

UN-ZEN:

Some Iconoclastic Shards from a Zendo

I. The Sound of Impact

Forget the koan of the phantom palm;
stop counting how many hands clap in the void.
Instead, feel the ghost of a shiver in your spine.

Remember only this:
The abbot's *keisaku* is carved from seasoned pine,
and it sings a sharp, splintering song
when meeting a slouching shoulder.

II. The Porcelain Sutra

The gilded Buddha on the altar gathers a grey, velvet skin.
Do not reach for the feather duster—
the dust on his enlightened brow is a holy irrelevance.

Instead, crawl toward the latrines.
Scrub until the porcelain screams,
and each toilet bowl reflects a face
distorted by the labor of the low.

Holiness is found in bleach, not incense.

III. The Architecture of Mindfulness

A perfect day for meditation!
Bang! Whack!

"Wake up!" a monk bellows, his breath a cloud of frost.
"Be mindful of the filth!
Keep sweeping the dust inside your head
until the floor is bare and all is white."

conforming
to no th
ought nor
concept of
de
light!

IV. Intellectual Karate

With such jagged aphorisms,
Gestapo-priests, draped in heavy robes,
execute a swift, intellectual karate.

They strike at the neck of the seeker—
those poor, inspired souls
starving for a single, shimmering
moment of in
sight
which comes
tumbling
crashing

- T Newfields