth not right where one stands? Is not ignorance and the clinging to the limited appearances in the little mind the Truth even though it is an illusion? Must one go elsewhere to find what is already present?



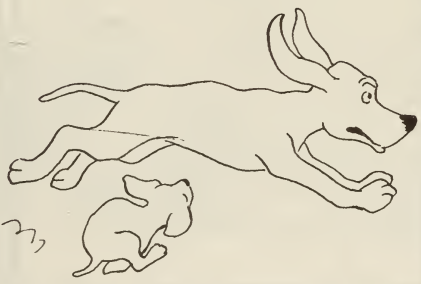
Great news-I heard there is a wizard in the valley that knows the "TRUTH"



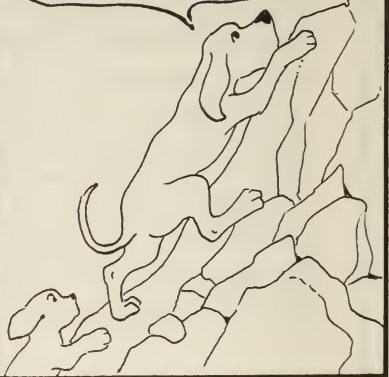
Follow me-I'll lead you to him.



Just think-the truth is near



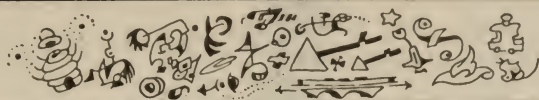
Just over this hill is the truth!



That was a deep-deep truth wasn't it?



Yup

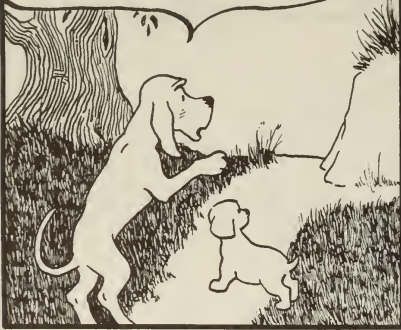


#2

When ordinary mind, functioning in the world of appearances, tries to solve the mystery of the sourceless source of itself, it inevitably comes to an impasse—the great abyss.

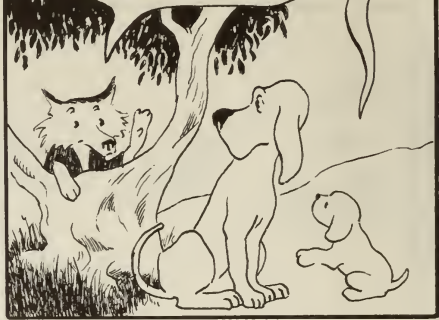


I think I know what went wrong yesterday - we turned off here - we should go straight ahead.



First let's ask some directions.

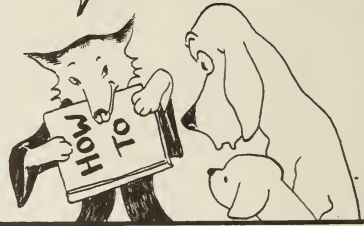
Directions?



St. Lee Sage - Master of Directions sir - my Card sir

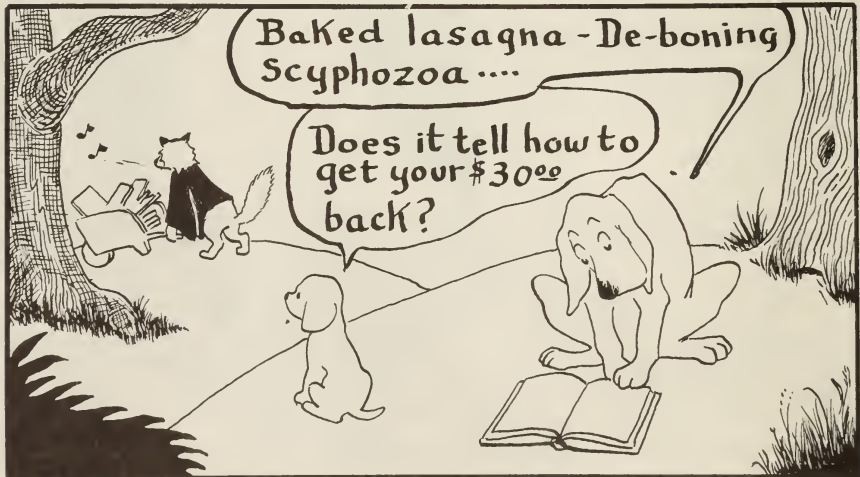


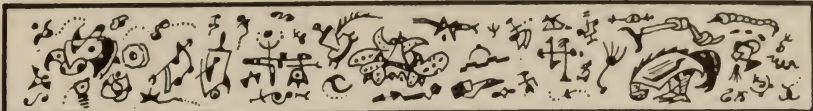
I just happen to have this marvelous book of directions, the last copy in the world - a steal at \$30⁰⁰



Baked lasagna - De-boning Scyphozoa

Does it tell how to get your \$30⁰⁰ back?





#3

Unk is experiencing his first encounter with Ole Foxy. Foxy represents the false prophets—the imitators—the pretenders and those who seek to profit from the ignorance and yearning for Truth that fills some of us.

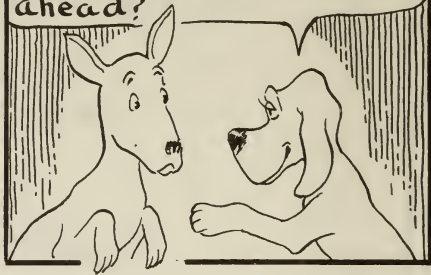
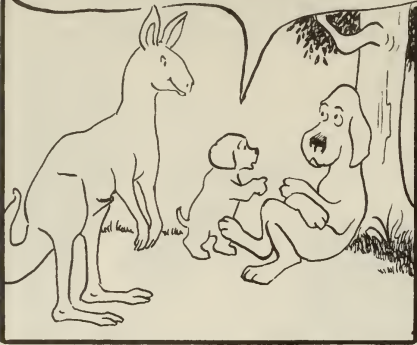
Foxy is aware that most who claim to seek the Truth are really seeking diversion, an avoidance of Truth. He knows too that many who claim to seek the Truth are only seeking a truth that is acceptable to them — in fact, an untruth suited to their prejudices.

Perhaps we should first seek to find the truth of our own inner condition. How does our mind work? Should we not attempt to discover the Truth of ourselves? If this were known no charlatan or false guide could take advantage of us.



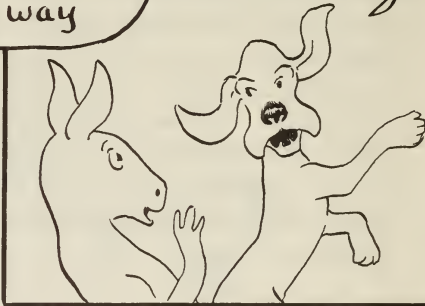
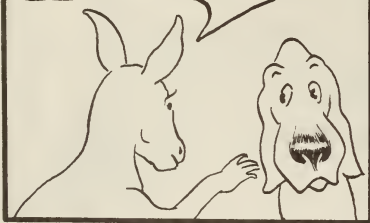
Kanga Rue Says she Knows this country well-maybe she can give us directions.

We're looking for the old magician that knows the truth, we went to the right but it was wrong-how about straight ahead?

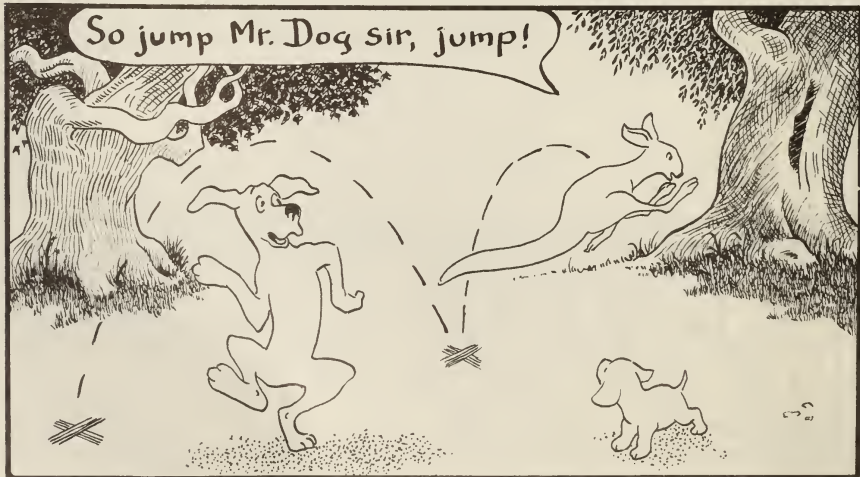


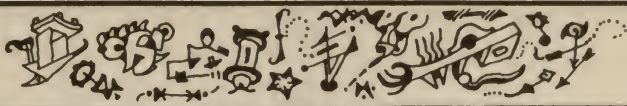
Right was right-to go straight would be wrong-going right is going straight ahead and to go straight ahead is to go to the left - go back the way you were going!

Just a darn minute-that way leads to a great precipice, then what?



So jump Mr. Dog sir, jump!





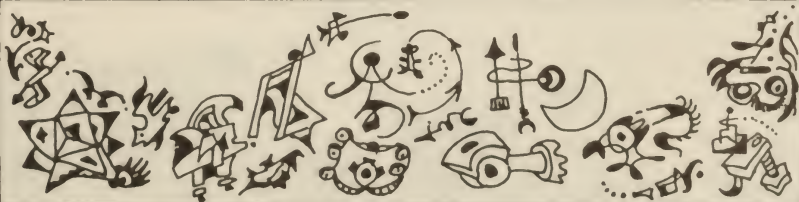
#4

One can seek the truth in the world of concepts, yet even the greatest genius imaginable could not find absolute truth. Why? . . . because what is sought is beyond conceptual thoughts. Since it is not subjective or objective, it has no specific location and is formless.

One can approach it conceptually, but sooner or later one will find oneself at The Great Abyss. Most will turn back as Unk did.

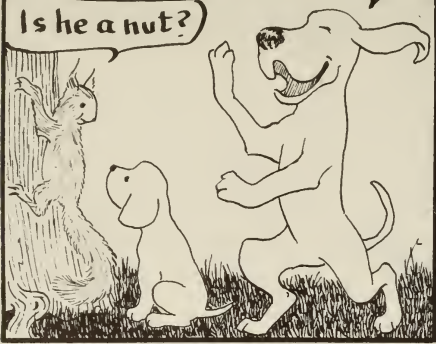
It is said that those who seek to know through concepts are like "fur" (many), and that those who find it intuitively are like "horns" (few).

Here, Kanga Rue is telling Unk to drop the conceptual approach and jump into the abyss—and he will obtain truth intuitively.



The "TRUTH" the "TRUTH" my Kingdom for the "TRUTH"

Is he a nut?

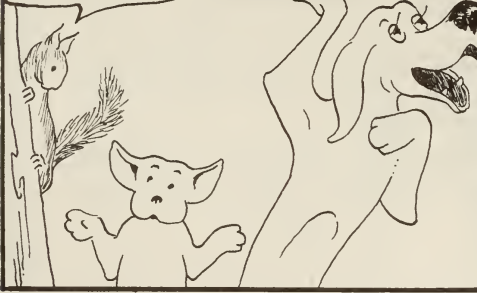


Is finding the truth really so important?

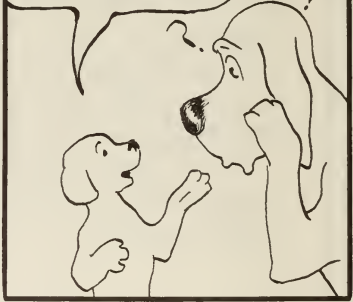


For me it is - I'm tired of being ignorant and stupid

you got him started again huh?

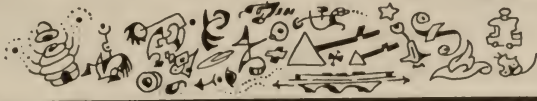


Unk- if a person is Stupid and ignorant how can he recognize the "TRUTH"?



Wow Little Friend now I really have something to worry about and that's the truth!

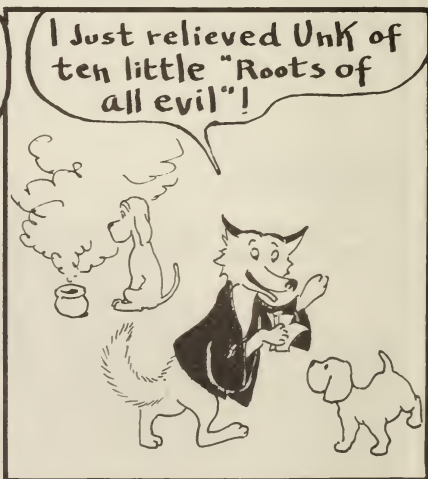
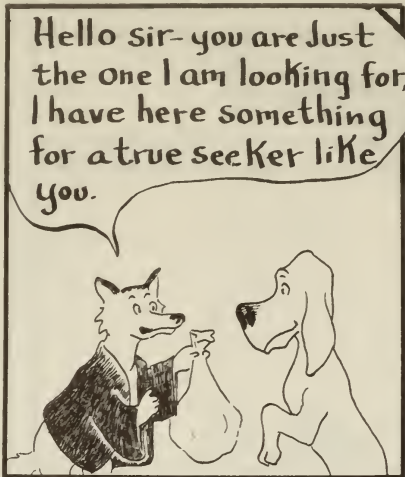


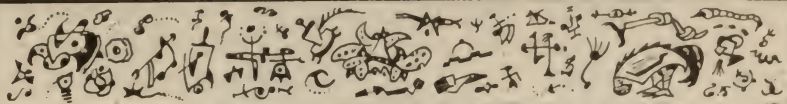


#5

Conceptual truths may reveal the limitations of the conceiver, but not the unlimited source of the limited conceptual mind.





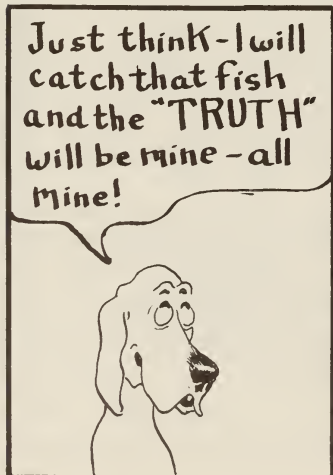
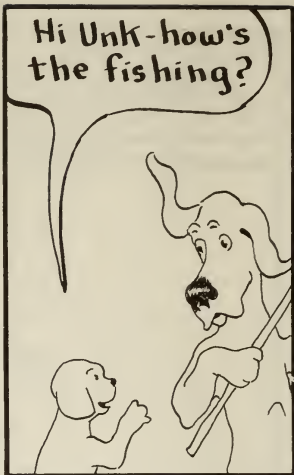


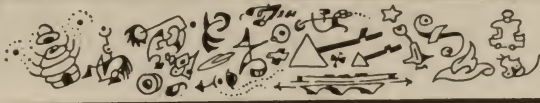
#6

Here Foxy clearly demonstrates that Unk is not so much seeking truth as he is seeking diversion.

The Truth (which is what Unk is) cannot be faced. Unk chooses to watch the smoke rather than discover the fire of his own existence. He persists in maintaining the "Self & Other" illusion.





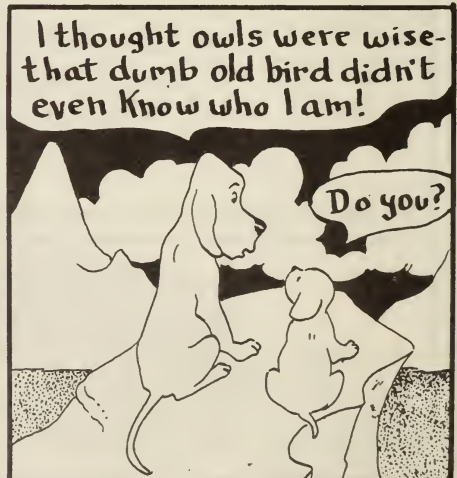


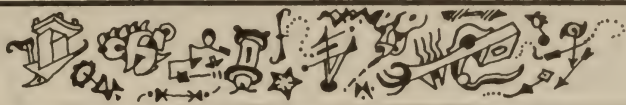
#7

There is an ancient Buddhist saying: "A caught fish is a dead fish", which is clearly saying that the "Truth" cannot be caught and defined.

The Truth is infinite and cannot be put in limited terms. Thus, a truth posited in words is a "dead fish". This is so as a result of trying to limit the unlimited.







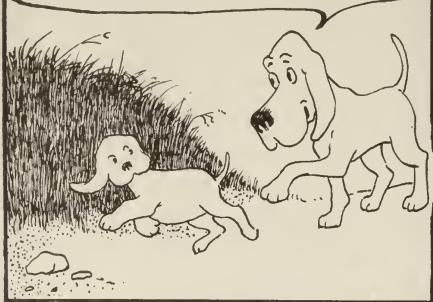
#8

Here Unk mistakes Hoo for Who. This is only one of his mistakes however. He obviously thinks that his name, his accumulation of conditioning, is what he is.

What then vivifies Unk and how does accumulation appear? Perhaps Unk should remember that he is infinite and that which appears is only a finite aspect of that infinity. Any ideas or concepts that he has of himself are limited to the finite. Even his concepts of infinity are finite.

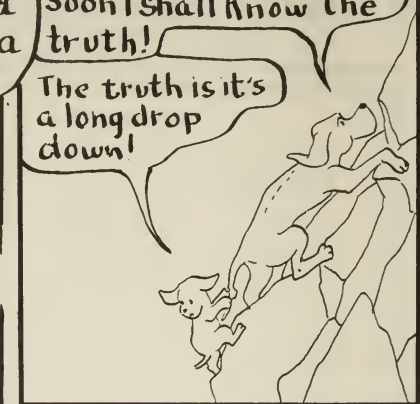


Wake up Pepito-wonderful news-I heard that an old Zen Master is living in a Cave on the hill!

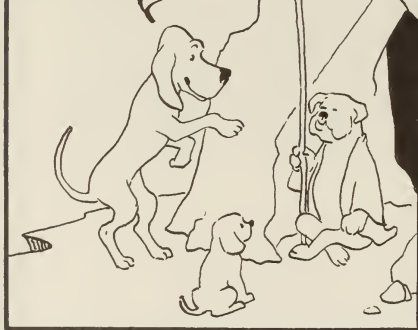


The truth-the truth soon I shall know the truth!

The truth is it's a long drop down!

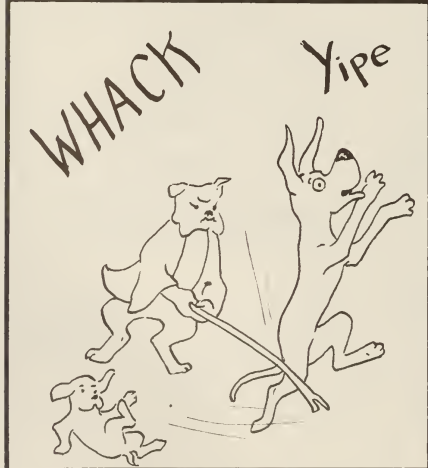


Tell me sir-What is the truth?



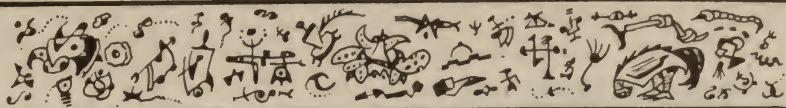
Can the truth be put in words?

Well-I think...



If that was the truth it was a painful truth!



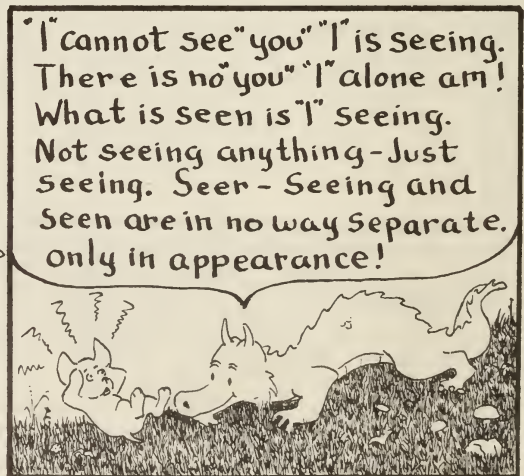
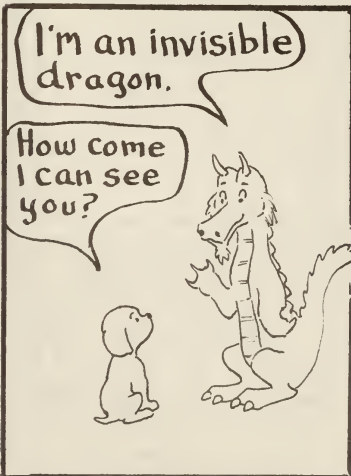
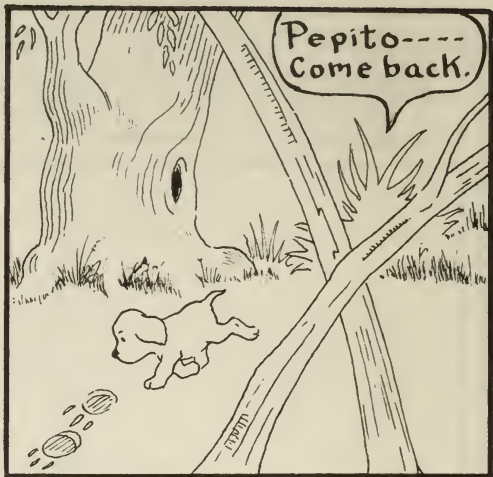


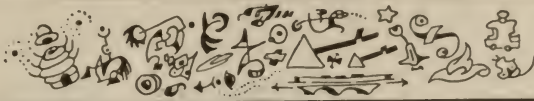
#9

Here, just as Unk says "Well, I think", this process is stopped by the Zen Master's stick. Unk's response to the stick is immediate and without interference from a pseudo-self.

This little sequence clearly demonstrates the problem: ordinarily, we face the Truth (and we are the Truth) and response is through a filter—our pseudo-self. The response reflects our conditioning, our ignorance, our prejudices, and the prajnaic wisdom is screened and hidden. However, this limited and ignorant response is the truth of the moment.

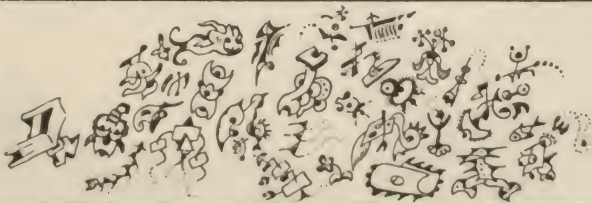


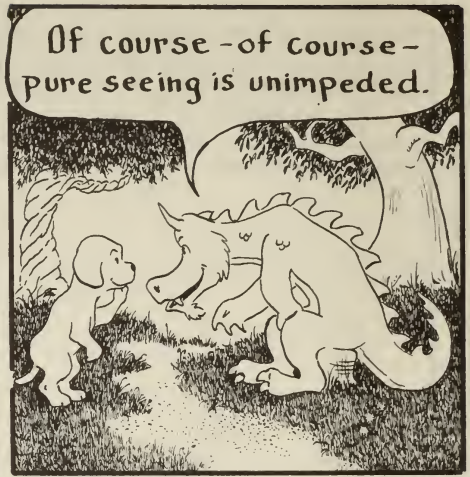




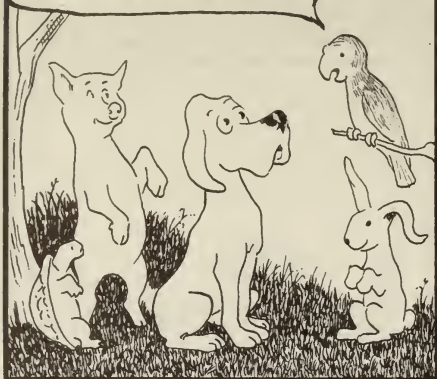
#10

The Dragon speaks of Being in the sense of Mu. In other words, No-thing—Not No-thing. Mind-Only.





Pepito saw a Dragon, what does it look like?



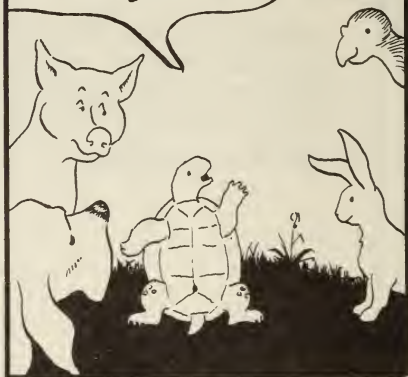
It is huge and scaly with long sharp claws on its feet



It has fierce eyes and enormous jaws with teeth like daggers.

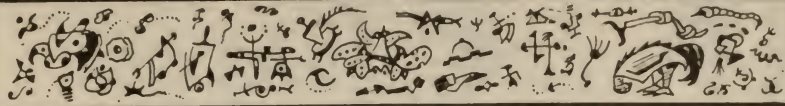


It has a long tail with a fiery spine!



You cannot see a dragon-the Dragon sees-that which appears is this so called "you"





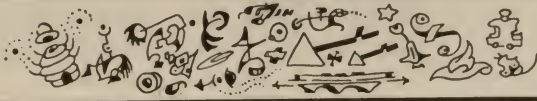
#12

All great Teachings become warped and obfuscated by those who try to define it.

Zen insists that all the description in the world will not reveal the Truth. It is by the Truth that we are revealed. Truth is not just a matter of concepts but includes that which cannot be conceived—more, what can *not* not be conceived.



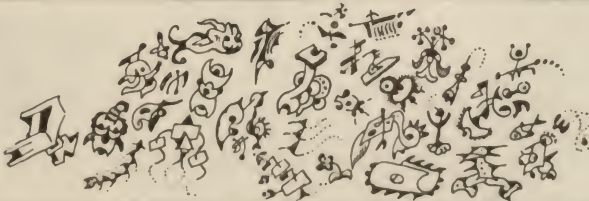


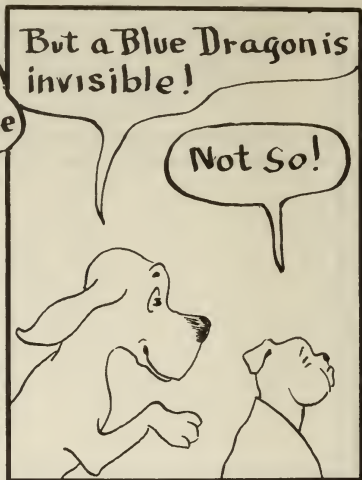


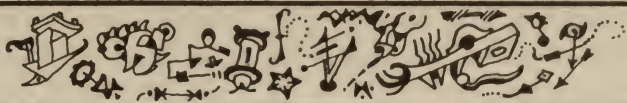
#13

The Western Mind is always looking for tomorrow. The Truth is present now—yet it is sought as if it resides in some mysterious future.

Many do as Unk is doing here. They indulge in activities that are acclaimed as “Seeking for Truth”. Thus, they become “Truth Seekers”. When Truth is projected as elsewhere its presence is never recognized.



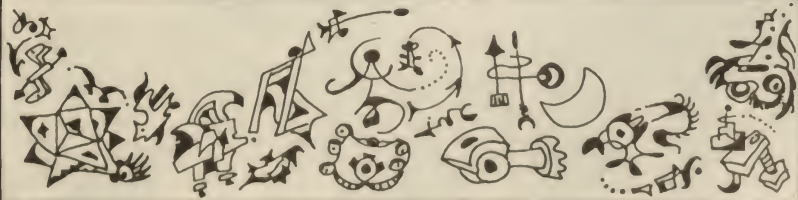




#14

You too, dear reader—simply consider the bulldog's statement: "The absence of the absence of *Is so* and *Is not so*".

P.S. If you came up with an idea—a concept or a conclusion—Unk will welcome you to the Club.



I'm a reporter for I.C.U. press - I'm looking for the Blue Dragon



I want to interview the Blue Dragon-

Gosh-he's invisible-but ask the Zen Master



Pepito says that you can lead me to the Blue Dragon



There is the entrance to the Blue Dragon's Cave

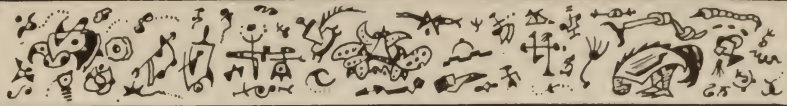


It is said that if one watches that pool long enough the Dragon will be seen!



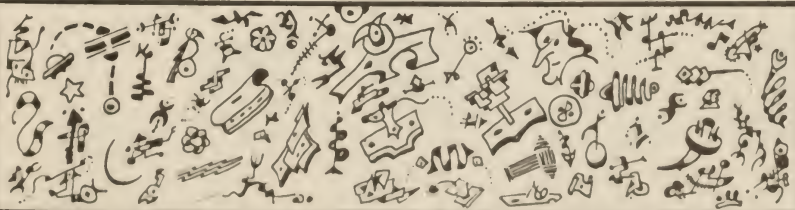
Holy Cats, the Blue Dragon is-- a-- monkey!

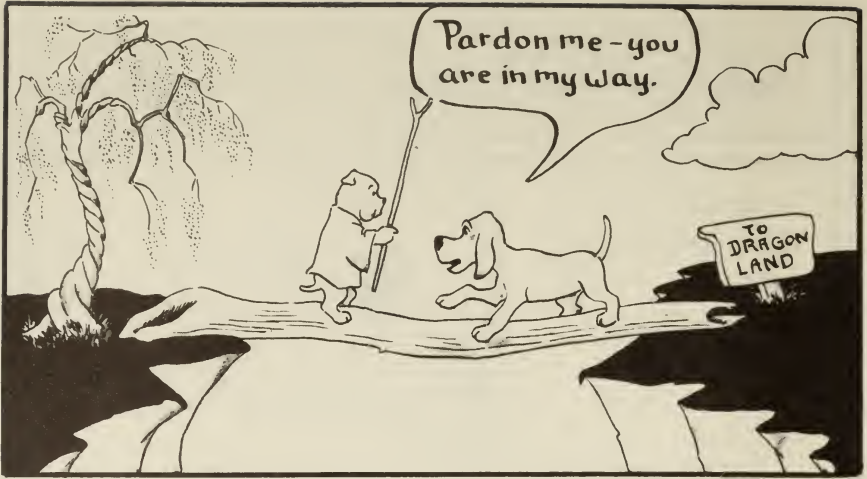


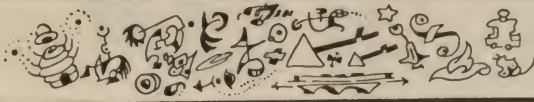


#15

*Don't laugh at the monkey unless you enjoy laughing
at yourself!*







#16

I, the purely subjective, is not a thing and does not travel from place to place.

You, the objective appearance, is not separate from the subjective and what is more cannot initiate individual activity.

What the Zen Master points out is the absurdity of assuming that No-thing can enter into No-thing.





Hey Pepito - guess what?
I found the Blue Dragon's
Cave!

Gosh Unk-did you
see the Dragon?

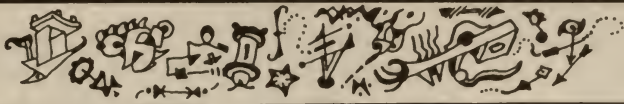


Then how did you know
it was his cave? Did
it have a sign?

No

If it had a sign I
wouldn't believe it -
If it had no sign-then
I'd believe it

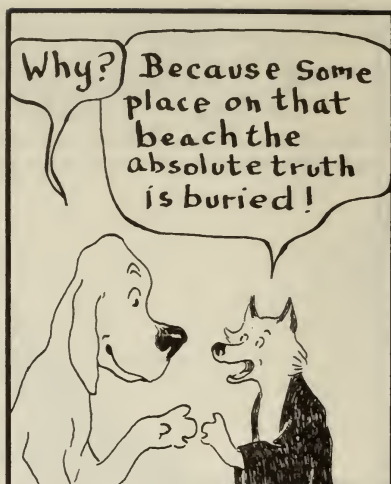


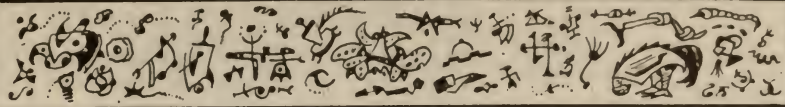


#17

Unconsciously perhaps, Unk has provided us with an excellent Koan. If it is successful for you, the Dragon will be revealed.





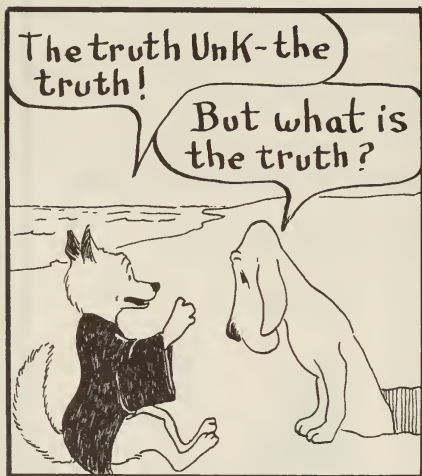
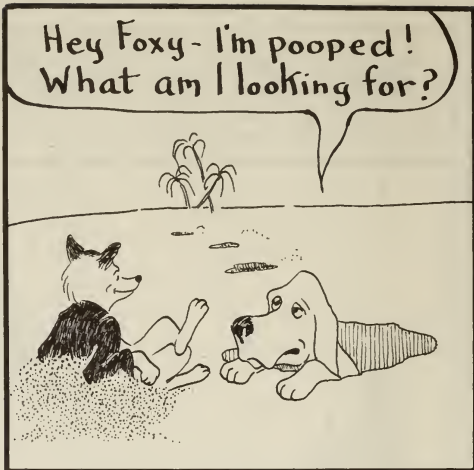
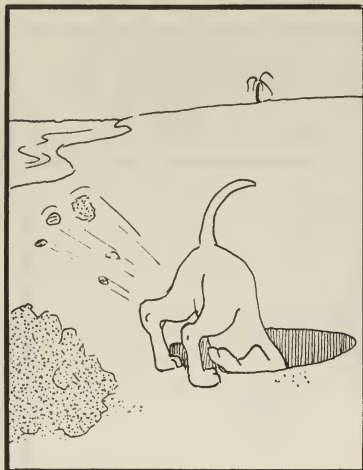


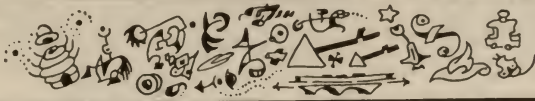
#18

Can the truth be sold? Could either the buyer or seller recognize truth?

Perhaps the truth lies in the transaction itself.



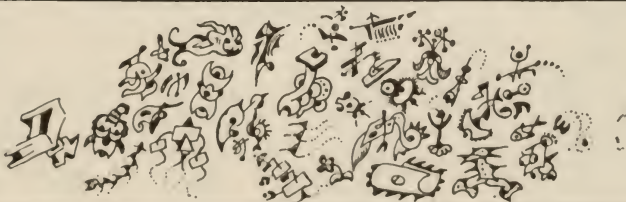


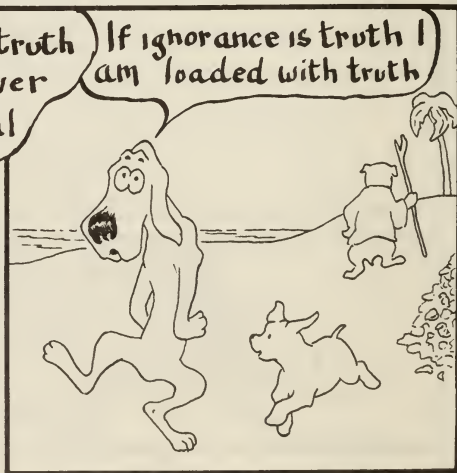
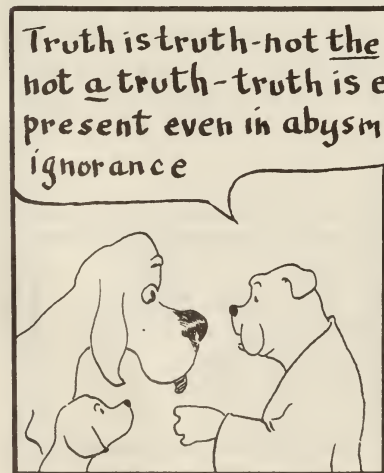
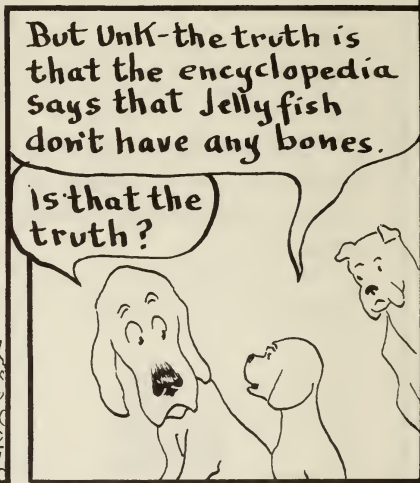
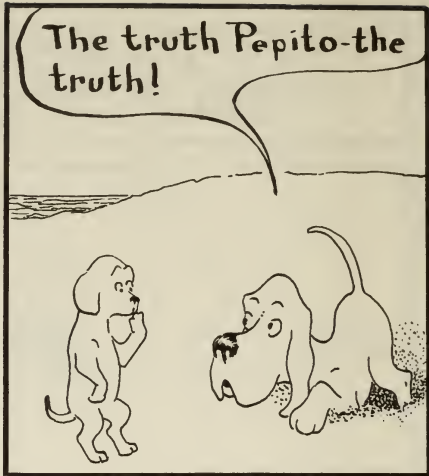


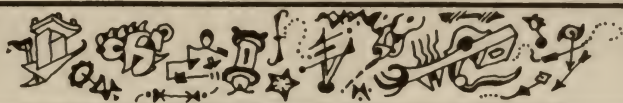
#19

Perhaps Foxy wants to keep Unk digging so that he can continue to collect his \$3.00 per hour. At least he has not tried to give a logical answer as to what Unk is searching for.

Very often truth becomes apparent as a result of sly and devious practices.



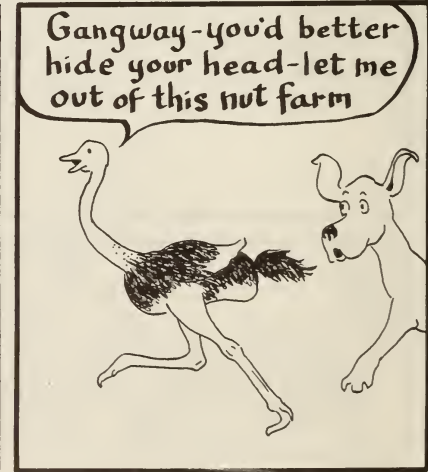
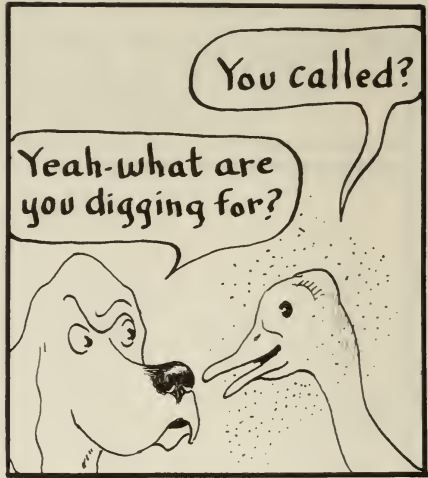


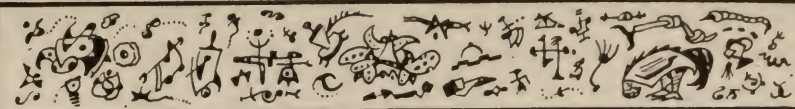


#20

Most of us have a pile within which we hope the truth can be found. The truth is that the truth is never missing even though we miss the truth.







#21

It is readily apparent that Unk is not very good at keeping secrets. But if he did find the truth, he would have to keep it a secret. Not voluntarily of course, but most certainly, he would want to talk about it. And, as he did so, he would obscure it completely with a lather of words.



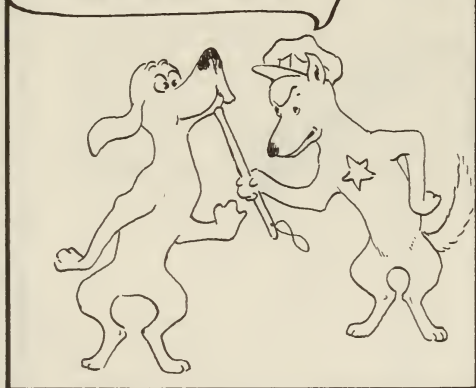
What are you doing here? This beach is private!



I know-I'm paying rent to Ole Foxy!



Foxy-Smoxie-he doesn't own this beach!



Now fill up all those holes you dug and get out!



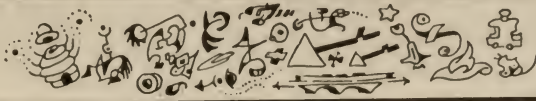
Gosh-I was only digging for Jellyfish bones



What's going on officer?

Oh just some drunk that says he was digging for Jellyfish bones.



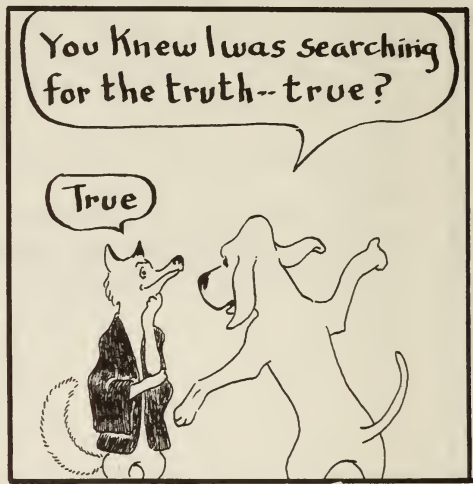
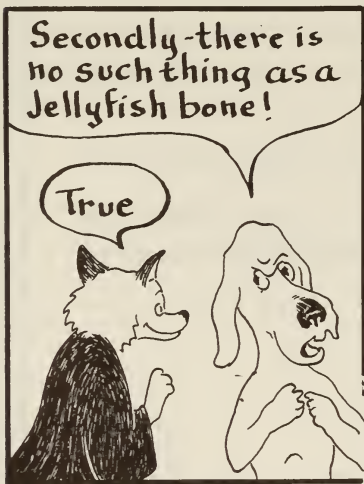


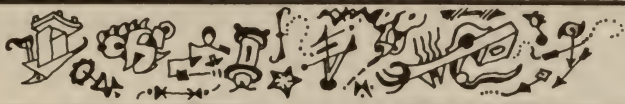
#22

The Truth arrived for Unk in a manner most unexpected.

Usually it is like that. The truth is present whether we look for it or not. Can we recognize it or do we continue to think it is a jellyfish bone?





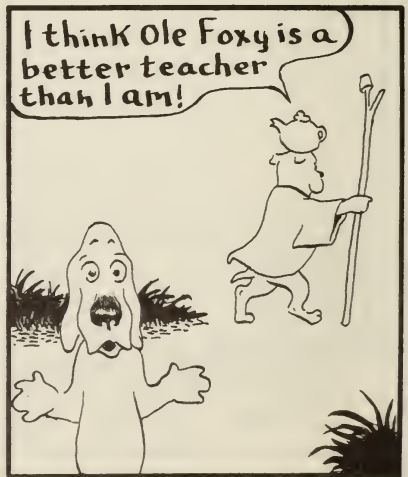


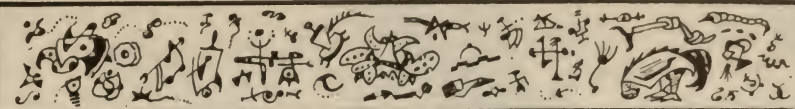
#23

In this world of words even the most blatant acts of chicanery can be made to sound true.

Can this tricky logical mind be transcended in such a way so that its limitations and the infiniteness of the vivifying source are equally present?

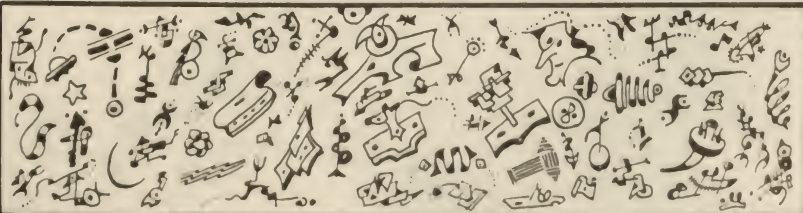


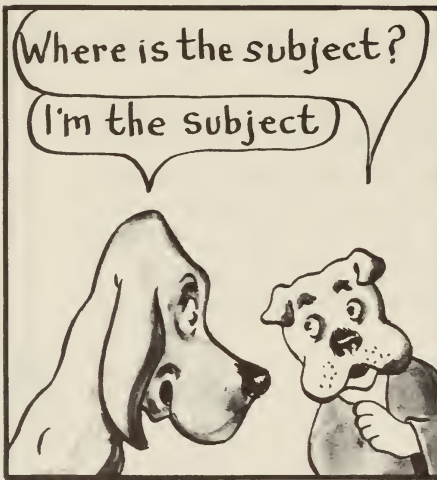


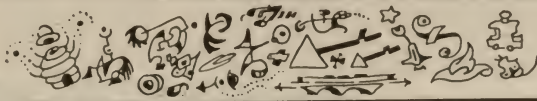


#24

This one is a trap. If you think "Truth" is imperceptible, as is a jellyfish bone, then you have discriminated. Did you choose imperceptible as compared to perceptible?—unknowable as compared to the known?—what is not as compared to what is? Any choice of truth is true but not Truth! If you choose either perceptible or imperceptible then the trap of duality is sprung and you are caught.



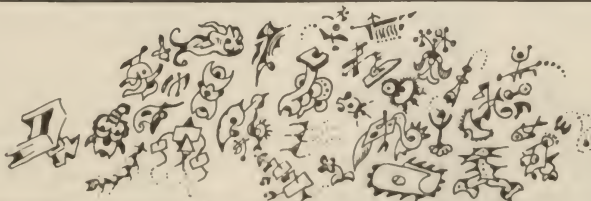




#25

"I", the seer, sees "me" as an object. The subject sees the object, but subject and object are solely aspects of little-mind. Subject is only possible with object, and object is only possible with subject. The two cannot be separated for in fact they are not two.

When subject and object are absent then Unk's "house" is truly full in its infinite Emptiness—the Emptiness of infinite potential.



Gosh Unk--that looks good
Beautiful is the word Pepito --- beautiful!



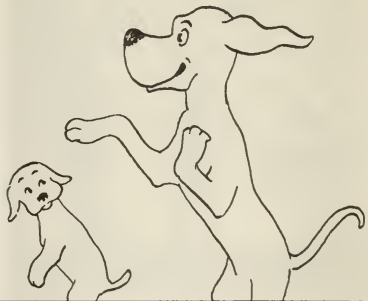
Beauty is everywhere-- look at those mountains.



Look at that beautiful Sky



Such beauty transports me to Secret places in secret worlds

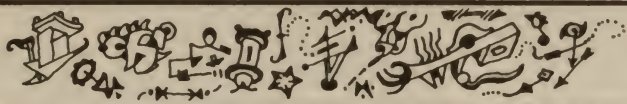


Something's burning!



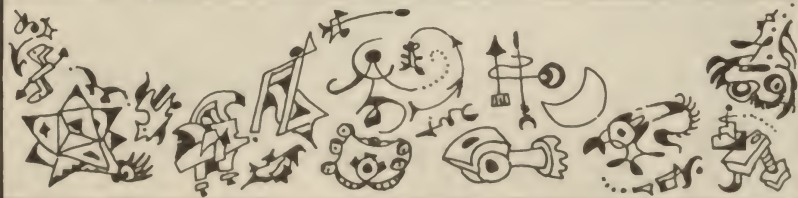
Maybe the secret is to be here in this world--at least the lunch wont burn!

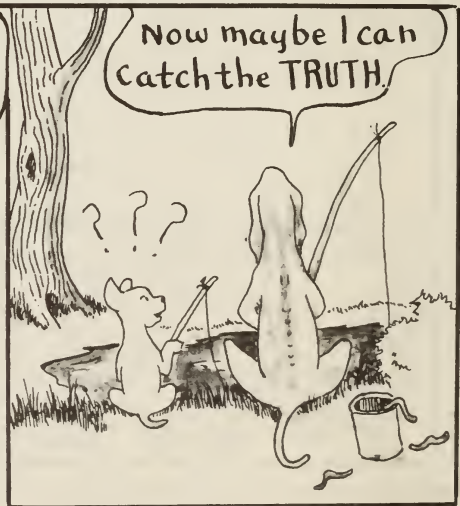
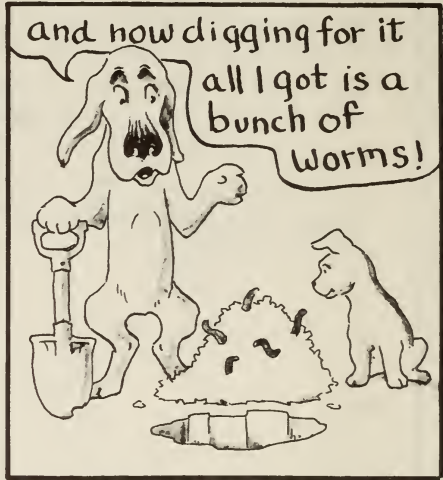
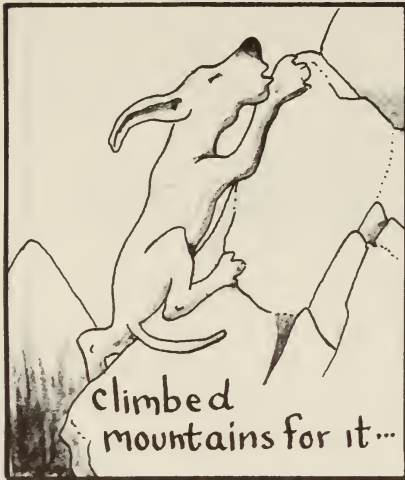


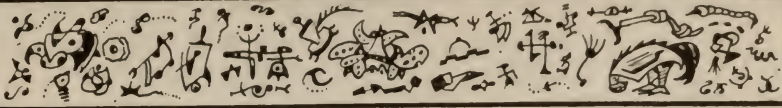


#26

A simple truth here. One cannot find the spiritual heights by abandoning the everyday reality of one's own humanity.



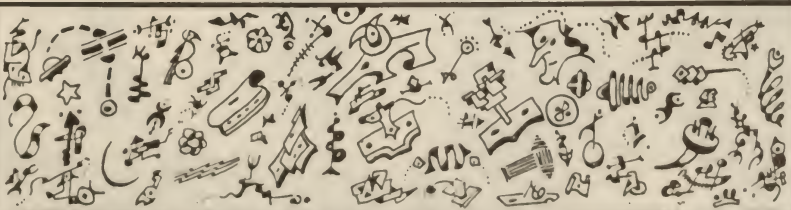




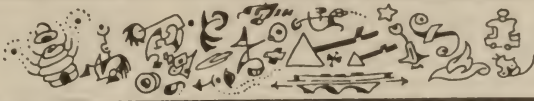
#27

Unk shows here that he is a "Truth Searcher". It follows of course that the illusion persists that the truth is elsewhere. However, Truth is whole, and Unk is an aspect of truth. At present, his incapacity for sensing it is his truth.

It is obvious that Unk is relying on the intellect to find Truth. If only he would let the heart speak—the intuition—he would find what it is to be infinite and holy (whole).





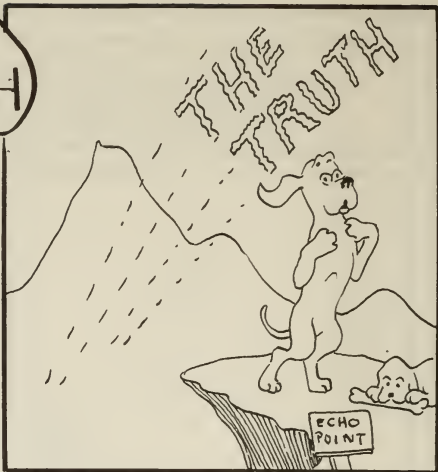


#28

Dreaming goes on and on—but there can be an awareness of the dream.



Pepito-I am determined
to find **THE TRUTH**



The truth is on that
mountain



I'll make it

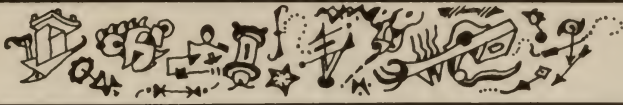


I'll make it!



I made it...but where's
the truth?





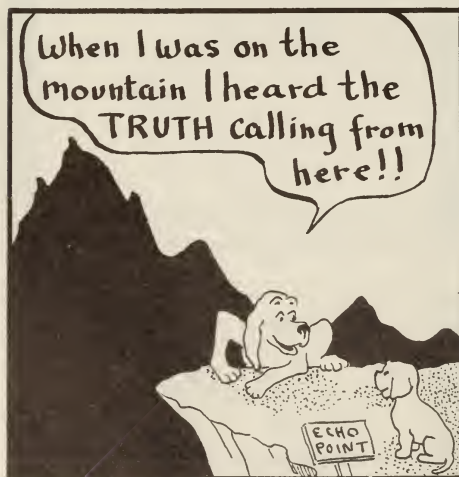
#29

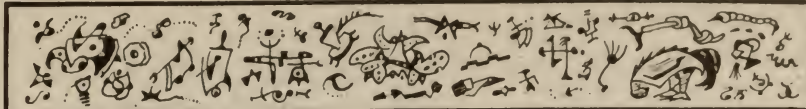
What is the difference between the shout of "Truth" and the hearing of the echo "Truth"?

In the causal world we might say that it is Yang and Yin, or more simply, a willful or positive action and a receptive or negative action. Can we see that the truth of each is simply truth and is in no way separated?

The appearances of a shout, of hearing the echo—Unk running down one mountain and climbing another, his lying exhausted at the top still unable to recognize the truth—was perfect truth ever absent in all of this? Is not Unk's ignorance still perfectly true?



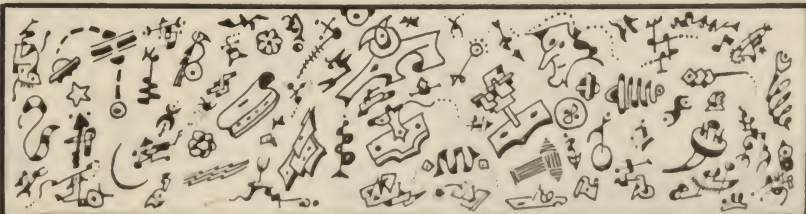


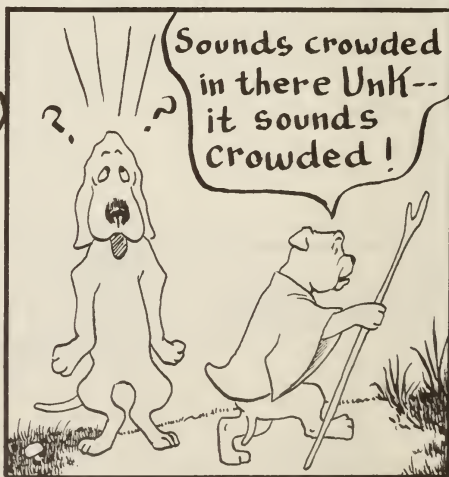


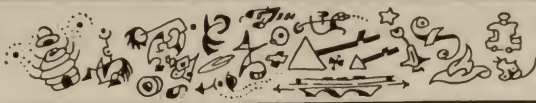
#30

Pepito's answer says much. To Unk, the world appears as a world of objects. He sees himself physically as an object. Psychically, his seeing is a sum total of his conditioning, his concepts. He thinks that this accumulation is his inner self-functioning in an outer or objective world.

The infinite potential, which is the source of Unk as an appearance, is not an object and cannot be seen. So it is that Unk is pursuing an echo. There is only the appearance of an objective self pursuing an objective truth.







#31

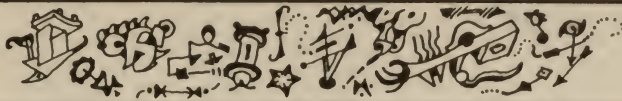
The Old Zen Master indicates the truth but Unk misses the point completely.

Sometimes we speak of "Looking Within". What is being sought when we look within? Can one find oneself?

There is only seeing—no seer—nothing seen.







#32

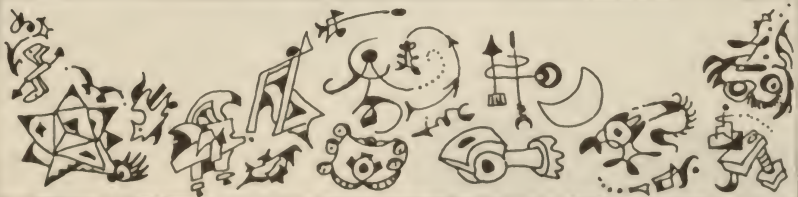
Long ago, a monk asked Joshu: "Does a dog have Buddha nature¹ or not?" Joshu answered: "Mu!" This became one of the most formidable and well known Koans² in the history of Zen.

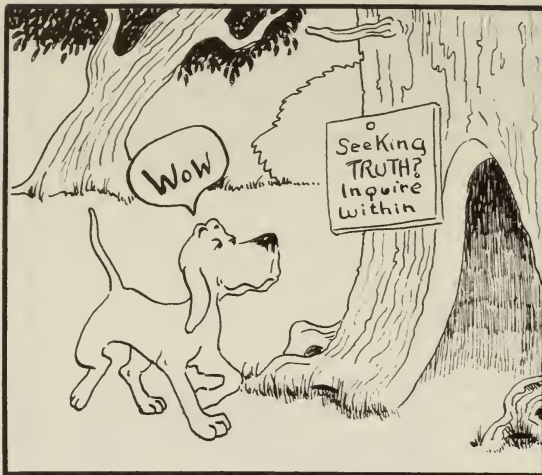
The Zen Masters of old put up barriers of this sort. They could not be passed by using discriminating knowledge. All the accumulations of consciousness were useless in passing through these barriers towards the "Gateless Gate".

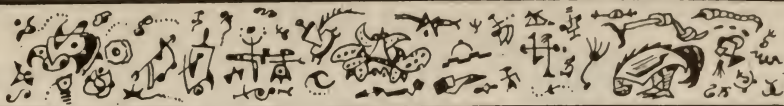
"Mu" can be translated as "No", but better yet, it means "No" in the sense of "No-thing". Since "No-thing" could be described as a specific designation, there is also the aspect of no "No-thing". There is no yes or no, only their mutual negation.

One cannot see Mu—one must be Mu!

-
1. Buddha Nature; The noumenal aspect of a sentient being.
 2. Koan: An exercise for the mind that demands an intuitive answer. The Koan by its very nature is unanswerable in logical terms.







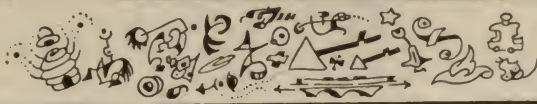
#33

Unk has always maintained that he seeks the truth. Many of us do as Unk does. We engage in various pursuits that are supposed to reveal the truth. These pursuits however are our way of avoiding truth. We really do not want to find it—we simply want to pursue it. The thought of full and absolute Truth fills us with misgivings.

However, no matter what Unk does, the Truth will be fully present. *Even Unk's inability to face the truth is the truth*—it is ever present!



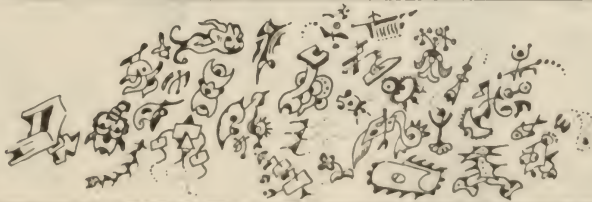




#34

For many of us, life is a constant effort to be what we are not. It is a constant effort to reflect upon the world the image of what we think we are. In this case then, life is a series of emotional responses that range from happiness to deep despair—from love to hatred—from calmness to purterbation.

With the “Whack!” of the stick, Unk responded directly. No conditioned response, no pseudo-Self fulfilling an image—the Truth of Unk spoke out for just a flash . . . directly!



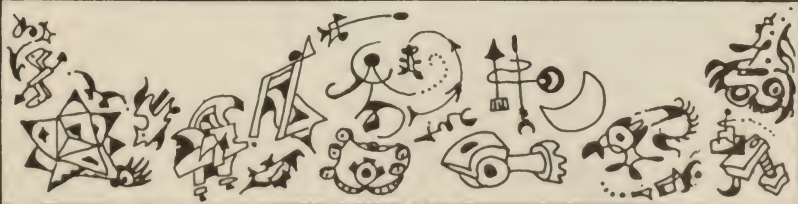


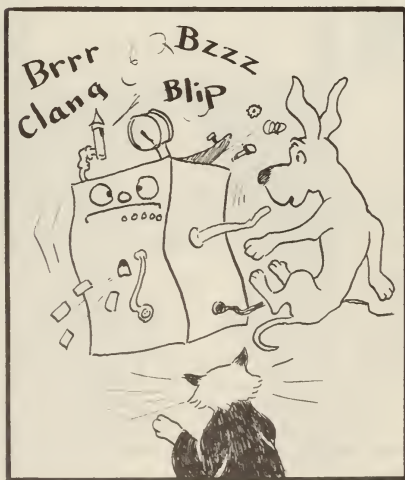
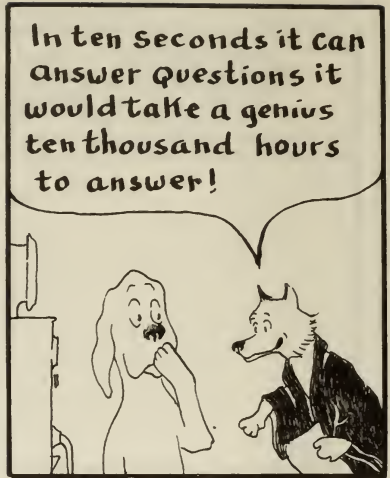
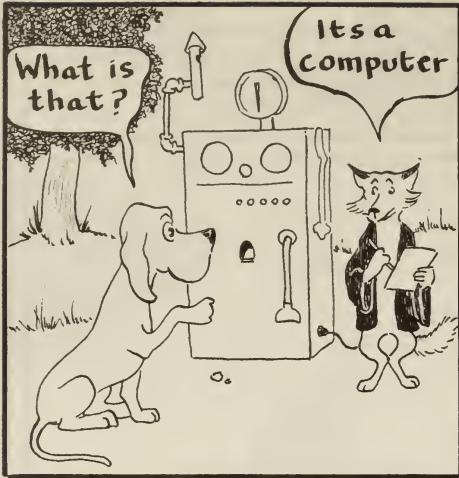


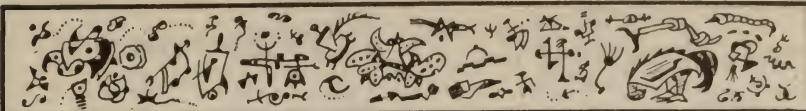
#35

Unk is living in the truth every moment. However, he is doing so unconsciously, and so the Zen Master's statement is pertinent. When Unk (who is an aspect of truth) functions in the world (truth), he is not aware of the truth and so the Zen Master's statement is correct.

If Unk could function in the truth consciously, his search would end. Truth is not elsewhere. We are the truth. So if we travel the world over in search of truth, when it is recognized it will be seen to be where it always was from the beginning.







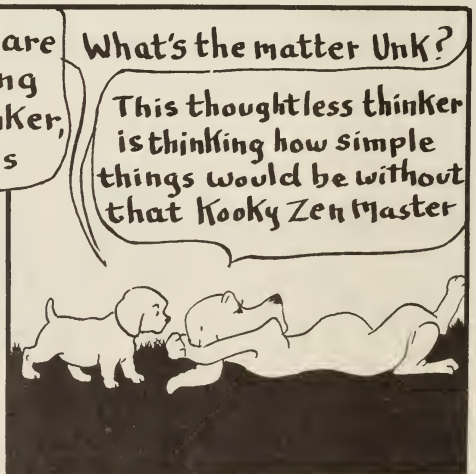
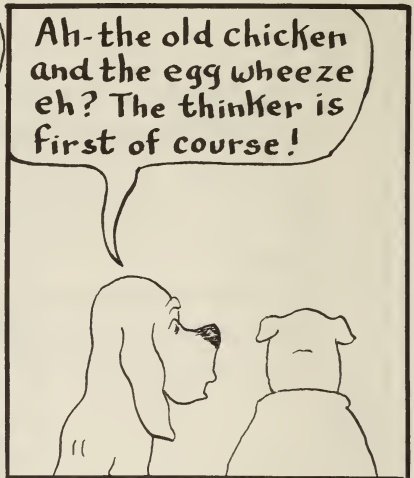
#36

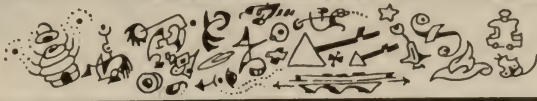
Unk asked for the Absolute Truth. Could even the most sophisticated computer contain the infinite?

All words are tools with which the discriminations within the finite world are expressed. Words by their very nature (that of describing or naming) are forms of limitation.

We can indicate that there must be something beyond limit in order for the limited to be. To try and describe the unlimited with limited terms is an exercise in futility.







#37

No comment needed here—Can you think it out?



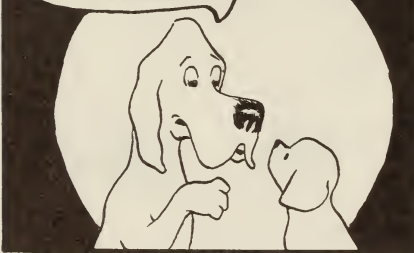
I'm discouraged-I think I'll give up this Search for Truth.



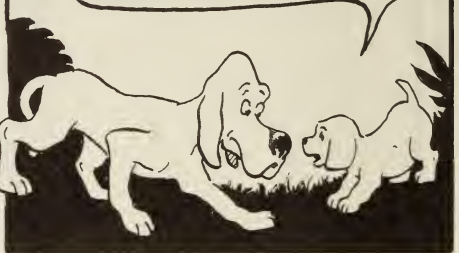
Maybe you are the Truth Unk!



But I am ignorant and stupid. How can I be the Truth? I want to be WISE!



Wise and stupid- truth and ignorance, are these not your "Ideas" Unk?



I intend to separate the true from the false.



Ah-you already consider yourself "All wise"





#38

With Unk's limited vision, could he see the "Whole" truth? Is not the Whole Truth present even though he cannot see it?



I'm looking for a Zen Master that can point out the truth!



So point pipsqueak or I will crush you like a bug!



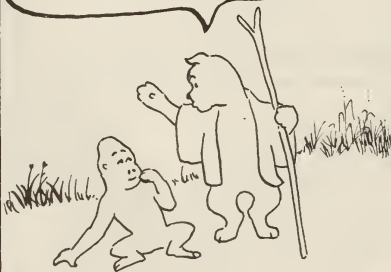
Are you sure you are ignorant?



To know one is ignorant would require knowing the truth perhaps?



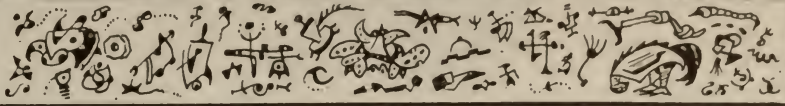
Who is this great omnipotent gorilla that can tell ignorance from non-ignorance?



The truth shrinks the ego Pepito.

How did that happen?

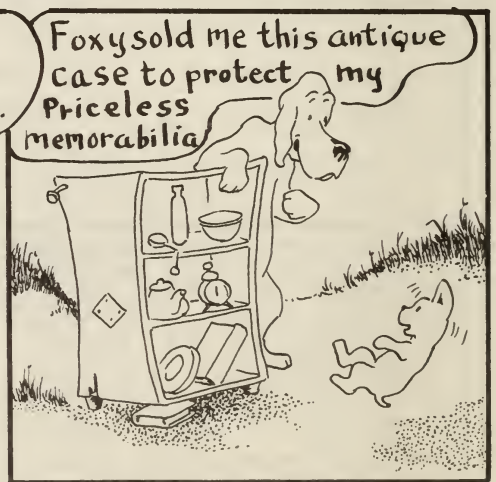
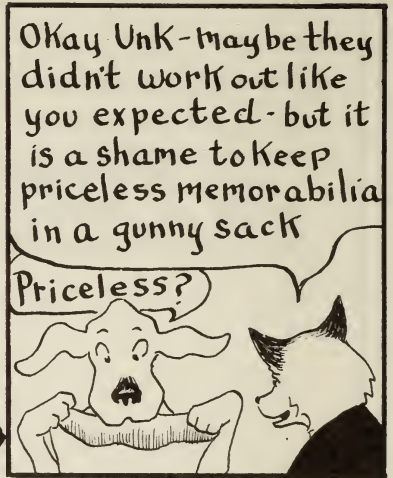


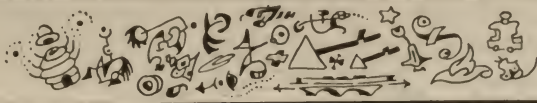


#39

As the truth becomes apparent, the ego diminishes.
As the ego diminishes, the infiniteness of what is
becomes more apparent.



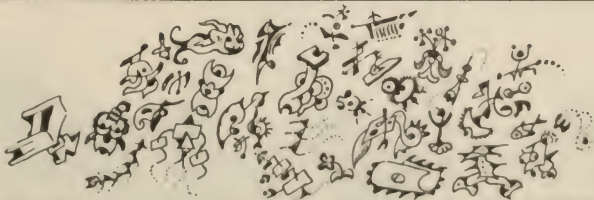




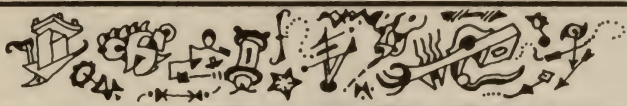
#40

Unk has tried many times to buy the truth. The truth is, he has always been victimized by the Old Fox. Unk's gullibility is endless and Foxey is well aware of it.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves: "Are we as vulnerable as Unk is in our search?"





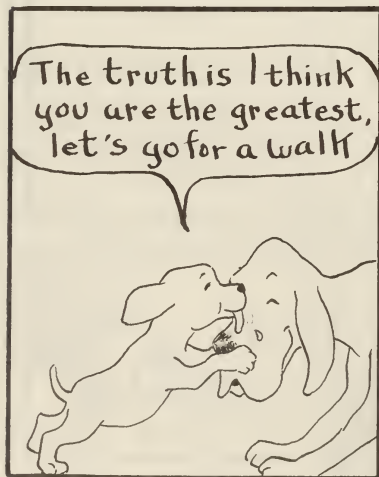


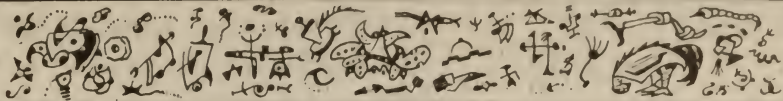
#41

Each moment in this world of appearances is a moment of truth. The truth is wholly present but our vision is limited (and this is truth).

Once again Pepito points directly at it.



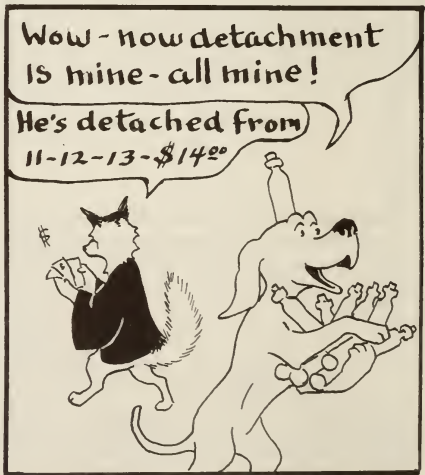
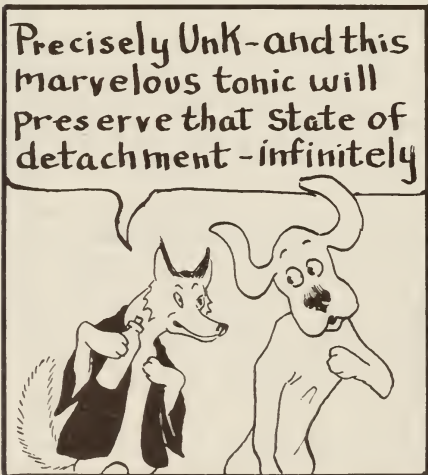
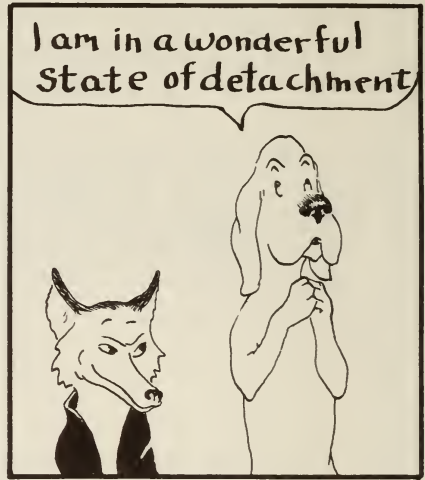


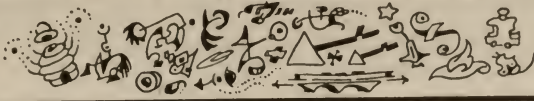


#42

The truth is that any search for truth must be conducted within our humanity. It must be found through our human-ness and not some pretended transcendence. The truth is whole and our human-ness cannot be excluded.







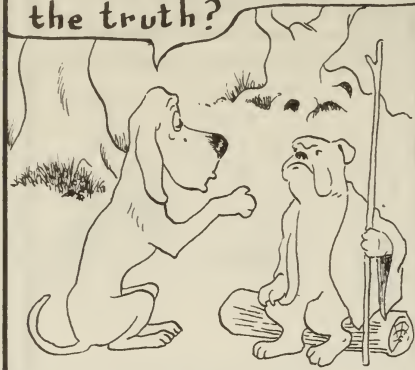
#43

"I" cannot have or possess the truth, nor can "I" possess detachment. If one were truly detached, there would be no need to speak of it.

Here Unk's pride in his detachment proves his own undoing. Once again he is successfully maneuvered by Foxy.



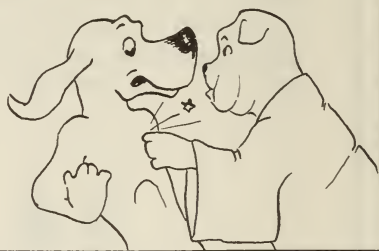
You say words are deceptive, All I am is seeing
do any words approach
the truth? when I see!



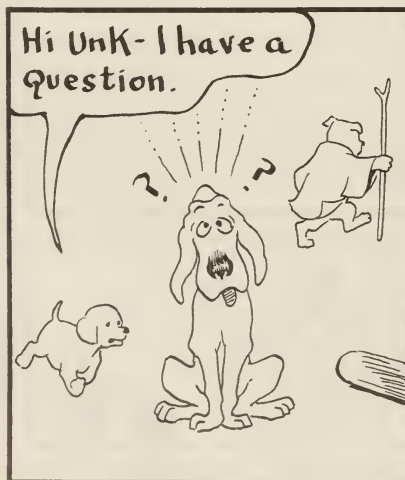
All I am is hearing when
I hear



All I am is feeling when
I feel - All I am is
understanding when I
understand.



Hi Unk- I have a
question.



Forget it! All I am is
stupidity when I'm
stupid!





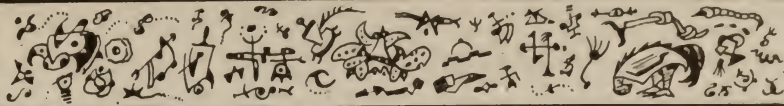
#44

The Old Zen Master is trying to point out to Unk that there is no seer and object seen. Unk's perception of himself is a group of sensory reports consolidated in memory as a concept. Unk has a concept of what he thinks he is.

Unk's statement to Pepito is a statement of truth.







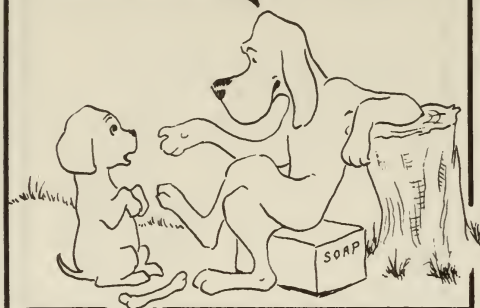
#45

One of the first things that many of us discover when we try to meditate is that our minds are very active. We are constantly talking to ourselves in our heads. Even more, we are filled with emotional turbulence that keeps our thoughts constantly moving. We think of ourselves as having free will but as we try to meditate we soon discover that thoughts occur as if from nowhere. Even when we have a specific practice for our meditation, we find it is constantly being interrupted by extraneous thoughts.

Some of us try to drown the inner noise by using outer noise. Much of modern society's addiction to the frenetic and raucous activities of our "Now" society is no doubt attributable to the effort to cover inner disturbance by immersion in outer disturbance.



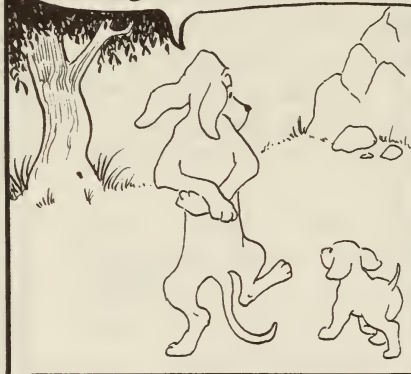
This search for truth is difficult Pepito---



First you have to truly know that you don't know the truth.



When you truly know that then you have the truth!



But that truth is not the whole truth and so it is not true.

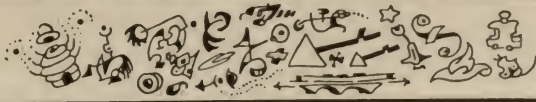


So if the truth you know is not true how can you truly seek the truth?



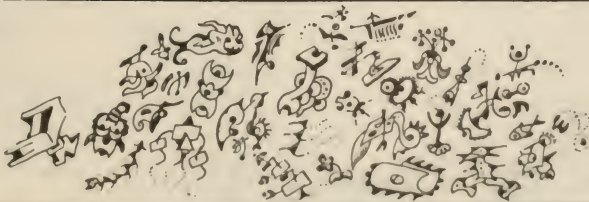
This bone is delicious!

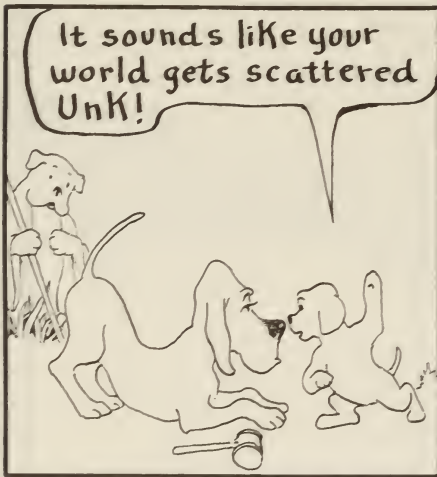


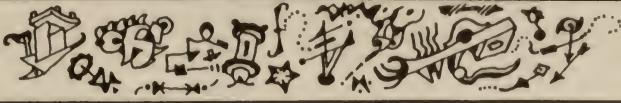


#46

If one can follow what Unk is saying, it seems to make sense. If one can "Know" the significance of what Pepito is saying, the need for searching for truth will be seen for the joke that it really is.

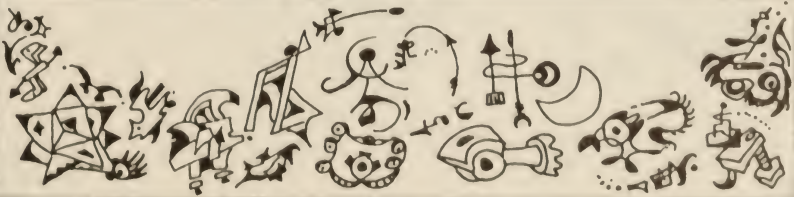


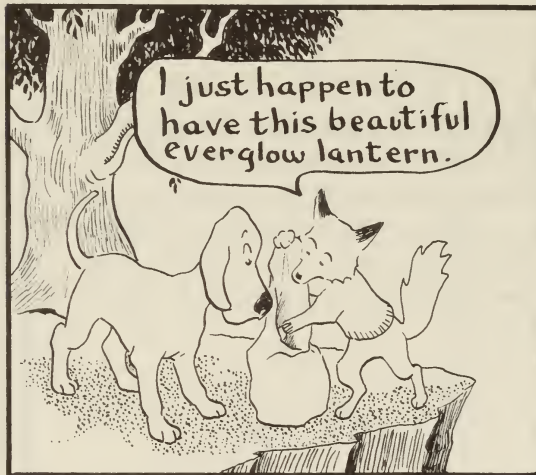


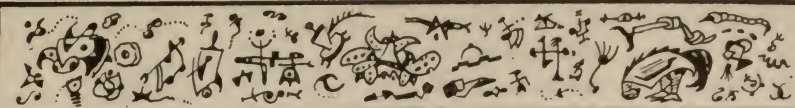


#47

Before we laugh at Unk for his foolish diversion, it might serve us well to look at our own activities. Much of modern society is busy hitting itself over the head, so to speak. Maybe this is done to divert attention from the truth of itself. To many, no doubt, the truth is even more painful than the foolish injuries they do to themselves in trying to avoid it.







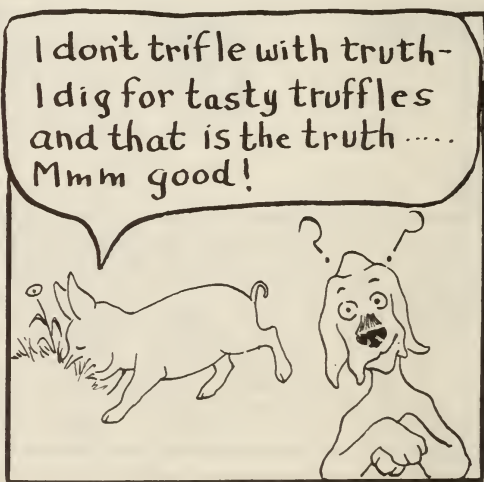
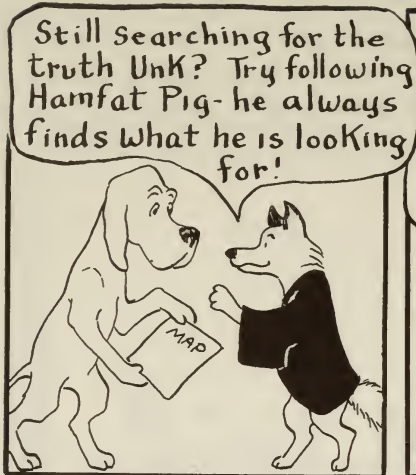
#48

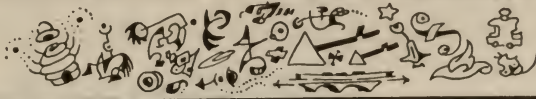
Intemporality is often called the Dharmakaya, the Absolute, the Kingdom of Heaven, Dhyana, Buddha Nature, and so forth.

Even though the word is undoubtedly incorrect, let us refer to the above as the Essence. Temporality is present as a result of Prajna, which we can think of as a "function of Essence". With this prajnaic function of the Essence, temporality is present and the world of phenomena appears.

Prajna then is like light, with which of course "no-light" cannot be found. In other words, much of our seeking is futile because it is phenomena looking for non-phenomena, or light searching for dark.







#49

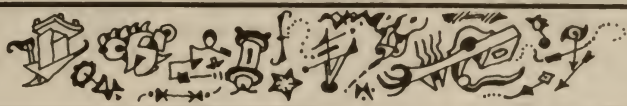
Hamfat is a wise pig. He does not philosophize on the truth, and he has a nose for what he considers the truth—Truffles!

In order to find Truffles, Hamfat must ignore all other objects. He must ignore other truths in order to isolate his truth.

We should remember that we are as Hamfat is, and that our nose for truth can only locate truth as we consider it to be. In other words, we seek Truffles and not the whole truth.







#50

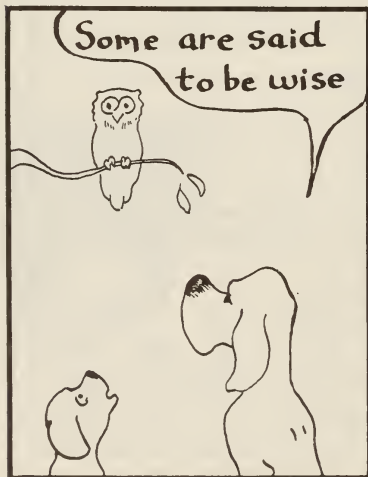
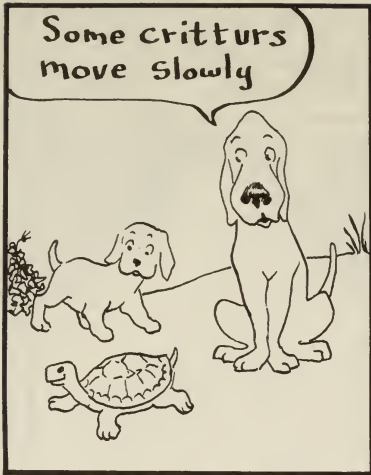
Unk thinks the truth is "Out There". The truth is that Unk has never seen "Out There". The "Out There" is only an appearance in Unk's mind. Even Unk is only an appearance in Unk's mind.

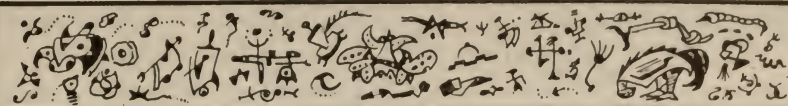
Unk has never seen an object of any kind, but only the images that appear in his mind. Does Unk see the image or is there only imaging?

Unk as an appearance is an object—can an object see? What of the subject that sees the object? Are subject and object really separated? Is there only appearance and nothing more?

Pepito provides us with a clue in his simple statement: "This bone is Delicious!"







#51

When we undertake to describe the world with words, sooner or later we trap ourselves. Pepito humorously points this out to Unk.



I shall no longer buy from you.



I am now a sales person - henceforth I get money instead of paying it out.



Hooray-hooray-free at last! I'm on my way to riches!

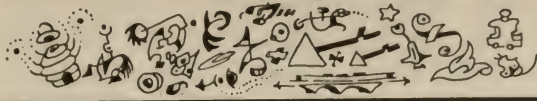


Hey Unk wait-I want to Congratulate you on your wise decision.



Look at these great bargains Pepito-Ole fox decided to quit business and he sold me his inventory - Cheap!

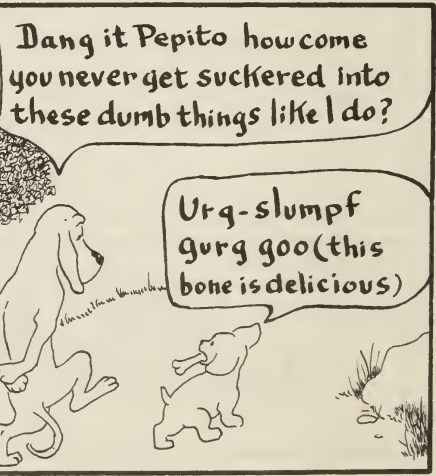
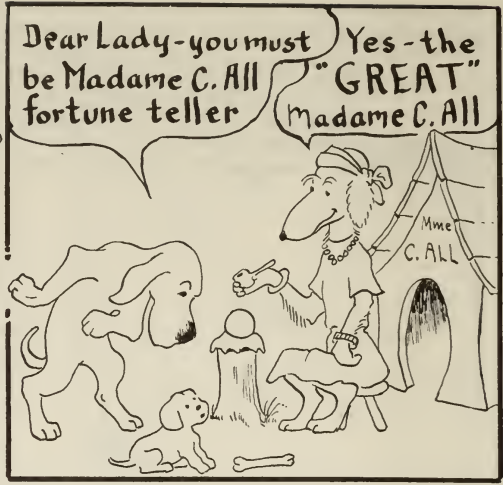


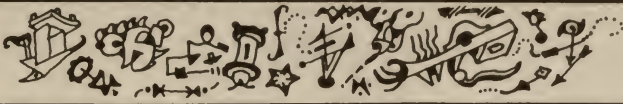


#52

Unk thinks he is liberated. He thinks that he has something to "sell" to the world. The more he thinks he is free, the more he is captive of the enticements proffered by the wiley fox.





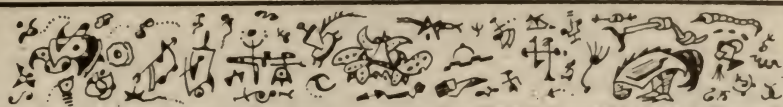


#53

No matter how wise "Madame C. All" may be, she cannot put the Whole Truth in words. If she is clairvoyant and can see into the future and into the past, that seeing is subject to the same limited interpretation provided to her ordinary sight. If she thinks there is a seer and something seen, she is as deluded as Unk is.







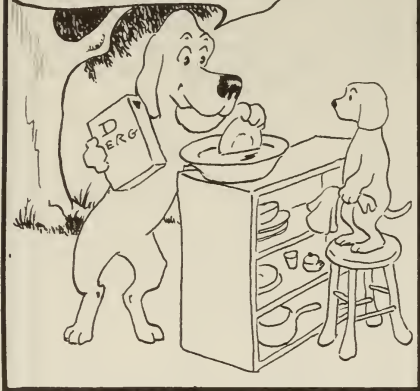
#54

Unk thinks he must find the truth (Enlightenment) in the arid and dry aspects of little mind. He persists in the belief that he is a separate personality capable of exercising his intellect to discover Truth.

The Zen Master is pointing out that the truth (Enlightenment) is noumenal and cannot be sought as a phenomena.



This new detergent is said to be the best.



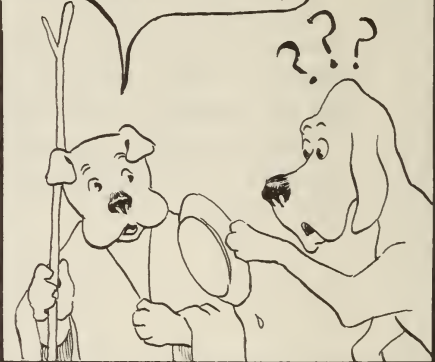
It is great, I can see my reflection in this plate!



Hi Unk - You say you see your reflection?



Which is more real your face or its reflection?

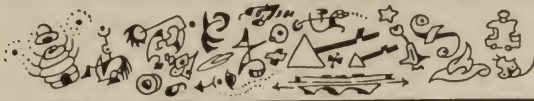


What a dumb question - my face of course!



You have just affirmed that the reflection is more real to you.

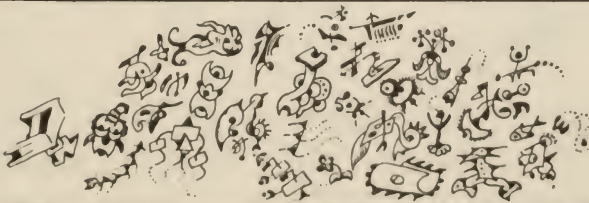




#55

Unk's face and its reflection are each real. Both are just images in Mind-Only. As such they are Mu.¹ Unk can easily see that his reflection is no-thing, but his face seems solid and its Mu-ness eludes him.

1. Mu: no thing—not no thing.



I promise to liberate all those that follow me!



You wish to speak to the Great Liberator?

Yeah-what's the net used for?



It is used like this.



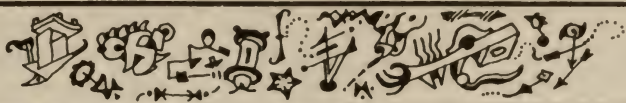
But you just captured him - you the Great Liberator

I'll Sue



How could I liberate him if first I didn't capture him?





#56

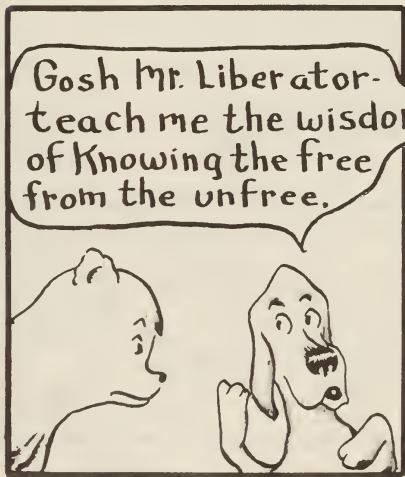
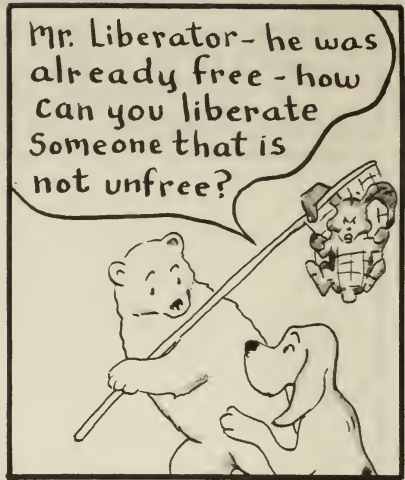
The world is full of "Great Liberators".

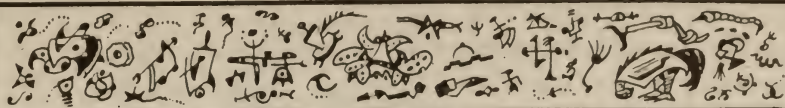
The word of the liberators is not much different from Foxy's world. Foxy sells his cure alls, after which you are free to go on your way. The "Liberators" hold you in a system, a practice, and they re-condition you—you exchange one set of illusions for another. They promise to exchange your "lower self" for a "higher self".

No matter how profound their philosophy, no matter how well intentioned their aim, *they cannot free anyone*, no matter whether their method is careful intellectualism or chaotic abandonment. No one frees anyone, for no objective person exists. There is mind only—seeing¹—just seeing and no seer.

1. Imaging—as it arises from whatever sensory source.







#57

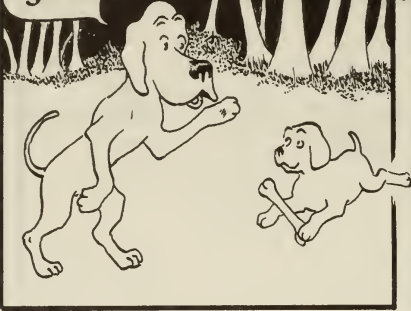
Here the "Great Liberator" is quite honest. It is true that he cannot impart wisdom to anyone. Wisdom manifests inwardly.

Other (seemingly) objective beings may seem to be a part of the (seemingly) objective world. All such activity is an activity of Mind-Only.

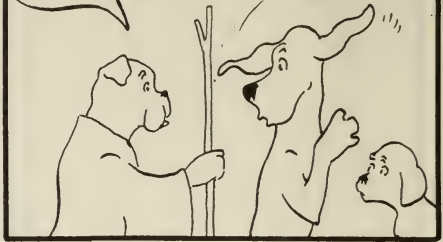
No matter how the Great Liberator appears to Unk to behave, the appearance is only an activity in what is generally designated as Unk's mind. Wisdom could be present when the limitations flake off. In other words, when the realization is present in Unk that Unk has no objective reality (no object—no subject), then Prajna (Wisdom) functions without illusion.



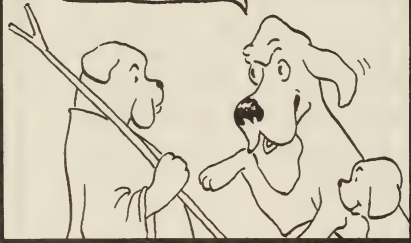
Hey Pepito-watch out
for the Great Liberator,
he may try to capture
you!



Don't worry about
Pepito Unk--the Great
Liberator can't catch
him.



How Can you say that?
he just caught Bunny
Flash--the freest and
the fastest rabbit in
the forest!



Just the point Unk--
he catches the free
and the unfree!

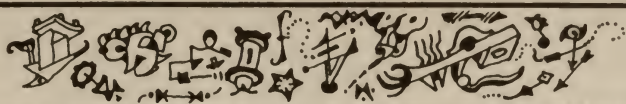


but Pepito is neither free
or unfree



This bone is
delicious

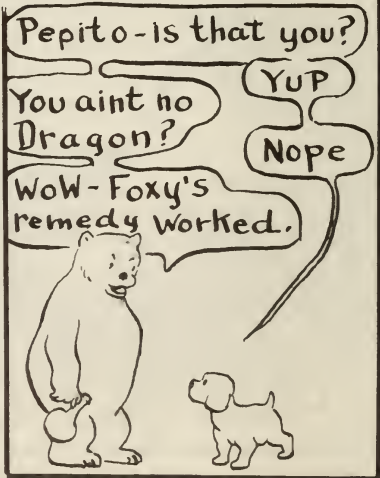
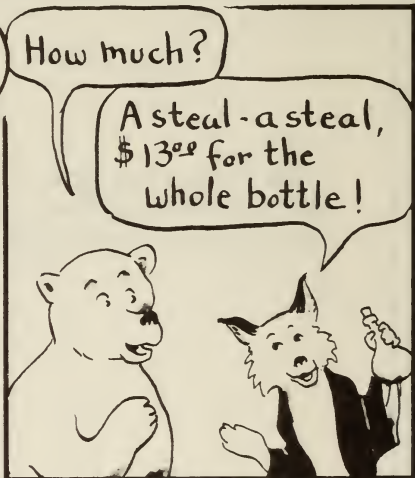
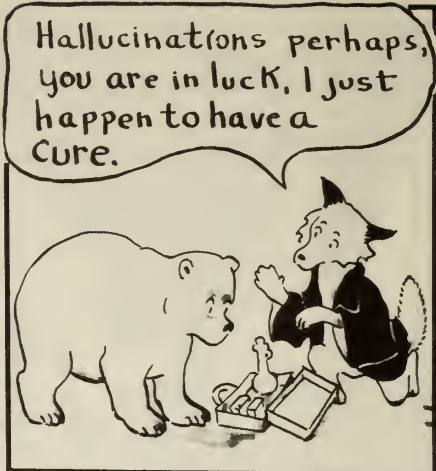


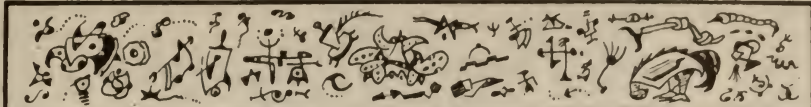


#59

The Dragon presents the Great Liberator with an ancient and honored Koan. When this Koan is a success, then even the Dragon will do him obeisance.



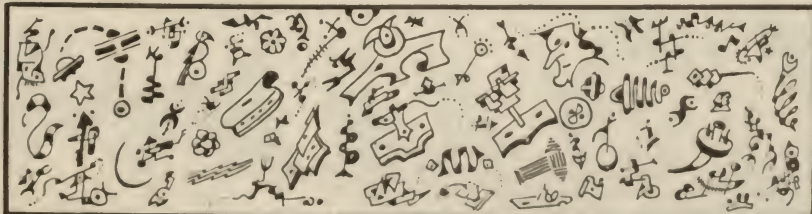


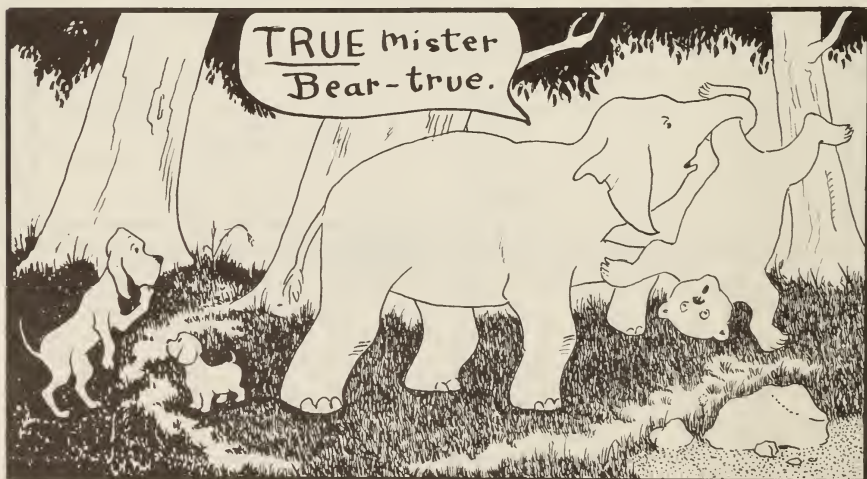
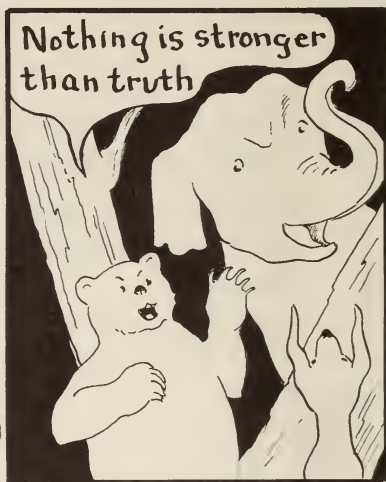


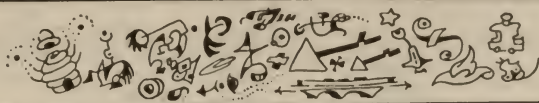
#60

If we saw the truth (the Dragon), might we not think we were hallucinating? We can accept innumerable partial truths, logical (mis)conceptions, and outright frauds, yet one moment of infinite Truth would no doubt be thought to be some form of mental aberration.*

*How many of us have a sense of the intuitive?



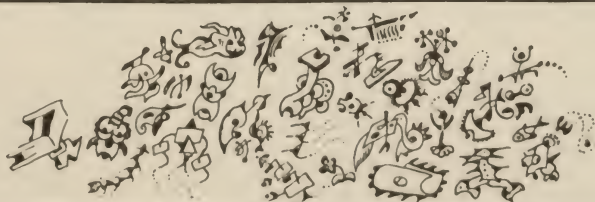




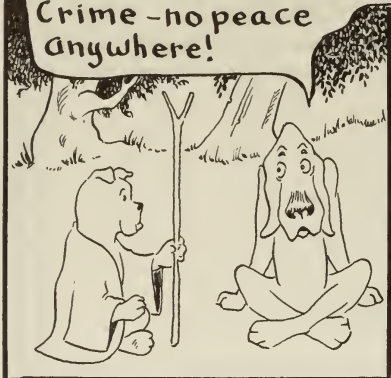
#61

Here the Great Liberator exposes his ignorance. There is no greater Truth or lesser truth. Truth is without limits. Yet ordinary mind is aware in a limited way. The appearances—the images that occur in the ordinary mind—are true in their uniqueness but not in the sense that they truly reflect an “Outer World”.

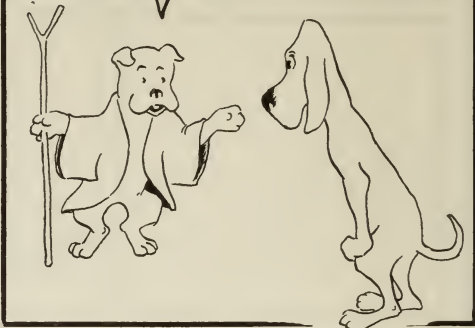
The Liberator with all his egotism, his arrogance, his pride and his boasting is inseparable from Truth—is Truth—and he cannot escape it.



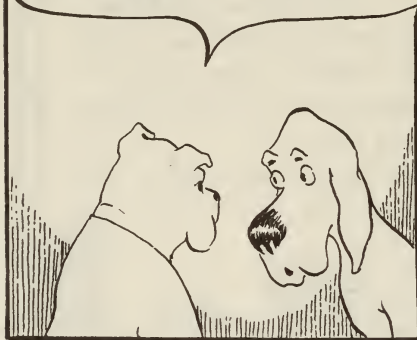
I'm worried - the world is full of violence and Crime - no peace anywhere!



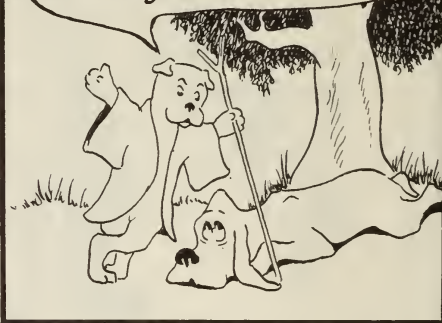
Unk, my teachings had one aim.



They were designed to strip away the clings that create turmoil.



Once true seeing is present there is peace and tranquility no matter where you are!

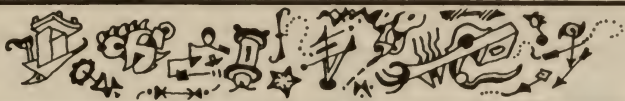


Remember - peace is a state of being - not a place or a practice.



WOW - now to find a peaceful place to practice being!



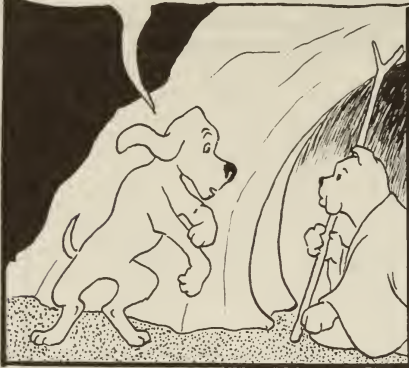


#62

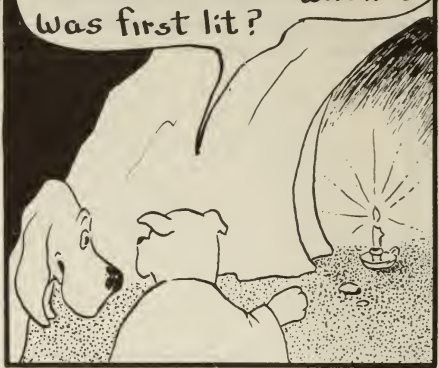
The Zen Master should know better than to try to explain his teachings. Unk in his ignorance responds in his usual ignorant manner. Before you judge Unk (or the Zen Master), ask yourself if you have ever played either role.



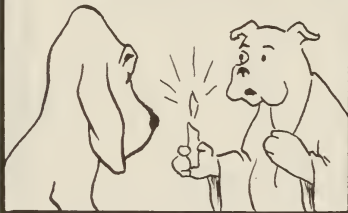
You told me I am no-thing
but look at me - I'm solid!



See the candle UnK-is
that the same flame
that was there when it
was first lit?



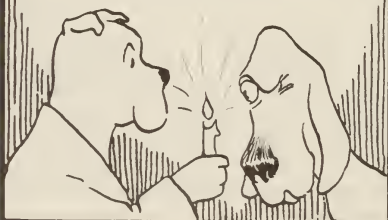
Is not a flame
an ever changing
Process?



You are like that flame -
ever changing. You do not
exist as a permanent being...

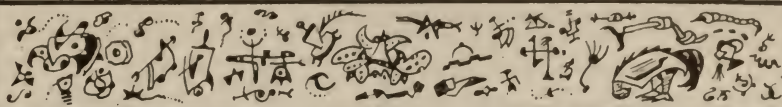


..nor an impermanent
being - Just consciousness
of change!



C'mon Pepito let's take a
walk - the Zen Master
burns me up and I need
a change of consciousness!





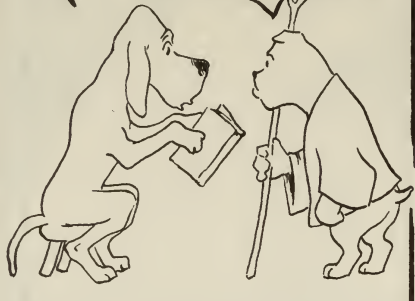
#63

The Buddha himself used the flame as an example of the appearance of constancy amid continuous change.



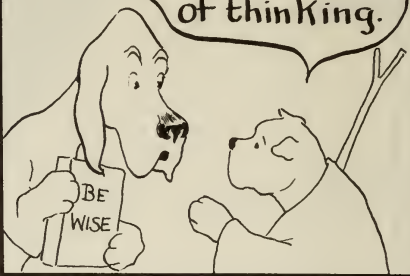
What is supremewisdom?

It is not a subject of thought!



But I have got to know!

It is beyond anyones power of thinking.



Wait! Can't you say something about Truth?

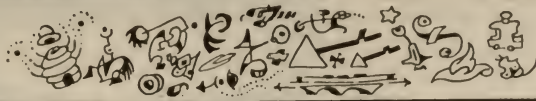


The "Truth" is a bald mans comb!



Hi Pepito-I'm on my way to find out if Ole Foxy has any hair restorer.



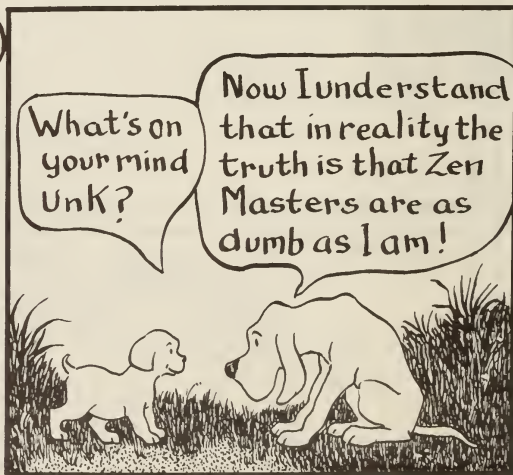
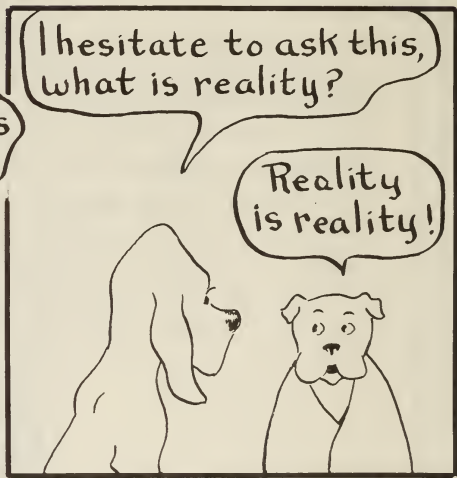


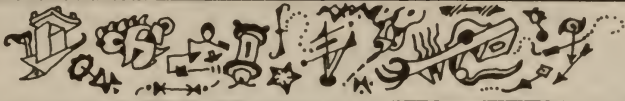
#64

"The truth is a bald man's comb" is a Koan. This is one of the barriers used by Zen Masters to deter seekers from resorting to logic for ultimate answers. Unk immediately seeks to bring about a condition where logic can prevail. Once again he has missed the point, and is willing to put himself at the mercy of Ole Foxy in an effort to establish the impossible.

Can you solve the Koan without placing your confidence in a "Hair restorer"?





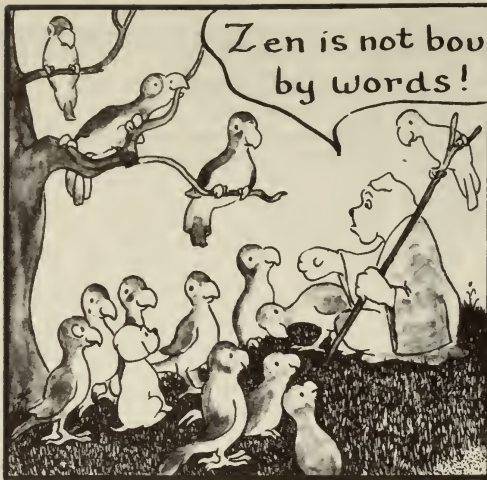


#65

Definitions are by their nature a form of limitation. A definition says that within certain limits the form and nature of something designated can be found. It can also be said that something is formless and its nature not known. This too is definition and it imposes certain conceptual limits on the subject matter. To say it is formless rules out the field of form, and so, limitation is imposed.

The Zen Master gave the only possible answer in words, but Unk tries to digest it mentally and not intuitively. Of course, any word is the "Truth", but not by definition.





Zen is not bound by words!



Zen is life.



"You" cannot see but there is seeing.

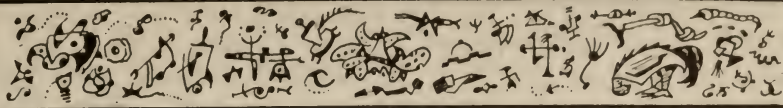


Zen must be lived... yet most of you can only say "I talk zen".



ITALK ZEN

This bone is delicious.



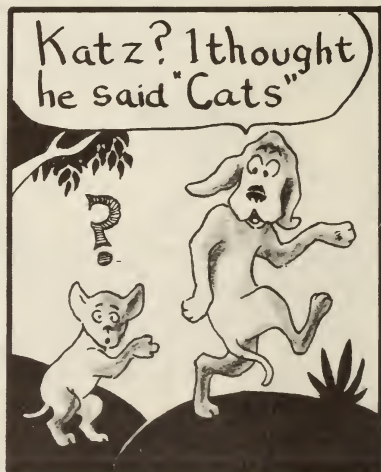
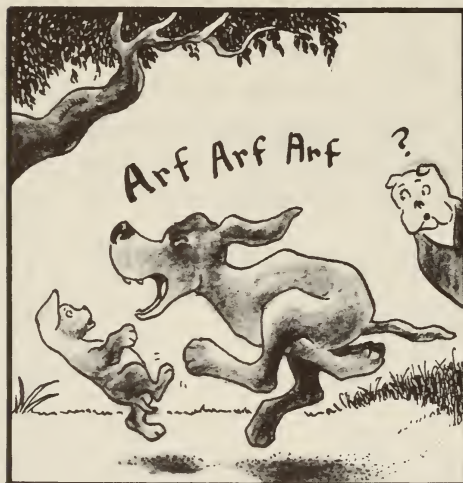
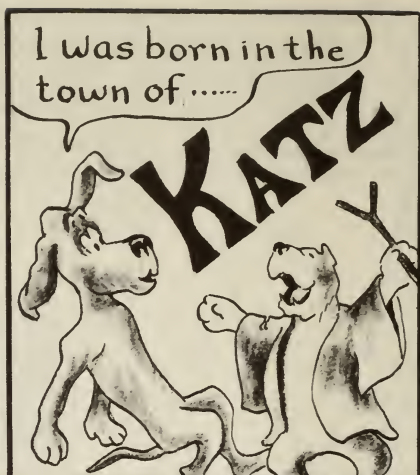
#66

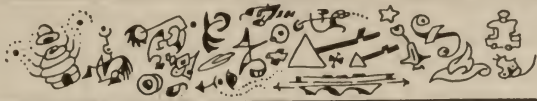
No matter how much we learn about Zen, no matter how cleverly we repeat its phrases, unless it is directly present in life itself, our words will be the words of a parrot.

The theatre of Zen attracts a large audience but there are only a few performers.

Once again Pepito supplies the clue.







#67

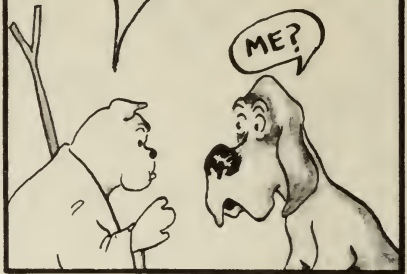
Unk's solution to the koan is obviously off the mark. The Zen Masters "Katz" was direct Zen. As is often the case Zen is heard incorrectly and as a result one runs about frantically searching for phantom objects.



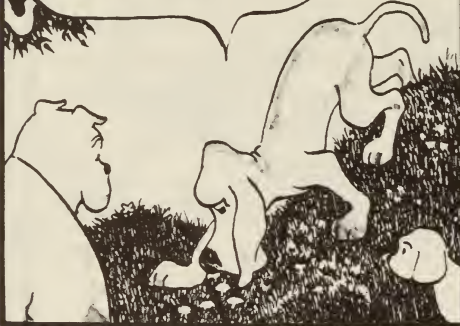
Silly ole Bulwer is chasing his tail again!



What are you doing Unk?



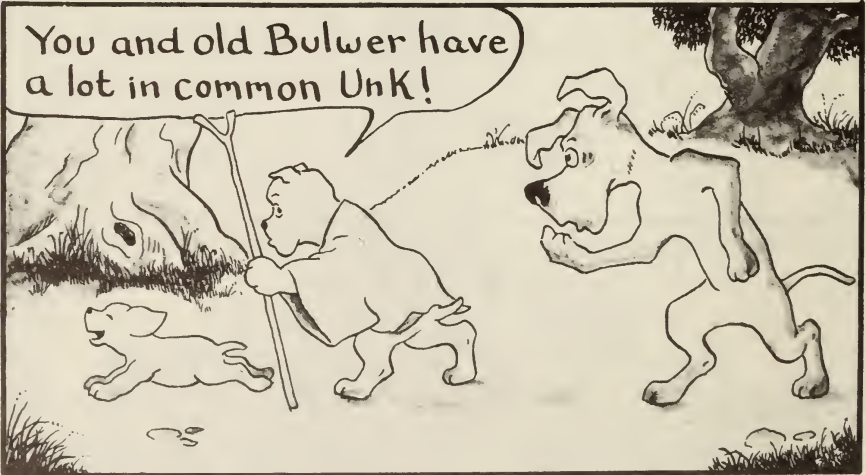
I Keep going here and there trying to sniff out

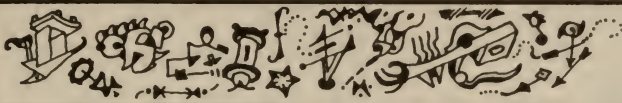


...the **ABSOLUTE** truth!



You and old Bulwer have a lot in common Unk!



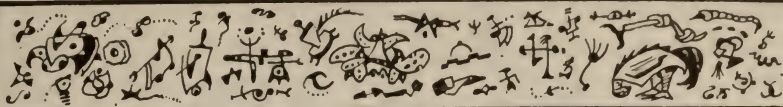


#68

Once again the Zen Master points out to Unk the futility of searching for the infinite within the finite. It is true that the finite is a limited aspect of the infinite but the infinite cannot be perceived nor expounded in finite terms.



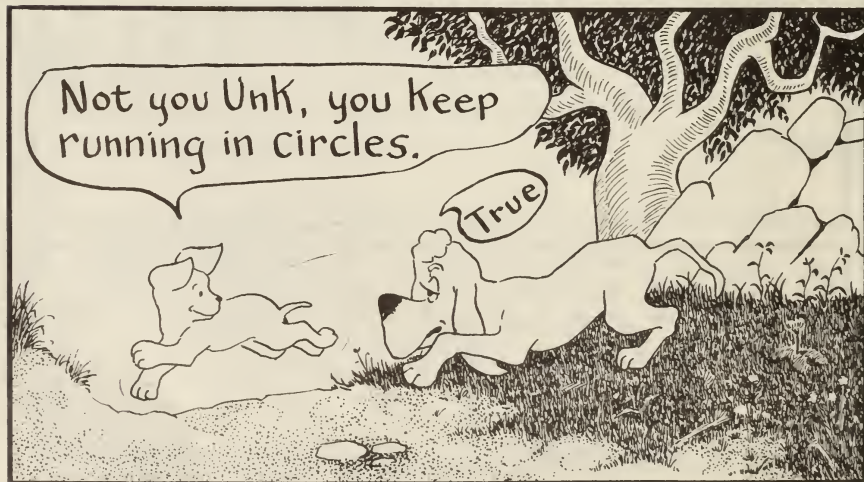


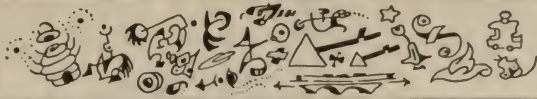


#69

No explanation needed here. Simply meditate on
IKKYU's statement.





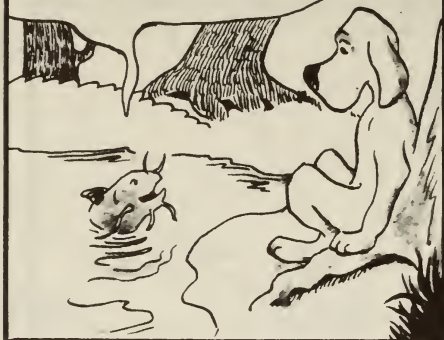


#70

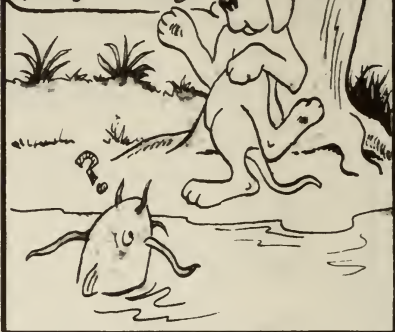
When most of us try to pass through the phenomenal world and discover the noumenal we run endlessly in circles in the phenomenal world.



Hi Unk- where have you been? Long time no see!



Gosh Bigcat- I've been on a pilgrimage



A pilgrimage?.. what is that?

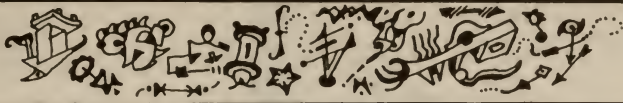


I've climbed mountains, crossed deserts, forded rivers - always looking for the truth!



To me Unk you sound like a fish looking for water !!

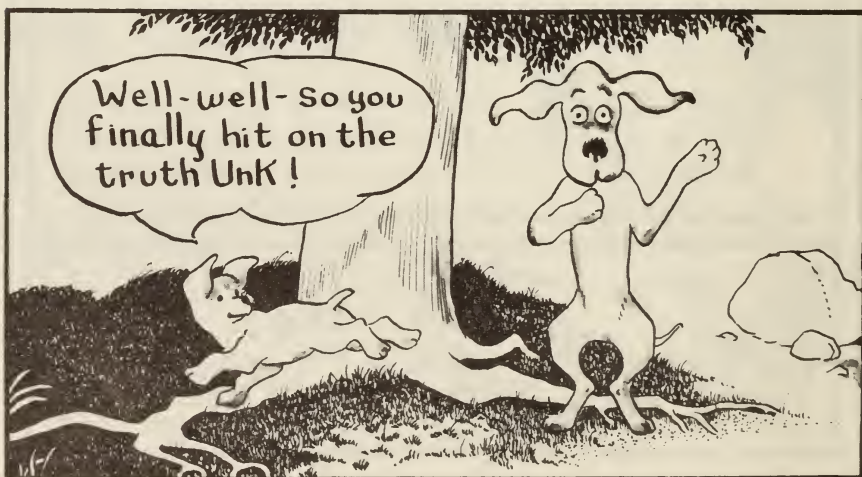
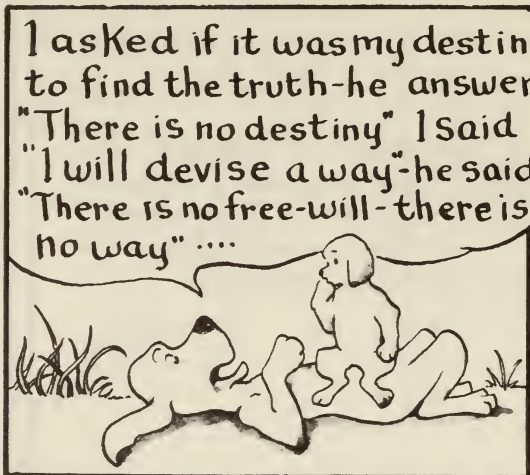


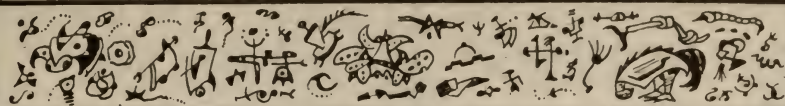


#71

If all of creation is "wholeness" it is infinite. If it is infinite it has no outside. If it has no outside it has no inside. There is nothing divisible except in conception. Unk is searching for a truth that is separated from his own truth. He wants to divide the undividable.



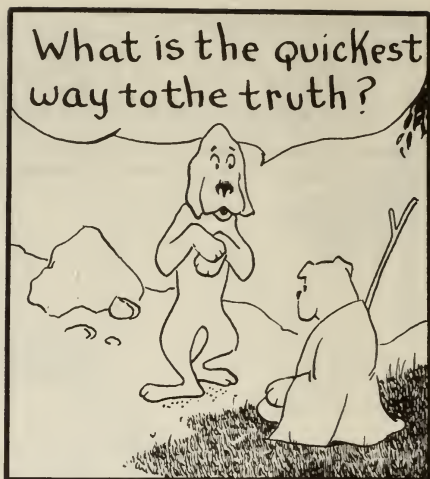


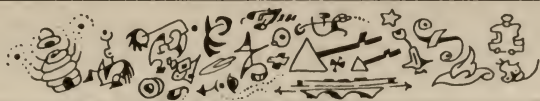


#72

If Unk really "got the message" the problem would vanish.



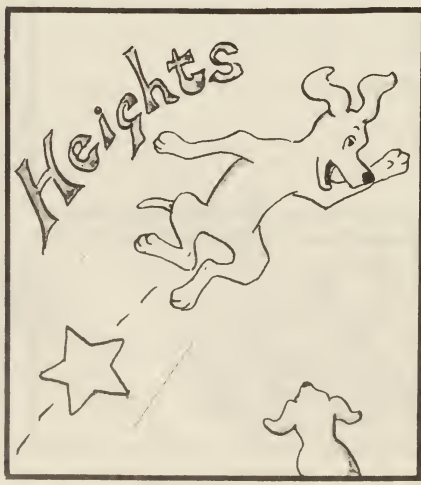




#73

Unk still thinks there is a difference between the truth and the observer of the truth. Unk is the truth but where is he?



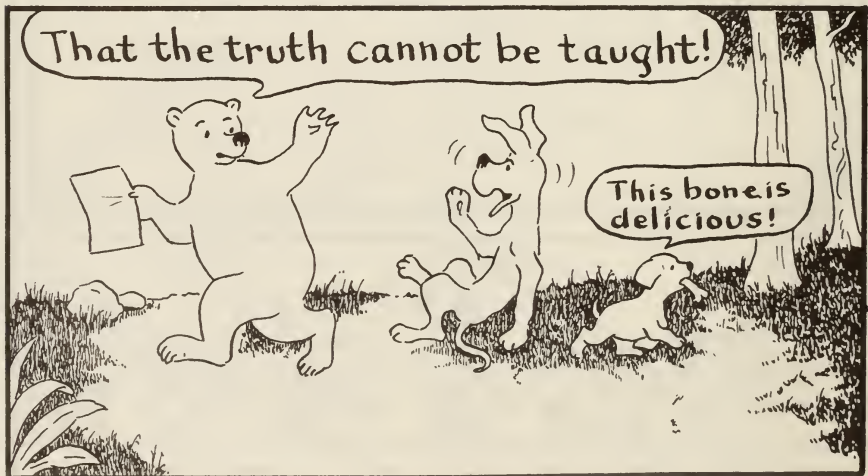


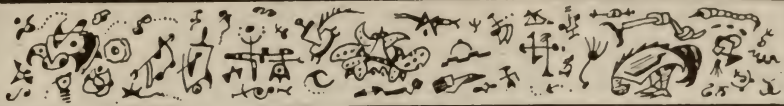


#74

Many of us experience this. We feel we are trying to get away and escape our present. Suddenly we find ourselves in new but even less comfortable circumstances.







#75

As Zen Master Joe Miller has often said "The truth cannot be taught it must be caught". If our lives are lived in the full awareness of Zen the truth of its expression is contagious.

Many blessings and may you "come down" with the truth.





Gilbert

"Blue Dragon Rises up to the Sky"

—Chan-pil Calligraphy
by Dr. Seo

靑
龍
望
蔚

三大僧正
藏法師

一鵬
徐京保







Master Ta Hui's book is a fresh approach to Zen. He does not adhere to tradition nor does he deny it. The work seems light and humorous but his pen is a zen sword and it is very sharp indeed.

Humor is an integral part of Zen and here it is employed with consummate skill. Those that have studied under Master Ta Hui know him for his gentle humanism. They know too that he can in one flash of incisive wit burst conceptual bubbles in a cascade of laughter.

In the book be aware of the little dog with his bone. He is often depicted as saying "This bone is delicious". This is a most important clue. This book then, is a finger pointed at the moon. If the reader can stop staring at the finger and look at the moon, the moon will be revealed smiling back at the looker.

When the little ego is recognized for what it is, then the Buddha will romp and play filling the world with unimpeded laughter. Master Ta Hui's book may just be the instrument that will help bring this about.

Seo Kyung-Bo

Zen Master (Il Bung) Seo, Kyung Bo is a Zen Master of the Cho Ke School in Korea, and is recognized worldwide as a Tripitaka (Scriptures) Master and master of Chan-pil Calligraphy.

Zen Master Ta Hui (Donald Gilbert) was designated as Dharma Successor in the United States to the Venerable Korean Zen Master Il Bung Seo, Kyung Bo in July, 1973. Zen Master Gilbert is a member of the World Society for Zen Academy, and founder of the Blue Dragon School of Zen in the United States. His Dharma name, Ta Hui (after one of the great early Zen Masters in China, known for his use of koans), means "Great Wisdom".