

Koans for
Joy in Each Other's Joy
June 12, 2005

One day, the Chan teacher Baiyun came into the milling shed where Fayan worked and asked him, "Some monks were visiting here from Mount Lu. They had all experienced enlightenment. When I asked them to express their understanding, they did it very well, with words of substance. When I questioned them about episodes involving Chan teachers of the past, they were able to explain them. When I asked them for comments on Chan sayings, their comments were perfectly acceptable. In spite of all that, they still weren't there yet."

Baiyun's words brought deep doubts to Fayan's mind. "Why did he say they were missing something?" After struggling with this for several days, he suddenly broke through. Everything that had seemed so precious to him had fallen away as he raced to Baiyun's quarters. When Baiyun saw him, he got up and began dancing about for him, waving his arms and stamping his feet. Fayan just watched him, laughing.

Later, Fayan said, "I broke into great beads of sweat ... then suddenly I experienced for myself 'the fresh breeze that rises up when you lay down the great burden.'"



A monk asked Caoshan, "What's it like when you put away your mourning clothes?"

Caoshan said, "Today I have fulfilled my duty to my parents."

"What about after you have fulfilled your duty?"

"I love to get drunk."



The Taoist philosopher Zhuangzi described the perfect leader this way: "People never even mention her name, for she lets things find their own joy."