

泣露千般草

吟風一樣松 *(overleaf)*

Tsuyu ni naku senpan no kusa

Kaze ni ginzu ichi yō no matsu

Myriad plants weep with dew

The pines all sigh the same

These lines are also from the works of Kanzan.

The Cold Mountain Road is strange
no tracks of cart or horse
hard to recall which merging stream
or tell which piled-up ridge
a myriad plants weep with dew
the pines all sigh the same
here where the trail disappears
form asks shadow where to

The Path of Kanzan is not of the world—no vehicles travel along it; no carts or horses or people come and go; there are no footprints or traces of habitation. The valleys take so many twists and turns, I can't remember from which direction I came. I have seen so many mountain ridges, I've lost count. The thick, dense grasses are crying with the dew drops that have formed upon them; the pines are singing with the winds that blow through their branches. Here in these mountains, if I miss a turn or become confused, the me that has a form has only to turn in the direction of the shadow of myself and ask, "What path are you traveling?"

Thus Kanzan sings of his world. His Cold Mountain is the mountain in the mind of each of us—people and vehicles and horses cannot pass there. Ridge after ridge, these mountains continue endlessly. This scenery is the state of mind where I have become one with the heavens and earth. If we look at our lives, we see how many thoughts we constantly pursue. When we forget our everyday concerns and melt into the endless mountain, we

know the state of mind of forgetting ourselves altogether. Here there is no good or evil, no failure or success, no resentment or pride, no sadness or happiness. This is the world of absolute Mu.

If we can awaken to the state of mind of Kanzan, we can know that deep wisdom and bring it to life. No matter how hideous the world in which we find ourselves, we do not need to be caught by it. But, as Kanzan tells us, it's not so easy to understand that this world of frantic noise, crime, and sorrow, just as it is, is the land of lotuses. Even while we are enslaved by our egos, not knowing what evil this bag of shit will do next, this very body is the body of the Buddha. While we remain caught and driven by ego, diving headlong into the world of Buddha is not a casual act.

Kanzan is not simply ignoring the dirt of the world and writing only of the higher realms where the birds fly. Diving into this world where everything is equal, we can become this state of mind of clarity and ease, smack dab in the middle of those crying grasses. We can know the absolute Mu where we can't see left or right. But if we are stuck in the world of angry beings, we can't discover true wisdom; the world will continue decaying, and infinite numbers of people will continue to be murdered. For this great suffering, the tears of dew are being wept.

The great wind that blows through everything isn't only for our own pleasure. Nor is it the wind of an all-consuming hell that agitates and disturbs all we see. The world of Kanzan isn't a world of saving only oneself. We have to look deeply within and inquire.