

Koans for Mountain Cloud's Summer 2003 Sesshin

Yunyan asked Daowu, "How does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion use all those hands and eyes?"

Daowu answered, "It is like someone in the middle of the night reaching behind her for the pillow.

Yunyan said, "I understand."

Daowu asked, "What do you understand?"

"All over the body are hands and eyes."

"That's most of it, but not everything."

"How would you say it?"

"Throughout the body are hands and eyes."



Spherically wondrous sunbeam
dwelling in the mansion
of the pine of chastity,
today we bought an ice pack
for Mildred's injured foot.
Luminous shadow
in the plumflower chamber,
Edna quit her job yesterday,
got drunk, stayed drunk,
behaved like a defective monster

collapsing in the mansion
of self-pity. Meanwhile,
the great sea of compassion
rolled in, rolled out, rolled in.
And the blue mountain
of itself remains,
and the blind shampooers
never tire of their work.
James Tate, "Per Diem"



Caoshan asked Elder De, "The Buddha's true Dharma body is like space. It responds to things – manifesting its forms the way the moon appears in the water. How do you explain this responsiveness?"

De said, "It's like a donkey sees a well."

Caoshan said, "That's most of it, but not the whole thing."

De asked, "How do you see it?"

Caoshan said, "It is like a well sees a donkey."



Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.
Lewis Carroll



Someone asked, "What is the Dharmakaya?"

Zhaozhou replied, "What is it you dislike that you ask that question?"

Linji asked, "In your life right now, what is it you lack, what is it that practice must mend?"

Praise this world to the angel.
Rainer Maria Rilke