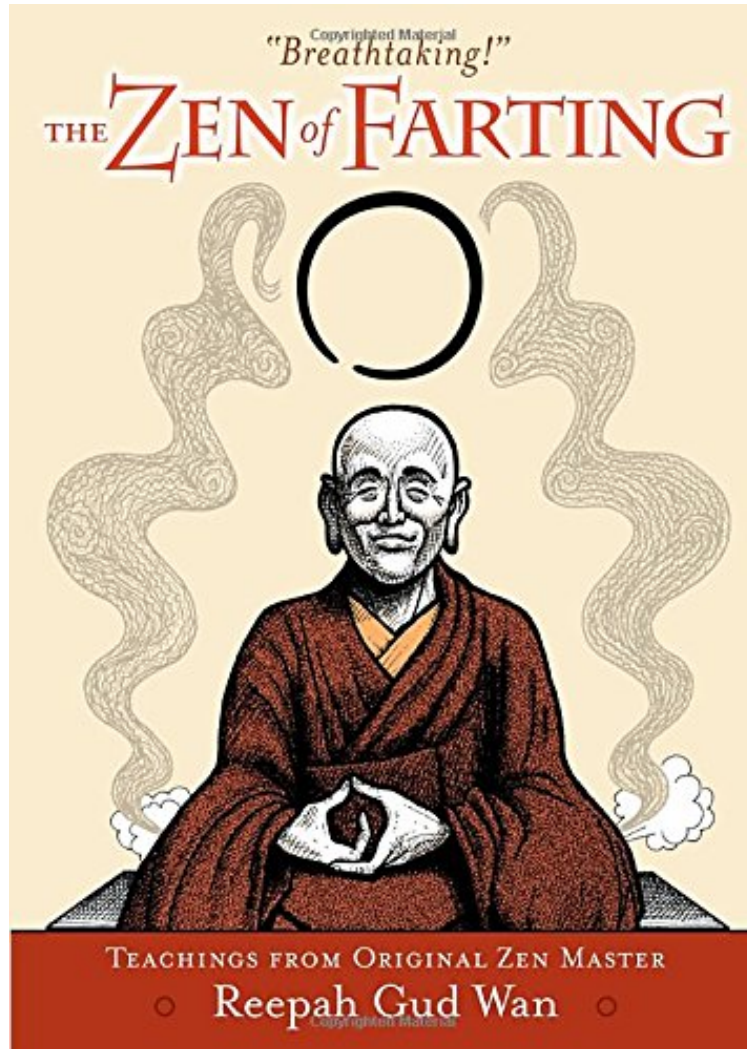


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The Zen of Farting

Reepah Gud Wan

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funny, great as a gag gift

In 1993, a Taiwanese fisherman opened a chest that had been in his family for centuries. Inside, he found a manuscript which may be as significant as the Dead Sea scrolls—a manuscript which will revolutionize our thinking about the origins of Zen. Written on a rice paper scroll, the manuscript records the teachings of the founder of Zen, the Master Reepah Gud Wan. It makes it quite clear that Reepah, a legitimate teacher of Buddhism, was frustrated by the inability of his students to grasp the abstract concepts of the Buddha. In desperation, he decided to play a joke on them. He invented the Zen of Farting, confident that even the densest pupil would realize that he was making a joke and laugh at his excessive seriousness—not to mention his farts. The joke went over like a stale air biscuit. Soon, the Master had thousands of students eager to learn this brave new spiritual teaching, the Zen of Farting. Thus was Zen born, not of heaven, but of the 'ethereal child of earth.'

About the Author No one knows much about Reepah Gud Wan, who lived before the 10th century in China and Japan, except that he was a legitimate Buddhist monk who tired of the inability of his students to grasp the essence of his teaching. In order to shake them up, he introduced the Zen of Farting, expecting his students to see the joke, laugh at it, and then understand his Buddhist teachings better. Unfortunately, they failed to get the joke.