

## HARVEST QUESTIONS

### *This year's harvest*

Each year asks something of us  
and each year gives us something

At what altars did you worship this year? ... What are you harvesting? ... What have you sacrificed? ... What did you give up willingly, and what losses do you mourn? ... What prayers were answered? ... What unexpected grace fell into your life?

### *What is left undone ...*

Between the harvest and the winter solstice  
is a time of taking stock & settling things

### *... that needs completing*

When you look into your heart, what can you  
set right before the end of the year?

### *... that needs holding a while longer*

Are there questions to which the truest answer is,  
I don't know? ... Can you allow the questions to resolve in  
their own time?

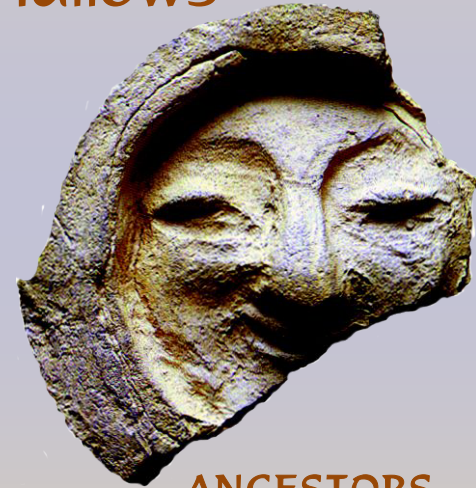
### *... that needs releasing*

What is it time to let go of? ... Can you open your hands & let something  
fall away, so that all of life can take care of it?



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## All Hallows



ANCESTORS  
KOAN RETREAT

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Whom can I ask what I came  
to make happen in this world?

Pablo Neruda, *The Book of Questions* 31

For whom do you bathe and make yourself beautiful?  
The cry of the cuckoo is calling you home.  
Hundreds of flowers fall, yet her voice isn't stilled;  
even deep in jumbled mountains, it's calling clearly.

"Service," from Dongshan's *Five Modes*



A monk asked Caoshan, "What's it like when you set  
aside 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 ancestors walk a straight road—  
Why do they sing a crooked song?



One day Jianyuan took a spade, went into the teaching  
hall, and crossed from east to west and back again from  
west to east.

"What are you doing?" asked Shishuang.

Jianyuan said, "I'm searching for our old teacher's  
sacred bones."

Shishuang said, "Waves flood to the horizon, whitecaps  
overwhelm the sky. What sacred bones of our teacher are  
you looking for?"

Jianyuan said, "This is just what I need to make me  
stronger."

Fu of Taiyuan commented, "The sacred bones of the old  
teacher are still here."



A monk asked Yunmen, "How do ancestors appear?"

Yunmen responded, "East Mountain walks along the  
stream."

The bright road that the ancestors knew is right in front of  
you, in everything you see and hear.

Yuanwu