



## Ukyu's Unfair Blows

*Teisho given on April 16th, 2005 after half day sit at Rutgers University*

Today's Teisho will be on case 75 in the Blue Rock Collection

*ENGO'S INTRODUCTION: The sacred sword is ever in hand: it is death dealing and life giving. It is there, it is here, simultaneously giving and taking. If you want to hold fast, you are free to hold fast. If you want to let go, you are free to let go. Tell me how it will be when one makes no distinction between host and guest, and is indifferent to which role one takes up? See the following.*

*MAIN SUBJECT: A monk came from Joshu Osho's assembly to Ukyu, who said to him, "What do you find in Joshu's teaching? Is there anything different than what you find here?" The monk said, "Nothing different." Ukyu said, "If there is you nothing different, why don't you go back there?" and he hit him with his stick. The monk said, "If your stick had eyes to see, you would not strike me like that." Ukyu said, "Today I have come across a monk." And gave him three more blows. The monk turned back and said, "To my regret, the stick is in your hand." Ukyu said, "If you need it, I will let you have it." The monk went up to Ukyu, seized his stick, and gave him three blows with it. Ukyu said, "Unfair blows! Unfair Blows!" The monk said, "One may receive them." Ukyu said, "I hit this one too casually." The monk made bows. Ukyu said, "Osho! Is that how you take leave?" The monk laughed aloud and went out. Ukyu said, "That's it! That's it!"*

### *SETCHO'S VERSE:*

*Easy to call the snakes, hard to scatter them.  
How splendidly they crossed the swords!  
Although the sea is deep, it can be drained;  
Kalpa stone is hard, but wears away.  
Old Ukyu! Old Ukyu!  
Who is there like you?  
To give the stick to another  
That was truly thoughtless!*

(Rings three bells)

This is a rather long story, so let me review it one more time. There was a monk who was a student of Master Joshu, not the famous "Joshu" but another teacher with same first name, and he came to sit with the assembly in Ukyu's temple.

Now, in ancient times in China, right up until recently, it was possible for people to practice meditation almost anywhere. There was a system of private and public temples all over the country. Monks and nuns were able to go virtually anywhere and find a place to stay, practicing meditation morning and night, working in the kitchen or in the fields, and spending time at innumerable

sesshins [meditation retreats]. Zen in China was a remarkable social experiment. For more than a thousand years, people in China took very seriously the pursuit of awakening, of enlightenment. They constructed a magnificent system for men and women to follow this path with very few obstructions. If there were young men or young women who had decided to give up their lives to practice Zen, they could travel to temples all over the country for instruction from the greatest masters. They could do a sesshin here and a sesshin there. This was the case with great Chinese master Hsu Yun. Even in the early twentieth century, he traveled all over China and he did sesshins in many different places.

In this context, the event described in the story is not so unusual. A monk came from Joshu's assembly and met master Ukyu. After a while, Ukyu asked him, *"What do you find in Joshu's teaching? Is there anything different than what you find here?"*

Perhaps Ukyu is just curious about the training at Joshu's temple, or perhaps he's simply dissatisfied with a monk who doesn't appear to be paying much attention to his practice. But it sounds to me like Ukyu is fishing for a compliment. Perhaps he expects the monk to say, "This is a much better assembly than Joshu's, and I've learned a lot more from practicing here." But the complement doesn't come. And when the monk doesn't deliver the complement, Ukyu hits him with a *keisaku*, the traditional "teaching stick" used in Zen practice.

Then the monk gets angry and says, *"If your stick had eyes to see, you would not strike me like that."* In other words, the monk says, "It's not fair of you to hit me! That's just not fair. You had no just cause to do that!" But the story doesn't stop there.

*Ukyu said, "Today I have come across a monk." And gave him three more blows.*

After this second indignity, the monk angrily prepares to leave, but Ukyu calls after him, saying, *"Sometimes in life one may receive unfair blows."* This almost sounds like a taunt, doesn't it? Ukyu is behaving in a very unjust way.

*The monk turned back and said, "To my regret, the stick is in your hand."*

In essence, the monk says to Ukyu, "It's easy for you to say that life sometimes deals us unfair blows, since you are the one who is holding the stick." But then, surprisingly, Ukyu gives his teaching stick to the monk.

*Ukyu said, "If you need it, I will let you have it." The monk went up to Ukyu, seized his stick, and gave him three blows with it. Ukyu said, "Unfair blows! Unfair Blows!" The monk said, "One may receive them." Ukyu said, "I hit this one too casually." The monk made bows. Ukyu said, "Osho! Is that how you take leave?" The monk laughed aloud and went out. Ukyu said, "That's it! That's it!"*

Today is another incredibly beautiful day. We have had string of these days when it is not too hot, not too cold, and the sun is shining; the sky is a beautiful, cloudless blue. This is just beautiful. Trees are blossoming. Flowers are coming out from the ground. Perfect! Perfect!

And yet everywhere around us people are finding reasons to be unhappy and angry. This is part of the human situation. Right now somebody somewhere is unable to feel this beautiful cool breeze or to look at the sky with a peaceful mind. Maybe this person is in deep turmoil. Some problem, some injury, some trouble is gnawing away at him or her. This is indeed the human situation. Beautiful world, troubled heart! If we are not careful, we can live our whole lives like that. How does this situation come about? The reasons are really complicated and very difficult to un-entangle. At some point, we lose our trust in life because life deals us injuries as we are growing up. If we are not very careful, everything becomes our enemy. Life becomes the enemy. In a way, this is the subject of this koan. We have this tendency to make life our enemy and to wait for the blow--the 'unfair' blow--to come.

I have a friend of mine who is an eternal pessimist. Probably this person is by nature rather pessimistic. But he really plays it up. There are people for whom the proverbial glass is always half full but he is the sort of person for whom glass is always totally empty. If we invite him to lunch, we expect him to say the most negative things anyone could say about the meal, and he seldom disappoints us. I can't decide if he takes a secret pleasure in this behavior because he has a mischievous nature or because deep down inside, as I suspect, he is really an embittered idealist. Even though he has a sense of humor about it, I believe that his pessimism is quite real. I was talking to him once and I asked him casually, "How's it going?" and he said, "It's going well--too well. I'm just waiting for the other shoe to drop." You all know what he meant: "It's a sunny day, the temperature is perfect and everything's going well, but I'm sure that life will turn out badly in the end."

This attitude is quite common. All people have this attitude to some extent, this deep distrust for life. This distrust is created over a lifetime of events that undermine our sense of the fairness of things, and it is almost inevitable that we will lose our sense of trust to some degree.

This distrust has far-reaching consequences, and one of them, I think, is the extraordinary violence of our times. After all, if life can't be trusted, it is dangerous. And if life is dangerous, then you have to stay strong, tough, and perpetually alert. The enemy could be anywhere at any time.

We live in a very violent society and perhaps this condition has something to do with a basic lack of trust. I can't help but notice this violence and you probably notice it as well whenever you look at something like television. Movies too are just amazingly violent and they contribute to this pervasive unhealthy atmosphere.

Violence is not only a part of our fantasy life, though it is everywhere in our collective fantasies; it is also pervasive in our everyday, real-world lives. I don't know if you have been following the news during the last couple of days, but mainland China has seen a series of large anti-Japanese demonstrations. I've found these demonstrations very difficult to deal with because I have the highest admiration for Chinese culture. I have deep respect for the Tang dynasty Ch'an masters in particular. For years, I've had a love affair with classical Chinese culture. At the same time, I've had a longstanding love affair with Japanese culture as well. I have known several deeply awakened Japanese teachers--men and women to whom I am grateful for their patience and assistance and great wisdom at times in my life when I didn't have much of either patience or wisdom. So it is extremely painful to see these events unfold in two societies I admire very greatly.

Now, quite possibly, this violence could get out of hand. I don't think we are looking at an actual war but at the expression of deep anger which is going to be reciprocated.

The truth is that as the Japanese modernized, they went through a terrible period of cultural confusion. A military dictatorship took over the country and it gradually destroyed all sources of political freedom and free-thinking in general. The dictators constructed an imperial-industrial-military machine. This process took place over the span of more than 50 years. Eventually dissenters were crushed and put into prison, and people were brainwashed into supporting the powerful military machine unleashed on China in the late 1930s. That's the history of Japanese and Chinese relations in the 20th century. We all know how World War II turned out. Since then, China has risen to the stature of a world power and feels great resentment for events that happened during World War II. The Chinese harbor a deep sense of indignation, caused by their belief that Japan did China a terrible wrong. And it did. What happened in city of Nanking was truly terrible. Terrible!

It is possible for the Chinese to see themselves as innocent victims of Japanese aggression, which they were! But when we begin to look at human lives in a more complicated way, it becomes very difficult to decide who is truly an innocent victim. We don't have to look too far into modern Chinese history to notice that the Chinese are also guilty of unreasonable, unjust violence. For example, some of you may be involved in the Tibetan rights campaign and may be concerned about the situation in Tibet. My second teacher, Kangan Roshi, had many dear Chinese friends, and he had relations with number of Chinese monks who were really saints—deeply awakened people. He loved them. On the other hand, he used to go to Tibet on a regular basis, back in the '70s and '80s, and he was always torn apart by the violence done to the Tibetan people, whom he deeply loved and respected—violence done by the Chinese people, whom he also deeply loved and respected. Unfair blows—yes? Unfair blows! The Chinese have given the Tibetan people unfair blows. The Japanese have given Chinese unfair blows.

But they aren't the only ones. One way to explain what happened in Japan prior to World War II is to start in the middle of 19th century, when the United States sent in its gun-boats to Japan. About three centuries before the Americans arrived, Japan had already seen the European powers completely destroy the Philippines' civilization. Most Filipinos have no historical memory of Filipino society before the Western arrival. The West did the same thing to Mexico and much of Latin America. The Japanese looked at what had happened to Philippines and these other countries, and Japan closed its borders to the West until United States showed up in the mid-19th century and said, "We will turn our gunboats on your cities if you don't open up your ports to us." So we could say that the Japanese built a military dictatorship in response to American aggression.

We Americans also sent gun boats to China when the Western Powers— England, France, Germany, and the United States--made a shambles out of Chinese society, which had been functioning quite adequately up until 18th century, when the West first started to interfere. So when we look at Japanese people, they don't have clean hands. They gave unfair blows to Chinese. The Chinese gave unfair blows to Tibetans. Americans gave unfair blows to Asians generally--and not only to Asians. It's easy to forget that only 50 years ago, people of color could not drink water from the same fountains as Caucasians in United States. Unfair blows!

We can go on and on with this. Everybody has been given unfair blows by somebody else. On the macro level, we see enormous tension all around the world. Resentment for injustice is everywhere, along with great anger, making for a really dangerous situation! After 9/11, the United States was convinced it had received “unfair blows” at the hands of the bin Laden’s followers. But I can’t help thinking that the 9/11 attack had something to do with the unfair blows we gave to other countries before then. Blows follow blows follow blows.

This is the climate of the world on the macro level—the large scale. And this is also the climate on the micro level in our personal lives much of the time. I think the big picture and little picture very much go together. On the level of nations there is the sense that some terrible wrongs need to be avenged. Historical injustices! They are really terrible. Japan hasn’t really apologized for the incidents in Nanking—formally, yes, but not to the satisfaction of the Chinese. The United States has only recently apologized to its Japanese-American citizens for their illegal internment during WW II, but that apology took us 50 years to make! We have not apologized to the Native Americans. For that matter, we haven’t yet apologized to the African-Americans.

One thing we could all do is to apologize to everyone else. We could have a day of apologies on the international, national, and neighborhood levels. There is certainly a lot to apologize for! We could write letters to all the people we have wronged and say that we are really sorry, and we could mean it. But this plan would be hard to carry out because on the micro level, in our hearts, the burning wheel of resentment and anger keeps rolling on all the time. We continue to have haunted minds—minds haunted by injuries real and imagined. And this is, I believe, the basic reason for the pervasive violence in our world.

When I was growing up, my father was a very strict disciplinarian – to say the least. My grandfather (my father’s father) believed that children should be subjected to corporal punishment. For him, that meant you could beat your kids. When I was growing up, I noticed that my father had an odd-looking wrist. Later, as an adult, I realized that my father’s wrist had been broken at some point and then not properly set. After my father’s death, I was talking to his sister, my aunt Joan, and she solved the mystery of my father’s odd-looking wrist. She said that it had gotten broken when my father was trying to ward off a blow from grandfather.

So my father grew up in a home environment where violence was a part of everyday life. This is quite common. People beat their children all over the world. Men beat their wives. This is an ancient way of life, violence at home. My father had seen a lot of violence in his home, so he tried to be a reformist. On principle, he would not use his fists to beat us but would use a belt instead, or his flattened hand. This kind of thing is very common. In fact, I thought that everybody got beaten up like that until I went to college. I had a room-mate, Larry Sullivan, and I once asked him, “Didn’t you hate it when your father used to hit you with a belt.” And he said, “What are you talking about?” I said, “You mean your father never hit you?” He told me that his father had never touched him, let alone beating him with a belt. I was astounded! “You’re kidding!” I said. “He didn’t beat you and yet you haven’t grown up to be a criminal!” Maybe beatings aren’t necessary after all.

I am not trying to elicit your sympathy by telling you this story. I’m trying to make the point that such violence is quite widespread and commonplace. I actually believe that my father used to

punish my brother and me because he loved us and wanted us to turn out well and not become criminals. His motives were good! That sounds incredible, but it's true! But regardless of his intentions, being punished like that has an effect on you in the long term. Long after the punishment is gone, the mind continues to be haunted by the injury. You carry a kind of a buried anger for years and years. It may lie forgotten, but it surfaces again and again unconsciously in places where it doesn't belong.

Actually, when I first started doing Zen on a regular basis, I experienced great relief from my anxieties and began to feel happier. But then I discovered that anger was rising up inside of me. There was an undercurrent of anger in my life. I couldn't put my finger on the cause for a long time because the doors of my memory were closed to the events in my childhood. The doors were kept shut because I wanted to tell a happy story about my family, and I did indeed love my father. But he did some terrible things out of love. You forget about such things and then you carry this anger unconsciously. All of us have to deal with this sort of thing even if we haven't been punished physically by our parents.

Gradually we develop a strong desire to avenge the unfair blows and to see that justice is done. But this desire for "justice" can be very destructive and somehow we have to move beyond the condition of anger and outrage. I am not saying we should give up on the quest for justice in our society. But I think we need to be aware of our underlying distrust of life – which is really at the heart of all this anger. Let me give you an example of what I mean.

A week ago, I got a call, believe it or not, from the American Civil Liberties Union. This was an interesting development since I don't know how the caller got my number. But at any rate, he left a message on my answering machine explaining that he was from ACLU. When I heard the message, I thought, "Oh no. Maybe someone is taking me to court for something again." As you know, I direct a freshman program at Rutgers and I thought that perhaps some student was suing us for some reason. I have been in court before and I was not especially worried about it, but I called the man back and he said, "We would like your help in filing a lawsuit. We are preparing to file a lawsuit against a number of towns in New Jersey, which have written into their local legislation clauses requiring that various public places display statements of allegiance to God. I have been told you are a Buddhist and I would like you to participate in this suit. Some atheist groups are going to be involved and there will also be some Universalist Unitarians."

You know, I actually respect the ACLU very highly. But I don't think that I am going to participate in this suit because I just don't believe this is the way to respond to the problem. I could join the suit, of course; we could take these municipalities to court and we could even win! We could take the case all the way up to the Supreme Court and we could win at every stage, but then you have to ask, "What is going to happen to the people we have defeated?" They aren't going to go away satisfied, are they? This is a real problem. We can appeal to a higher authority--it can be Justice, it can be Reason, and it can be even be God. And we can win win, win, and win. But actually you never win! You never win. Your opponents will be there, forever-- on the macro level and on the micro level. They will be out there in the world, and they we will be in your mind and in your heart, haunting you. One of the sutras we recite in Japanese refers to "beginningless greed, anger and delusion." The sutra is saying that greed, anger, and delusion are beginningless and endless. If you are hoping for a resolution to all the injustice, all the unfair blows, that is never going to happen.

Even if you take the “bad guys” to the Supreme Court, they are still going to return; even if you win, your so-called “enemy” is always going to come back tomorrow.

There is something wrong with thinking in terms of “bad guys” and “enemies.” I personally feel that as soon as we start thinking this way we have already put ourselves in a situation that is very false and destructive for everyone involved.

It is true that in Buddhism, we don't make use of a "God" concept. Actually, that's quite true! I would be very unhappy if I were required by law to espouse a belief in God. But, when I talk to people who believe in God, I still try to find a common ground. Of course, I would tell them what I actually believe--and what I don't believe. I would say, “We Buddhists believe in what we call 'enlightenment' or 'awakened mind.'" This is a condition of awareness in which we feel connected to everything around us. This sense of connectedness is accompanied by an overwhelming sense of compassion.” Then I would say, “Isn't that what you are supposed to feel in the presence of God—overwhelming compassion?” And then I might add, “If you think about it, God probably isn't a person like you and me.” I am a big fan of the theologian Paul Tillich, who calls God the “Ground of our being.” I think “Ground of being” is very similar to “Mu-shin” or “Buddha mind.”

Most of the people living in the towns named in the ACLU suit would probably agree that heaven can't really be a place like this world. It has to be a little different. After you have died, for example, will you be a child, an adult, or an old person when your family meets you? When you meet your son in heaven, will he be ten years old or thirty years old? Maybe your son will be ten years old when you stare at him but thirty years old when his wife stares at him. Heaven will be a very complicated place! It will be very hard to keep all of these details straight.

I think that when people talk about heaven they mean something else. When Jesus talked about the Kingdom of Heaven he probably meant that every moment exists not only in time but also in eternity. When we are with people we love, it is important to stop and realize that we are in eternity right here and now. Eternity is this life here and now with the people we love!

And that's not a just a pleasing possibility. Physicists tell us that there is no time. The sense of time is actually an optical illusion created by our being situated on the space-time continuum. On the surface of the continuum, every moment is a moment in time, but from above the continuum, every moment is also a moment in eternity. This is what Buddhism also says.

I would prefer to deal with these municipalities—the ones who are passing the laws-- by making connections, not divisions. I would rather try to talk to people and build some kind of a bridge, and to see if we can find a way to forgive each other for the injuries we have each done. It is very hard to forgive people for the injuries they have done to us or might do. But the worst way to solve the problem is to launch a preemptive injury and then appeal to the Supreme Court.

But even if we can forgive other people, it is much harder to forgive life in general because there is no specific person to blame. Sometimes, there is just no one to blame—except for life itself. That's one of the reasons that Zen meditation practice is so important. You might say that when we practice zen we are learning how to forgive life for the injuries it has done to us. We do this one breath at a time! All of us have had experiences which undermine in a profound way our trust in

life. We have all been given unfair blows. A couple of weeks ago, for example, we saw the death of our friend Charmanie.

Unfair blows! When I was a young man, in New Mexico, I met a woman named Ronnie. I have been to Albuquerque a number of times since then, and whenever I go, I always check the phonebook without success to see what has happened to her. When I met Ronnie, I was working in a restaurant. I was a very immature person in a lot of ways. I had never had to take care of anybody other than myself, and I wasn't even good at taking care of myself. I met this woman, Ronnie, and she was working as waitress in the restaurant while going to the University of New Mexico to get her degree in musical composition. When I got to know her, I was deeply moved by the life she was living. She had just gone through the death of both of her parents from emphysema, a degenerative lung disease. She had been a high school student when both her parents had been diagnosed with this disease, and she would have to come home from high school to take care of her ailing parents. Meeting her was such an interesting experience because she had gone through a very difficult adolescence, to say the least. But she somehow remained amazingly open to life. She had her "down" days, I must admit. She told me, at one point, that after her parents' death she had felt so depressed that's she couldn't get out of the bed for days. But finally, she got out of bed and she started re-building her life.

When we sit down on the cushion, we are engaged in the same kind of process-- forgiving life for the injuries it has done to us. We sit on the cushion, watching our breath go out, and we encounter all of this baggage we have acquired over a lifetime: there is anger; there is resentment and frustration! This is inevitably so. Life deals us cards we just don't deserve. I don't deserve this! I don't deserve that! And indeed we don't. But life is bigger than what we deserve and also more wonderful than we ever imagined.

This little story—this koan--describes a Zen exchange called a mondo, a “Zen duel,” so to speak.

*A monk came from Joshu Osho's assembly to Ukyu.*

Ukyu decides to test the new arrival. Ukyu is basically asking the monk, “How much have you been able to forgive life for the injuries it has done to you?”

*“What do you find in Joshu's teaching? Is there anything different than what you find here?”*

Ukyu is setting him up—see? He's testing him.

*The monk said “Nothing different.” Ukyu said, “If there is nothing different, why don't you go back there?” and he hit him with his stick.*

Ukyu picks a fight with the monk. He basically says, “If there's nothing different, then why don't you get the hell out of here?” Then Ukyu hits the monk with his stick. This is a test. Ukyu is testing the monk—and testing you, to see how you will respond when you are done an injury.

It's a wonderful test because as soon as you feel the anger of an innocent, injured victim, as soon as the righteous anger rises up in your chest, you know you are a million miles from Buddha nature.



Beware of that! When that anger arises, it is always wrong. Then you know you are million miles from it.

But if the moment of injury can push us into hell, it can also lift us into heaven. Many people have had the *Daikensho* or “Great Awakening” experience at the moment when they have faced a severe personal crisis or have gone through some terrible, undeserved injury. The moment when someone slaps your face and you want to hit back with all the righteous anger that you can muster--that’s the moment when you can open up the most. That’s the test. When life gives you undeserved injuries and you can say, “I love you. I love this life unconditionally! Thy will be done! Unconditionally! -- then you are there.

But it’s so hard to get there. I love the people of China, but today they are a million miles from “It.” And tomorrow the United States will do something even worse – in fact we are probably concocting a scheme right now that we are going to be ashamed of tomorrow. Regardless of 9/11, we will be a million miles from “It.” On a personal level too, we are often in a state of “mutually assured destruction,” like Russia and the United States when they used to have their thermonuclear missiles pointed at one another. Someone will hurt us, and then we will set out to get some kind of revenge, and then there will be retaliation. At the gas station or the grocery store, on the job or in our own homes, I will hurt you and you will hurt me, trying to even up the score.

Ukyu does something which is grossly unfair. He slaps the monk’s face, in essence. And he wants to see whether the monk is going to get mad or whether the monk will give him a big kiss. It’s so hard--right? My father was wrong to hit me with a belt. But he loved me even though he was confused. It took me a lot of zazen to forgive my father and then give him a big kiss on the cheek. But I promise you, I did it. It took an incredible amount of zazen. But I’m so glad I did it. And I’m so lucky that he lived long enough for me to free myself from this anger, because it did indeed take a lot of zazen.

When Ukyu hits the monk, the monk gets mad, and he wants to get even. *The monk said, “If you stick had eyes to see, you would not strike me like that.”*

The monk yells to Ukyu, “Hitting me is an injustice.” Ukyu says, “Ha ha ha!”

*And gave him three more blows.*

Then Ukyu says, “Hey! Sometimes life gives you unfair blows.” This is almost a taunt.

*The monk turned back and said, “To my regret, the stick is in your hand.”*

In other words, the monk wants his revenge. He says, “If I had the stick, you’d be sorry, buster.”

But then Ukyu does something strange and unexpected. He gives the monk the stick. And he says, “Go ahead and hit me. Get your revenge.” And then something strange and unexpected happens to the monk.

*The monk went up to Ukyu, seized his stick, and gave him three blows with it. Ukyu said, “Unfair blows! Unfair blows!”*

Unexpectedly the monk sees his teacher accept the blows and not become angry. He sees his teacher acting out of loving kindness, not taking the unfair blows too seriously. “Oh well,” Ukyu might have said, “these are just unfair blows—so what else is new?”

How is it possible for Ukyu to respond in this compassionate way? In Zen we speak about the "host" and the "guest"! When you sit around feeling sorry for yourself, you are unknowingly playing the part of the "guest." The "guest" is the one who comes to stay at an unfamiliar place, a motel or hostel for example, and never entirely feels at home. The mattress is too hard, the sheets are too scratchy, the thermostat is set too low.

But when you are in deep mu-shin, when you are connected to everything around you, and when your discriminating mind is at rest, then you have returned to the "host" consciousness. You return to a "self" which has no death and no birth, a "self" that can suffer no loss or gain. That is absolute perfection! The "host" is the one who prepares the guest's room, washing the sheets and making the bed, hanging clean towels in the bathroom and placing a vase of bright flowers on the table.

The little mind that says, "I've been done an injury"--that is the mind of the "guest." But by doing your zazen faithfully you can learn to shift from the mind of the "guest" to the mind of the "host." And then you are set free. Then you can forgive. Then you can love. Seeing his teacher move voluntarily from "host" to "guest" and then back to "host" again, the monk realizes a little something. Once you have found the way back to the "host," it's not so terrible to play the "guest" role. It's not so unbearable to take a few blows.

Ukyu says, "Go ahead and hit me. Ouch! That hurts! But I love you anyway." This is an awakened person. The student sees this and realizes that he does not have to live in a haunted mind. He does not have to be angry and resentful all the time. And then he starts to depart from the temple.

*Ukyu said, "Osho! Is that how you take leave?" The monk laughed aloud and went out. Ukyu said, "That's it! That's it!"*

Now Ukyu is happy because the monk has discovered "host" consciousness. And when the teacher sees his student waking up a little, he says "That's it! That's it!"

Probably we all still have some residual anger. Much of zen practice is about liberating ourselves breath by breath until we have entered the host mind. Then we can forgive. What a wonderful way to live! It is not easy, but it's worth doing!

*SETCHO'S VERSE:*

*Easy to call the snakes, hard to scatter them.  
How splendidly they crossed the swords!  
Although the sea is deep, it can be drained;  
Kalpa stone is hard, but wears away.*

In other words, karma is hard to dispel but meditation gradually wears it away. Please let all anger go!

*Old Ukyu! Old Ukyu!*  
*Who is there like you?*  
*To give the stick to another*

Ukyu says, "Go ahead and hit me, if you're so upset. But see, it doesn't bother me because I live in 'host' mind."

*That was truly thoughtless!*

Remember that when a Zen master like Setcho wants to compliment somebody, he appears to insult him. So when Setcho says that Ukyu's deed was truly thoughtless, he means that Ukyu acted from deep mu-shin.

It is a beautiful day and we all have our reasons for not enjoying it. But we have come here this morning nevertheless, purifying our bodies, hearts, and minds. I hope everybody can go outside and look at that beautiful, clear, cloudless sky, and I hope that that your body, heart, and mind have all become as clear and cloudless as that sky. Of course, more clouds will arrive and more zazen will be necessary. A beautiful way to live!

(Rings three bells)