CHAPTER FOURTEEN (Dai jūyon shō 第十四章)

Root Case1【本則】

第十四祖、龍樹尊者、因十三祖赴龍王請、受如意珠。師問曰、此珠世中至寶也、是有相耶無相耶。祖曰、汝只知有相無相、不知此珠非有相非無相。亦未知此珠非珠。師聞深悟。

The Fourteenth Ancestor, Venerable Nāgārjuna. When the Thirteenth Ancestor [Kapimala] had gone in response to an invitation of the dragon king and received the wish-granting jewel, the Master [Nāgārjuna] asked, "Does this jewel, the most precious treasure in the world, have marks or does it lack marks?" The Ancestor [Kapimala] said, "You only understand having marks and lacking marks; you do not understand that this jewel neither has marks nor lacks marks. You also have yet to understand that this jewel is not a jewel." The Master [Nāgārjuna] heard this and profoundly awakened.

Pivotal Circumstances【機縁】

師は

The Master [Nāgārjuna]2

西天竺国の人なり。龍猛亦は龍勝と名く。

was a man of a country in West India. He was called Dragon Ferocious or Dragon Victor.

At that time, the Thirteenth Ancestor [Kapimala], having been delivered and received dharma transmission,

十三祖、當時受度傳法にして、

在印土に至る。彼に太子あり、雲自在と名く。尊者の名を仰で宮中に請して供養す。尊者曰く、如來に救あり。沙門は國王大臣權勢の家に親近することを得ざれと。太子曰く、今、我國城の北に

1 Root Case (C. benze 本則; J. honsoku). The passage given here is a block of Chinese text, but no part of it can be found in extant Chan/Zen texts that predate the Denkōroku, so whatever source Keizan may be quoting is unknown.

2 The Master (Shi wa 師は). The block of text that follows these words is a Japanese transcription (yomikudashi 読み下し) of a nearly identical Chinese passage that appears in the Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame under the heading “Fourteenth Ancestor, Venerable Nāgārjuna”:

《景德傳燈錄》西天竺國人也。亦名龍勝。（T 2076.51.210a29-b1).
大山あり。山中に一つの石窟あり。師、此に禪寂すべきや否や。尊者曰く、諾。師之彼山に入て行くこと数里、一大蟒に逢へり。尊者、直に前て顧りみず。蟒来りて遂に尊者の身を盤縛す。尊者曰く、汝何れの所にか止る。老人答て曰く、我れ昔し嘗て比丘なり。多く寂靜を樂て山林に隠居す。初學の比丘あり、数は来て益を請ふ。尊者問て曰く、此山に誰人ありて居止する。曰く、此より北に去ること十里にして大樹あり、五百の大龍を蔭覆す。其大樹王を龍樹と名す。常に龍衆の為めに説法す。我もし聞受するのみ。尊者遂に徒衆と與に彼に詣る。龍樹出て尊者を迎て曰く、深山孤寂にして龍蟒の居する所なり。大聖至尊、何ぞ神足を枉る。尊者曰く、余、至尊非ず、來て賢者を訪ふ。龍樹默念して曰く、此師、決定性を得て道眼を明むるや否や。是れ大聖にして真乘を繼ぐや否や。尊者曰く、汝心に語ると雖も、吾已に意に知る。但出家を辨ぜよ、何ぞ吾聖不聖を慮るや。龍樹、聞已て悔謝出家す。尊者、即ち與めに度脱せしむ。及五百の龍衆、倶に具戒を受く。
there is now a great mountain, and in the mountain there is a stone cave. Master [Kapimela], would you like to practice dhyāna serenity there?" The Venerable [Kapimela] said, “Yes.” Thereupon, he went several miles into that mountain and encountered a great serpent. The Venerable [Kapimela] proceeded straight ahead without looking back. The serpent came and eventually coiled itself around the Venerable’s [Kapimela’s] body. The Venerable [Kapimela] accordingly gave it the threefold refuge. After the serpent had complied with this, it departed. Then again, as the Venerable [Kapimela] was about to arrive at the stone cave, there was a lone old man in white clothing who came out and bowed in gasshō to him. The Venerable [Kapimela] said, “In what place are you staying?” The old man replied: “Once in the past I lived as a bhikṣu. Greatly enjoying tranquility, I secluded myself in a mountain forest. Many beginner bhikṣus came periodically to request edification. But I felt annoyed by having to respond and gave rise to grudging thoughts. After that life ended, I fell into a serpent’s body, residing in this cave for what is now already a thousand years. Just a moment ago, upon encountering you, Venerable, I was able to hear the precepts. Thus, I come only to thank you.” The Venerable [Kapimela] asked, “What other people reside in this mountain?” [The old man] said: “Ten miles to the north of here there is a great tree, which provides sheltering shade for five hundred great dragons. The ruler of that great tree is named Nāgārjuna. He always preaches the dharma for the congregation of dragons. I, too, simply listen and accept it.” The Venerable [Kapimela] then went there with his group of followers. Nāgārjuna emerged and greeted the Venerable [Kapimela], saying: “This is an isolated location deep in the mountains, where dragons and serpents dwell. Why, Great Sage and Most Venerable, have you condescended to bring your spiritual powers here?” The Venerable [Kapimela] said, “I am not the most venerable. I have come to visit the wise one.” Nāgārjuna silently thought to himself, “I wonder whether or not this master has sufficient fixed potential and has clarified his eye of the way. Has he succeeded to the true vehicle of the Great Sage, or not?” The Venerable [Kapimela] said, “Even though you are speaking in your mind, I already know your

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1 named Nāgārjuna (Ryūju to nazuku 龍樹と名く). The two Chinese glyphs for “Nāgārjuna” mean “dragon” (C. long 龍; J. ryū) and “tree” (C. shu 樹; J. ju).

2 speaking in your mind (nanji kokoro ni kataru 汝心に語る). That is, thinking to oneself, rather than speaking aloud.
thoughts. Just determine to go forth from household life. Why consider whether I am a sage or not a sage?” After Nāgārjuna had heard this, he repented and went forth from household life. The Venerable [Kapimala] then conveyed him to deliverance. In addition, the assembly of five hundred dragons all received the full precepts.

Thereafter, they followed the Venerable [Kapimala] for four years, whereupon

the Thirteenth Ancestor\(^1\) went at the invitation of the dragon king and received the wish-granting jewel. The Master [Nāgārjuna] asked, “Does this jewel, the most precious treasure in the world” ...and so on, down to...\(^2\) The Master [Nāgārjuna] heard this and profoundly awakened.

After that, he [Nāgārjuna] joined the succession as the Fourteenth Ancestor.

**INVESTIGATION【拝提】**

Now, Nāgārjuna studied different paths and was equipped with supernormal powers. He always went to the dragon palace and saw the sūtra books of the seven buddhas. He knew a sūtra’s essence just by reading its title, and he always worked to convert the five hundred dragons. As for the so-called Dragon King Nanda, Dragon King Upananda, and so forth, all were

\(^1\) **Thirteenth Ancestor** (Jūsan So十三祖). The block of text that begins with these words is a Japanese transcription (yomikudashi 読み下し) of the Chinese passage that is given above in the Root Case.

\(^2\) **and so on, down to (naishi 乃至).** This expression indicates that part of this repetition of the Root Case has been elided to save space, but that the intention is to quote the entire thing.
bodhisattvas at the level of equivalent awakening. They had each received the entrustment of previous buddhas, and they had enshrined various sūtras. Now that the sūtra teachings of our present great master, Śākya the Honored One, have already exhausted the opportunity to convert humans and gods, they should all be stored in the dragon palace.

He [Nāgārjuna] had this kind of awesome supernormal strength, but even though he routinely engaged in back and forth question and answer with great dragon kings, he was not a real person of the way. He merely studied other paths. But once he had taken refuge in the Thirteenth Ancestor, naturally he became a great clear-eye.

However, what people all think is that Nāgārjuna is not just the Fourteenth Ancestor of our ancestral gate, because he is also regarded as an ancestral teacher in various schools. The Shingon school, too, regards him as its root ancestor. The Tendai school, likewise, regards him as a founder. Yin-Yang schools and sericulture traditions, etc., also regard him as a founder. Although in the past he had learned various arts, after he joined the ranks of the ancestors, he discarded them. Disciples of those arts say, “We too have Nāgārjuna as our root ancestor.” They want to think that it [their founder] is Nāgārjuna. They are minions of Māra or species of beasts who confuse truth and falsehood and cannot distinguish gems from rocks. As for Nāgārjuna’s buddha-dharma itself, Kānadeva was the only one to whom it was directly transmitted. The rest were all various lineages that he abandoned. We know this from the present episode.
Although [Nāgārjuna] guided the congregation of five hundred dragons, when Venerable Kapimala arrived, he went out to greet him, make prostrations, and test him. For a while the Venerable [Kapimala] was secretive and did not reveal the true axiom. Nāgārjuna silently thought to himself for a while, “Is he a great sage who has succeeded to the true vehicle?” As he tried to calculate this within his mind, the Ancestor [Kapimala] said, “Just determine to go forth from household life. Why consider whether I am a sage or not a sage?” Nāgārjuna felt ashamed and inherited [the dharma] from the Thirteenth Ancestor. This is clear from the present episode.

曰く、此珠、世中の至宝なり。此珠、有相なりや無相なりや。実に龍樹さきより知 れり。是 有相なりとや せん、無相なりとやせん。頗る有無 の所見 を 動 執 す る な り 。之 に 依 て 祖 示 し て 、云 云 。

He [Nāgārjuna] said, “Does this jewel, the most precious treasure in the world, have marks or does it lack marks?” Actually, Nāgārjuna already knew this. Wondering if it has marks or if it lacks marks is just an attachment to one-sided views of existence and non-existence. On this account, the Ancestor [Kapimala] taught him: “etc., etc.”

実に設ひ世間の珠なりと雖も、真実を論ぜん時、是れ有相無相に非ず、只 足れ珠なり。況やカ士の額に繫る珠、輪王の髻に包みし珠、龍王の珠、醉 人衣裏の珠、悉く他の所見に渉らず、有相無相とも辨じ難し。然れども適 來の珠は、悉く世間の珠なり。今く足れ道中の至寶に非ず。何に況や、此 珠、又珠に非ざることを知ること能はず。實に精細にすべし。

Truly, even with regard to a worldly jewel, when debating its reality, it neither has marks nor lacks marks: it is only a jewel. How much more so, then, with the “jewel in the strongman’s forehead,” the jewel wrapped in a wheel-turning king’s topknot, the dragon king’s jewel, or the “jewel in the drunken man’s robe”? None of these involve things that can be seen by others. It is impossible to discern whether they have marks or lack marks. However, the aforementioned jewels all are worldly jewels. None of them are the most precious jewel of the way. How much more so then, with regard to this jewel, are you unable to know that this jewel is not a jewel? Truly, you must proceed attentively.

1 etc., etc. (unnun 云云). This expression indicates an intended repetition of what the Thirteenth Ancestor, Kapimala, said to Nāgārjuna in the Root Case: “You only understand having marks and lacking marks, but you do not understand that this jewel neither has marks nor lacks marks. You also do not yet understand that this jewel is not a jewel.”
Xuansha said,1 "The whole thing is a jewel, but who shall I make this known to?" He also said, "All worlds of the ten directions are a single bright jewel." Truly it cannot be discerned by the observation of humans and gods. However, even if it were a worldly jewel, it would not come from outside at all. It appears completely from within a person’s own mind. Therefore, Śakra, King of Devas, came to receive it and use it as the treasure of a wish-granting jewel, as the treasure of a mani jewel.

When there is illness, install this jewel and the illness will be cured instantly. Or, when there is anguish, hold this jewel and the anguish will, by itself, be removed. The appearance of the miraculous manifestations of supernormal powers also depends on this jewel. Among the seven treasures of the wheel-turning king is the mani jewel, and it produces all precious treasures. It can be used indefinitely. In this way, there are distinctions between superior and inferior karmic recompense for humans and gods.

The wish-granting jewels of the human realm are also named “grains of rice.” They are regarded as precious jewels. In comparison with the jewels of the heavens, they are established via artifice, but they are called jewels. Likewise, the Tathāgata’s relics become wish-granting jewels at the time when the buddha-dharma is extinguished. They rain down on all, also becoming rice grains that surely benefit living beings.

1 Xuansha said (Gensha iwaku 玄沙曰く). The context of this quotation is a kōan involving Xuansha Shibei 玄沙師備 (J. Gensha Shibi; 835–908), which is quoted in the following line of the Denkōroku. → “all worlds of the ten directions are a single kernel of bright jewel.”
Whether it appears as the body of the Buddha, as rice grains, as the myriad dharmas, or as “a single kernel,”¹ it appears from one’s own mind as a five-foot body, or as a three-headed form, or in the shape of a creature with fur and horns, or as the luxuriant web of myriad phenomena, item by item. However, you should understand them to be that mind-jewel.

昔の比丘の如く、寂静を願ひ山林に隐居すること勿れ。実に是れ前來も是の 如き未得道なる错りあり。近 來も是の 如き未得道なる错りあり。犹ほ諸人と肩を交え、参来参去すること閑静ならざる故に、独り山林に居して静かに坐禅行道せんと。是の如くにて、多く山谷に隱居し、妄に修錬する類、多くは以て邪路に趣き来る。所以者何となれば、其真實を知らず、徒に自己を先とする故なり。

Do not wish for quiescence and seclude yourself in a mountain forest like the bhikṣus of long ago. Truly, in earlier times, this was the mistake for those who had not yet gained the way, and these days it is still a mistake for those who have not yet gained the way. It is as if, when they rub shoulders with people, there is no tranquility in their inquiring when coming and inquiring when going, so they want to reside alone in a mountain forest and quietly follow the way in seated meditation. Most of those who say this kind of thing are the type who seclude themselves in mountain valleys and train mistakenly. Most of them, due to this, come to veer off on false paths. Why? Because they do not know this reality and futilely put their own self first.

又曰く、大梅常禅師も鉄塔を戴き、松煙の中に坐す。満山大圓禅師も虎狼を友として、雲霧の底に修す。我等も是の如く修習すべしと。実に笑ひぬべし。古人悉く得道して正師に印記を受け、暫らく道業を純熟せしめん為に、機縁を待つ間、是の如く修せしなりと知るべし。大梅は馬祖の正印を受け、満山は百丈の傳付を得し後なり。愚見の及ぶ所に非ず。隠山羅山等の古人、いづれも未得道の先に獨住せしことなし。 德行を一時に揮ひ、名を末代に留る。明眼の大聖得道の眞人なり。 徒に参ずべきを参ぜず、至るべきに至らず、山谷に居して獮猴の如くならん。尤も是れ無道心の甚きなり。

Likewise, [people] say: “Chan Master Damei Chang placed an iron stūpa on his head and sat among the misty pines. Chan Master Weishan Dayuan practiced in the clouds and mists with tigers and wolves as his companions. We should also practice in this manner.” This is truly ridiculous. You should

¹ “a single kernel” (ikka 一顆). Short for “a single kernel of bright jewel” (ikka no myō-ju 一顆の明珠), as mentioned in the saying attributed to Xuansha Shibei 玄沙師備 (J. Gensha Shibi; 835–908) above. → “all worlds of the ten directions are a single kernel of bright jewel.”
know that the ancients all gained the way, received the seal of approval from a true master, and then, in order to let their work of the way mature, while they waited for pivotal circumstances to develop, temporarily practiced in this manner.¹ That was after Damei received the true seal from Mazu, and after Weishan received Baizhang’s bequest. They were beyond foolish views. None of the ancients, such as Yinshan and Luoshan, lived alone when they had not yet gained the way. They demonstrated their meritorious practice to all their contemporaries, leaving their reputations for the latter era. They were true people, great sages with clear eyes who gained the way. If you futilely reside in mountain valleys without consulting those whom you should consult, without arriving where you should arrive, you will be just like monkeys. You will completely lack the way-seeking mind.

Those whose eye of the way is not clear but who have self-discipline in training, become śrāvakas or pratyeka-buddhas. They vainly become ones with spoiled seeds. A “spoiled seed” is a burnt seed, which destroys the potential for buddhahood. This being so, gentlemen, to meticulously train in major monasteries, to consult with good friends over a long period of time, to completely clarify the great matter, to truly finish the task of clearly discerning your own self, and then afterwards to briefly deepen your roots and to gird your loins — that is what constitutes the bequest from our ancestors of old, especially within this one gate,² where the founder of Eihei Monastery forbade living alone. He did so to prevent people from heading down false paths.

¹ practiced in this manner (kakuno gotoku shū seshi). That is to say, the people of old only went into solitary retreat in mountain forests after they had gained the way and received dharma transmission, for a brief period before they began accepting disciples of their own to teach.

² within this one gate (kono ichimon no naka). The “gate” referred to is the Sōtō Lineage established in Japan by Dōgen.
In particular, my late master, the Second Generation,¹ said: “My disciples must not live alone. Even if they have gained the way, they should train in major monasteries. Even more so, then, must members of the cohort of student trainees, too, never live alone. Any person who violates this regulation does not belong to my branch lineage.”

Likewise, Chan Master Yuanwu said: “The ancients, after attaining their goal, went off to thatched huts or stone grottoes deep in the mountains where they spent ten or twenty years eating rice boiled in a bent-legged pot.² They entirely forgot the world of humans and were long removed from defiled realms. These days we definitely do not hope to do likewise.”

Likewise, Huanglong Huinan said: “How can growing old and bent in the forest and maintaining the way by yourself compare to guiding a congregation in a major monastery?” None of the great lineage builders of recent generations preferred living alone. How much more so for people whose faculties are entirely inferior to those of the people of old? You must simply train and pursue the way in a major monastery.

The ancients, in just this manner, lost attentiveness in this regard, and on that account he licentiously enjoyed tranquility. Thus, when a bhikṣu new

¹ Second Generation (Nidai 二代). The reference here is to Ejō 懐奘 (1198–1280), the second abbot of Eihei Monastery, who was Keizan’s precept master (kaishi 戒師) when he went forth from household life. Ejō is featured in Chapter 52 of the Denkōroku. Dōgen was the founding abbot of Eihei Monastery. The Third Generation [abbot] (Sandai 三代) was Tetsū Gikai 徹通義介 (1219–1309), from whom Keizan received dharma transmission.

² bent-legged pot (sekkyaku tōji 折脚鐺兒). A three-legged pot suitable for use over an open fire, as when cooking outdoors. Mention of this implement here is suggestive of the rustic life of a hermit living simply in the mountains, albeit with a supply of rice, which implies some kind of support from donors.

³ the ancient (C. guren 古人; J. kojin). That is to say, the aforementioned old man in white clothing who was reborn as a serpent.
to training came to seek instruction from that master, the latter did not answer when he should have answered, and he gave rise to anger. Truly know that if you live alone in a secluded abode, separated from good friends while you have not yet regulated body and mind, then even if you can preach the dharma as well as Nāgārjuna, you will merely be one of those who incur karmic recompense.

People, because you have thickly planted good karmic roots, you are able to correctly hear the true dharma of the Tathāgata. What it says is: “Do not become close with kings and ministers of state.”¹ Do not take pleasure in living alone in a secluded abode.² You must only be vigorous in your work of the way and whole-heartedly pass beyond the dharma source. This, truly, is the authentic oral transmission of the Tathāgata.

Verse on the Old Case【頌古】

From a solitary light comes a numinous vacancy, always without obscurity. The wish-granting mani jewel distributes its illumination.

1 “Do not become close with kings and ministers of state” (kokuō daijin ni shingon sezu 国王大臣に親近せず). This is a paraphrase of what the Venerable Kapimala said to the prince named Cloud Sovereign about the Tathāgata’s teachings, quoted above.

2 Do not take pleasure in living alone in a secluded abode (dokujū kankyo wo kōgyō sezu 獨住閑居を好樂せず). This is a paraphrase of Ejō’s admonition to his disciples, quoted above, which is further supported by quotes from Chan Masters Yuanwu and Huanglong Huinan.