



**Good morning, everybody.** I have a few death stories to share with you from our beloved teacher.

The first occurred in Poland in 1986 at a dharma talk. Zen Master Seung Sahn was there in the dead of winter, and it was a room smaller than this, with standing room only. It was night time and outside the windows you could only see the noses pressed up against the glass. After the talk, and it was a wonderful talk, he patted me on the knee and he himself said, “Good speech, yah?” I said, “Very good speech.” And he said, “Now, not famous. After die, very famous!”

He was very straight up. And I think that’s true—I think his teaching has only just begun. So much of what he has imparted to us is just beginning and it’s like what the Buddha gave us: it’s 2,500 years later and we are still doing it. That’s just part of his teaching.

I had practiced in the Tibetan tradition for a few years before this one. There is this whole emphasis on reincarnation and choosing where you are going to be reborn. Somehow these Tibetan lamas will tell you before they die, “Look for me on the mountaintop in such-and-such a province in two years and five days.” So I said to Dae Soen Sa Nim, “Do they have a corner on that market? Are you going to do something like that? Can you determine, do you know where you are going to be reborn?”

He looked at me and said, “Of course!”

I said, “Really, where?”

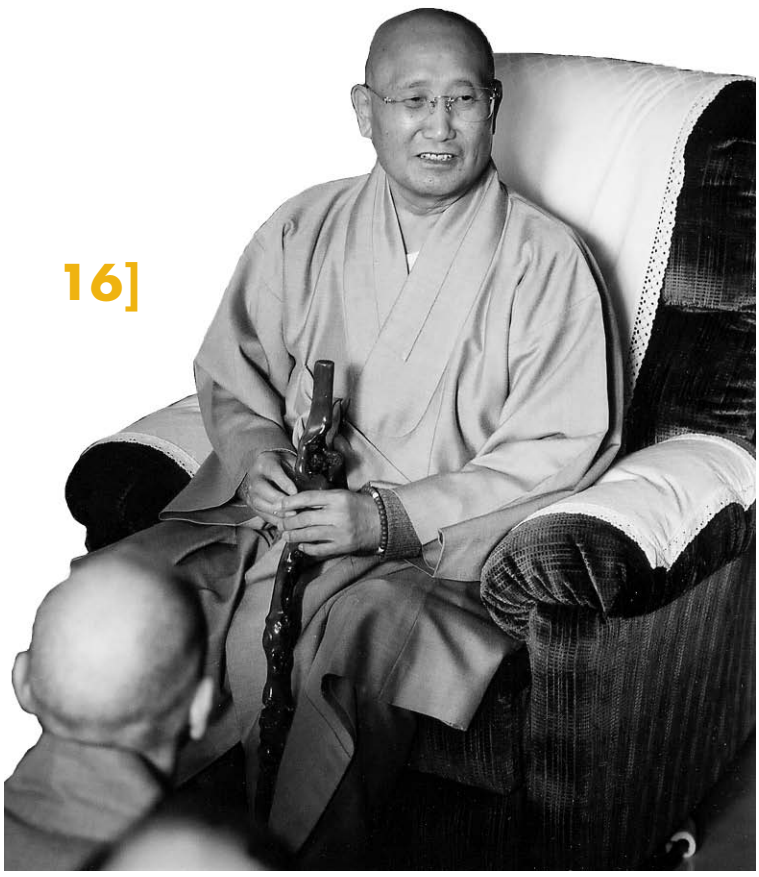
He said, “KOREA!”

I think there’s a good chance that we’ll be eating kim chee for generations to come.

That was something so great about him. He really wouldn’t let you get attached to anything, and yet he would go along with all of this and use it as a teaching tool.

Another really beautiful story was recently, when he was—he was suffering a lot. I am grateful to him for his benevolence, that he faded away at his own great physical

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pain over the last few years. It gave us all a chance to get used to this idea, that he would be going soon. I think it made it a little easier, at least for me, so that it could be a relief that he could get out of that body. His rental car needed a new transmission.

In this state, a student said to him sometime recently—it's a great Buddhist question we all have: "How do we get beyond life and death?" That's why a lot of us come through the door. So this monk said to him, "Well, Dae Soen Sa Nim, how do you go beyond life and death?"

He looked at the monk and he said, "We are life and death." That's true. He was always very deep in bringing it down to earth for us.

Lastly, his famous question about the rental car was great. For the first ten years, he would say, "This is just your car. But who is driving this car?" I know it gave me a heart attack the first time I heard that, and it gives everyone a heart attack because that's the question we have. Who is driving the car?

As he did with all his teaching, he refined it. He was always making it better and streamlining it and making it more efficient. Soon the car became the rental car. Or, as he would say, "the lentil car." He was always telling us that one day we must return this car. But I have no doubt that the driver's direction is still the same. Thank you.

*Zen Master Bon Yeon*

