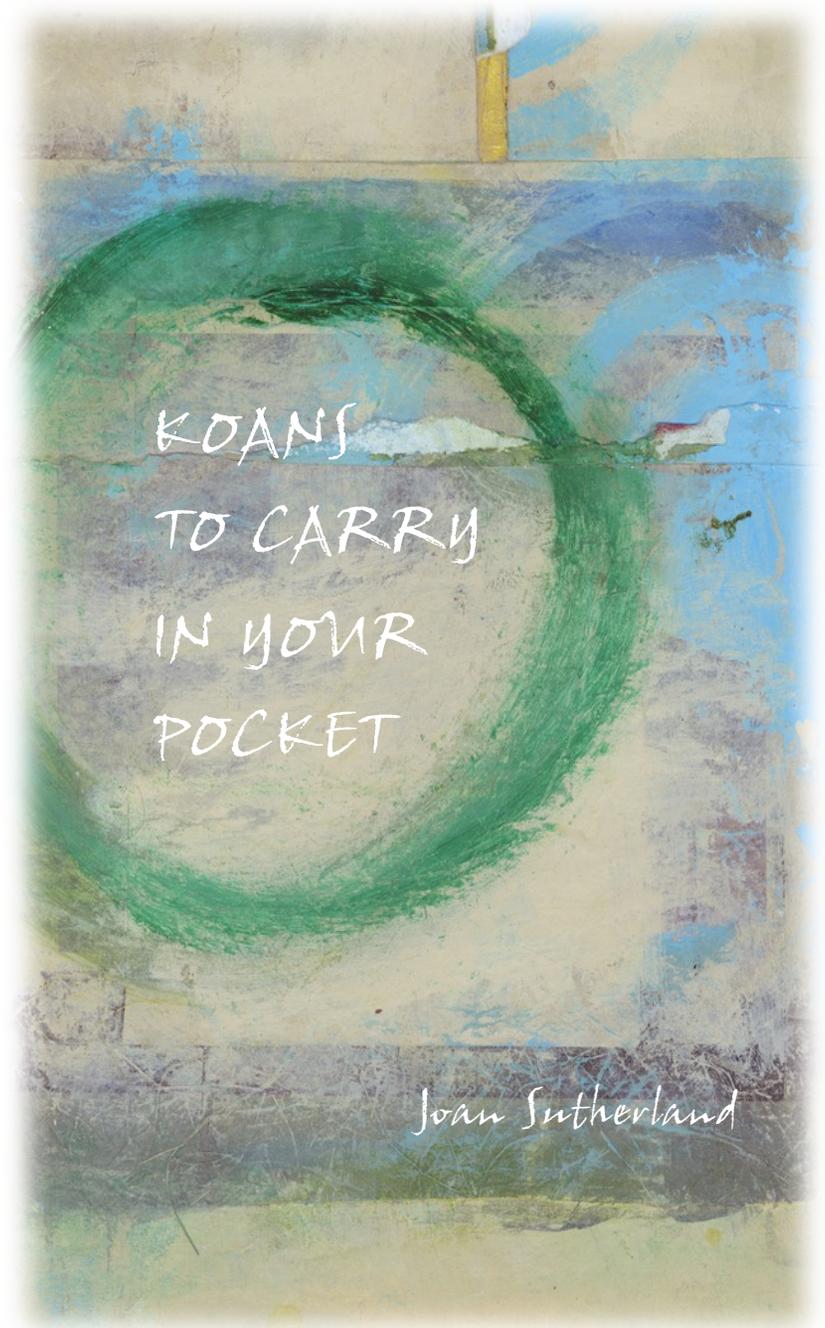


*Suddenly I experienced for myself
the fresh breeze that rises up
when the great burden is laid down*

Fayan



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Joan Sutherland

*The first question to ask of a koan:
What is the invitation to freedom?*

What is this?

The ancient, all-purpose inquiry ~ Leaning in with warmth and curiosity ~
A very different beginning from *Why is this?*, but what's it like when *why*
has the same meaning as *what*?

Who's angry? happy? bored?

When you react to something, *Who's angry?*, etc. interrupts the habitual
process & reminds you of a deeper question

Quickly, quickly, without thinking good and evil, before your parents were born, what is your original face?

Your Original Face is the space before reactions, opinions, and stories
arise, which you can step back into it in any moment ~ What becomes
possible where the question is not *What do I need to do about this?* but
What wants to happen?

A tree older than the forest it stands in

Hanshan

That tree is always right behind you, in that moment just before, waiting for
you to lean back against it

If wherever you are you take the role of host, then wherever you are will be a true place

&

There is nothing I dislike

Linji

In each situation, how are you the host? The guest? How are others host or
guest? How about the vastness itself? ~ And what does it mean to welcome
everything without immediately being *for* or *against*?

What is most intimate?

Dizang asked Fayan, "Where are you going?"
Fayan replied, "I'm on pilgrimage."
"What sort of thing is pilgrimage?"
"I don't know."
Dizang said, "Not knowing is most intimate."
Fayan suddenly awakened.

In any situation, you can ask *What if I don't have to know?* and *What is
most intimate here?* In Chinese, a synonym for *enlightenment* is *to become
intimate*

I saw you fall so I'm helping

Once Layman Pang and his daughter Lingzhao were out selling
bamboo baskets. Coming down off a bridge, he stumbled and fell. When
Lingzhao saw this, she ran to her father and threw herself down next to
him.

"What are you doing?" cried the Layman.
"I saw you fall, so I'm helping," replied Lingzhao.
"Luckily no one was looking," remarked the Layman.

Fortunately I'm here to do it

Yunyan was making tea. His friend Daowu asked him, "Who are you
making tea for?"

Yunyan said, "Someone who wants it."
Daowu asked, "Why don't you get him to make it for himself?"
Yunyan said, "Fortunately, I'm here to do it."

Are you afraid of this happiness?

This question arose in Shakyamuni's heart-mind as he contemplated
turning from harsh austerities toward a path without resistance, tension, or
craving

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