

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།
Karmaśataka

Toh 340

SPECIAL EDITION

2021



The translation and online publication of *The Hundred Deeds* represents a significant achievement in 84000's progress over the past decade. In commemoration of our tenth anniversary, and as an expression of the ways in which we collaborate to make the words of the Buddha as accessible as possible for future generations, we asked children around the world to illustrate the 127 individual stories contained within.

This special edition publication celebrates 84000's tenth year of connecting the world with wisdom, and with this publication we make the aspiration that the Buddhadharmā continues to flourish, and we thank you for your sustained support thus far.

With special thanks to:

All the children who took their time and shared with us their creative interpretations of the stories in this sūtra, and the dedicated and talented designers who volunteered their time to render this text and these illustrations into the beautiful edition you see before you today.

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Designed by:

Yijing Space, He Hanzhen, He Wenzhen

The Hundred Deeds

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Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73 (mdo sde, ha), folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74 (mdo sde, a), folios 1.b–128.b.

Translated by Dr. Lozang Jamspal (International
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INTRODUCTION

The Hundred Deeds is a collection of stories or *avadāna*, a narrative genre widely represented in the Sanskrit Buddhist literature and its derivatives. The term *avadāna* can be analyzed and understood in several ways. One common interpretation is “legend,” but that understanding is perhaps too rigid, as well as too romantic, for what could be described as religious or spiritual biography. The general intention of *avadāna* literature is to elicit faith and devotion in the reader through an object lesson in karmic cause and effect: how, for example, a noble act motivated by faith and devotion toward the Three Jewels (Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha), or toward another object of veneration, yields a good result, while the result of an ignoble act is dreadful. Historically, the specific functions of *avadāna* literature were to propagate Buddhism and to provide inspiration and preliminary education in the Dharma, particularly for laypersons and the recently ordained. It can still perform these functions today.

The collection was written at the beginning of the Common Era, and is most likely the product of the Sarvāstivādin school of Mahāyāna Buddhism; it is thus likely to have originated in the northwest of India in the vicinity of Kashmir. Léon Feer, a late nineteenth century scholar of *The Hundred Deeds*, suggests that the Sarvāstivādins were not responsible for the Sanskrit text, but does not offer any indication of which school he believes may have been responsible. Whatever the case may be, the Tibetan text closely resembles the texts of the

Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya found in the Kangyur in its wording and in its structural format—in parts, each with its list of contents. Indeed it shares with that corpus a large number of passages, not only stock phrases and modular passages but also whole episodes.

The Hundred Deeds survives exclusively in Tibetan translation; the original Sanskrit version is no longer extant. The Tibetan has no translator’s colophon, and there is no direct evidence of when, or by whom, it was made. It may possibly have been first translated somewhat before the major imperial translation project of the early period began; several sources, including Butön’s *History of the Dharma*, mention that it was translated by Drenka (*bran ka*) Mūlakośa and Nyak Jñānakumāra during the reign of the father and immediate predecessor of King Trisong Detsen, King Tridé Tsuktsen (*khri lde gtsug btsan*, r. 705–55 CE, also known as *mes ag tshoms*). In any case, the Tibetan translation is included in the Denkarma (*ldan dkar ma*) inventory compiled during the Tibetan imperial period and usually dated 812 CE, so it must have been produced no later than that date.

There are two accounts of how the text was saved from destruction during the period of upheaval around the reign of Langdarma (r. 836–42 CE) by being taken to eastern Tibet. One account mentions that three monks from Palchubori Monastery transported *The Hundred Deeds* and other texts to the Amdo region while fleeing from persecution by King Langdarma. The other account states that Palgyi Dorje carried the text to the Kham region after he had assassinated the king.

There is another collection of broadly similar narratives, the *Avadānaśataka*, that is perhaps the closest kin of *The Hundred Deeds* in terms of style and content,

and thus may serve as a primary reference point for comparison and contrast. The temporal relationship between the two collections, as well as the seniority of one collection over the other, is a matter for debate. The *Avadānaśataka* has a definite plan and a clear, orderly structure: it has ten chapters, each containing ten stories based on a common theme, giving a total of one hundred stories. Although *The Hundred Deeds* is similarly divided into ten parts, it lacks the *Avadānaśataka*'s structural adherence to round numbers and its more developed thematic arrangement; *The Hundred Deeds* contains approximately 127 stories by Feer's count (of these, some fifteen are also in the *Avadānaśataka*), and the collection is not organized around fixed sets of common themes.

The Hundred Deeds is not entirely lacking in thematic structure, however. The stories in the eighth chapter share a common theme, that of prophecy (*vyākaraṇa*), the same as the first chapter of the *Avadānaśataka*. Each prophecy is essentially an "explanation" of a person's future buddhahood. The primary aspect that differentiates *vyākaraṇa* *avadānas* from the majority of other *avadānas* is that they end with a prophecy rather than in fulfillment; that is, the protagonist of each *vyākaraṇa* *avadāna* will certainly achieve enlightenment, but not by the story's end.

Furthermore, most of the texts in *The Hundred Deeds* share a basic structure. In general, a given text will begin with a narrative from the time of Buddha Śākyamuni, at the conclusion of which Śākyamuni explains to his monks which of the characters' previous actions caused the present state of events. This explanation then leads to a second narrative, and occasionally also a third, within the same text. Through these interconnecting stories, the text gives practical examples of karmic cause and effect.

The presence of the bodhisattva vow (*pranidhāna*) further differentiates *The Hundred Deeds* from the *Avadānaśataka*. In the present collection, the bodhisattva vow appears some ninety times, and in the *Avadānaśataka* only fourteen times. The preeminence of the bodhisattva vow in *The Hundred Deeds* would certainly seem to place it closer to the work of the Mahāsāṅghika school. However, some scholars believe these are later interpolations in what was originally a Sarvāstivādin text.

While calling attention to the relative lack of thematic structure in *The Hundred Deeds*, Feer nonetheless classifies several of the collection's stories using the following categories: parallel, *jātaka*, and historical *avadānas*. The parallel *avadānas* are those in which both the past and present tales are essentially the same, with the common narrative generally lacking karmic punishment or reward. The *jātaka* (Buddha's "birth story") *avadānas* are further subdivided into partial and "pure" *jātakas*. The *avadānas* not considered "pure" are those in which the Buddha acts as protagonist for only a portion of the tale of the past. The historical *avadānas* are those that feature well-known Buddhist figures as protagonists or secondary characters as well as events from the history of Buddhism. These categories are by no means discrete; there are several instances in which Feer cites a single story as belonging to two categories, if not all three.

The present English translation is based mainly on the Tibetan text of the Degé Kangyur; other Kangyurs were consulted where the Degé reading called for further investigation. Where one folio of the text was missing in the Degé Kangyur (vol. 73, folio 12a, see notes), the corresponding passage in the Stok Palace Kangyur was used to complete it.

Part One

- 1 The Dog
 - 2 The Story of Little Eyes
 - 3 The Story of Pūraṇa
 - 4 The Person with a Curving Spine: Two Stories
 4. i The First Story about “The Person with a Curving Spine”
 4. ii The Second Story About “The Person with a Curving Spine”
 - 5 The Story of Udayin
 - 6 Victory Banner
 - 7 The Story of Kṣemā
 - 8 The Story of Maṇiprabha
 - 9 The Story of Jasmine
 - 10 Give It to Me!
 - 11 The Story of She Who Gathers
 - 12 The Tailor
-

Part Two

- 1 The Chariot: Four Stories
 1. i The First “Chariot” Story
 1. ii The Second “Chariot” Story
 1. iii The Third “Chariot” Story
 1. iv The Fourth “Chariot” Story
 - 2 The Story of Earnest
 - 3 The Story of Gopā
 - 4 The Story of Keśinī
 - 5 The Story of Lotus Color
 - 6 The Butcher
 - 7 The Story of Golden Color
 - 8 The Cowherds
 - 9 A Band of Friends
 - 10 The Story of Abhaya
 - 11 The Story of Lake of Jewels
 - 12 The Story of Wealth’s Delight
 - 13 The Bear: Two Stories
 13. i The First Story of the Bear
 13. ii The Second Story of the Bear
 - 14 The Story of Small Person with a Curving Spine
 - 15 The Rākṣasa
-

Part Three

- 1 The Story of Kacaṅkalā
- 2 The Story of Kaineya

- 3 The Betrothal of the Bride: Two Stories
 3. i The First “Betrothal of the Bride” Story
 3. ii The Second “Betrothal of the Bride” Story
 - 4 Cuts: Two Stories
 4. i The First “Cut” Story
 4. ii The Second “Cut” Story
 - 5 Being Devoured
 - 6 The Story of Nandaka
 - 7 Chunks of Meat
 - 8 The One Who Thought He Saw His Son
 - 9 The Farmer
 - 10 Death
 - 11 A Story about Kokālika
 - 12 The Tired Man
 - 13 Morsel
-

Part Four

- 1 The Story of Maitrībala
 - 2 The Dark Storm
 - 3 Ants: Two Stories
 3. i The First “Ant” Story
 3. ii The Second “Ant” Story
 - 4 The Lay of the Land
 - 5 The Story of Āraṇyaka
 - 6 The Elephant
 - 7 The Nāga (1)
 - 8 The Story of Siṃha
 - 9 The Schism in the Saṅgha
 - 10 The Dark Forest
 - 11 The One Who Heard
-

Part Five

- 1 The Story of Virūpa
 - 2 The Story of Kṣemaṅkara
 - 3 The Young Untouchable
 - 4 The Story of Subhadra the Charioteer
 - 5 The Story of Sahadeva
 - 6 The Bull
 - 7 The Story of Good Compassion
 - 8 The Story of Fleshy
 - 9 The Story of Black
 - 10 The Story of Iṣudhara
 - 11 The Man Who Was Trampled
 - 12 The Story of Jackal
-

Part Six

- 1 The Bird: Two Stories
 1. i The First Bird Story
 1. ii The Second Bird Story
 - 2 The Story of Majestic Body
 - 3 The Teacher
 - 4 A Story about Kāśyapa
 - 5 A Story about Ānanda
 - 6 The Story of Son of Grasping
 - 7 The Story of Subhadra the Mendicant
 - 8 The Worthy of Offerings Litany
 - 9 Latecomers to the Dharma: Two Stories
 9. i The First “Latecomer” Story
 9. ii The Second “Latecomer” Story
-

Part Seven

- 1 The Story of Paṅgu
 - 2 Bhādra
 - 3 The Blind Man
 - 4 The Story of Nirgrantha Kāśyapa
 - 5 The Story of Foremost Kāśyapa
 - 6 The Story of Mounted on an Elephant
 - 7 The Story of Saraṇa
 - 8 The Mṛgavratins
 - 9 The Story of Candrā
 - 10 The Kinnara Spirits: Two Stories
 10. i The First “Kinnara” Story
 10. ii The Second “Kinnara” Story
-

Part Eight

- 1 The Story of Pūrṇa
 - 2 The Sacrifice
 - 3 The Lazy Man
 - 4 A Story about Anāthapiṇḍada
 - 5 The Humble One
 - 6 Padmottama: Two Stories
 6. i The First “Padmottama” Story
 6. ii The Second “Padmottama” Story
 - 7 The Story of Sudarśana
 - 8 The Story of Ratnaśikhin
 - 9 Wealth
 - 10 The Story of Vijaya
-

Part Nine

- 1 The Sons
 - 2 The Crevasse
 - 3 The Ransom
 - 4 The Attack
 - 5 Trapped
 - 6 The Partridge
 - 7 Father, or The Story of Sudarśana
 - 8 The Bandits
 - 9 The Piśācas
 - 10 The Story of Head of Indra
-

Part Ten

- 1 Śakra
 - 2 The King
 - 3 The Hunter
 - 4 The Story of Deluded
 - 5 The Brahmin: Three Stories
 5. i The First “Brahmin” Story
 5. ii The Second “Brahmin” Story
 5. iii The Third “Brahmin” Story
 - 6 The Story of the Householder Govinda
 - 7 The Quarrel
 - 8 The Nāga (2)
 - 9 Two Stories about King Śibi
 9. i The First Story about King Śibi
 9. ii The Second Story of King Śibi
 - 10 Kauśāmbī
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The Hundred Deeds

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Part One

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Person with a Curving Spine” | 10 | Give It to Me! |
| | | 11 | The Story of She Who
Gathers |
| | | 12 | The Tailor |
-

Part One (1)

The Dog

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

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Karmaśataka

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Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Dog

1.2 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s—who was fond of philosophical extremists.

1.3 When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin, a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

1.4 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. Once he was able to walk, his father brought home a little puppy for him to play with. Any time the puppy saw philosophical extremists, she would run and bite at them, sometimes tearing their robes. But when she saw Buddhist monastics she would trot up, lick their feet, and circumambulate them clockwise while wagging her tail.

1.5 The buddhas, the blessed ones, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless

by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

1.6 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

1.7 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

1.8 Just as the buddhas, the blessed ones, regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night—so too the great disciples of the

buddhas regard the world with disciples' eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night. When Venerable Śāriputra regarded the world with his disciple's eyes, he knew that the time had come to tame the householder and his retinue. In the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went for alms in Śrāvastī.

1.9 As he went for alms, Śāriputra eventually came to the home of that householder. As soon as the dog saw him from a distance, she jumped up and ran right up to Śāriputra, just as she had with the other monks. She very respectfully licked his feet and circumambulated him three times while wagging her tail.

1.10 The householder saw all this and thought, "My! This one has fallen so low as to possess the body of a dog. If even she thinks to pay him such esteem, then surely this monk is a great being. I should invite this monk and offer him food." Reflecting in this way he approached Venerable Śāriputra, bowed down at Śāriputra's feet, and said, "Lord Śāriputra, whatever food you need, please take it here." Venerable Śāriputra assented by his silence.

1.11 Understanding that by his silence Venerable Śāriputra had given his assent, the householder then prepared a seat for Venerable Śāriputra and said, "Venerable Śāriputra, please sit upon the seat that I have prepared," whereupon Venerable Śāriputra sat on the seat prepared for him.

1.12 Once the householder knew that Venerable Śāriputra was comfortably seated, by his own hand he contented him with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that he wished. After he had contented him with many different kinds of good, wholesome foods by his own hand, and had proffered all that he wished, once he knew that Venerable Śāriputra had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, he sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

1.13 Venerable Śāriputra directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature of the householder and his retinue, and taught them the Dharma accordingly.

1.14 When they heard it, the householder and his retinue destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Having seen the truths, they went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts. After Venerable Śāriputra had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted the householder with a discourse on the Dharma, he rose from his seat and departed.

1.15 Having seen the truths, the householder began to give gifts and make merit such that his home became like an open well for those in need. The householder invited Śāriputra to take food at his home again and again. Venerable Śāriputra and the householder would give food to the dog, and the householder would sit before Venerable Śāriputra to listen to the Dharma. The dog too would sit down before Venerable Śāriputra and listen to the Dharma. The householder reflected, "Such good things I have realized, and all on account of this dog!" Realizing this, he took very good care of her.

1.16 One day the dog fell ill, and Śāriputra said to her, "And so it is, child: All conditioned things are impermanent. All conditioned things are suffering. All phenomena are selfless. Nirvāṇa is peace. Let your mind be filled with joy at the thought of me, and you may even be released from rebirth in the animal realm." With that, Venerable Śāriputra departed.

1.17 Not long after he had gone, the dog died, filled with joy at the thought of Venerable Śāriputra. After she died, she took rebirth in the same house, in the womb of the householder's foremost wife.

When the dog died, Venerable Śāriputra returned to the house, where the householder

informed him, “Lord Śāriputra, our dog has passed away.”

1.18 “Keep the dog’s body in a secluded place,” Venerable Śāriputra instructed, “for those bones will be of benefit to her later on.”

“As you wish, Lord Śāriputra,” said the householder, and the householder put the dog’s dead body in a place where no one would see it.

1.19 After nine or ten months had passed, the householder’s wife gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they named her according to their clan. They reared her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake.

1.20 When she had grown, Venerable Śāriputra told her, “Child, sit and listen to the Dharma,” but she had become arrogant on account of her well-proportioned shape and youthfulness, and was so distracted that she was unable to listen to the Dharma. One day Venerable Śāriputra recognized how to uncover her potential. He set the bones of the dog in front of her, and blessed the young woman in such a way that she remembered her former lives.

1.21 Recalling her former lives, the young woman was overcome with grief and thought, “Look at the difficult task Noble Śāriputra has done for me! Thanks to him I have been freed from the realms of animal birth.” At this thought she was filled with happiness, and sat before Venerable Śāriputra to listen to the Dharma.

1.22 Then Venerable Śāriputra, directly apprehending her thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature, taught her the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the young woman destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of

the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where she sat.

1.23 Having seen the truths, she rose from her seat, drew down the right shoulder of her upper garment, bowed to Venerable Śāriputra with her palms together, and implored him, “Lord Śāriputra, if permitted, I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. I too wish to practice the holy life in the presence of the Blessed One.”

1.24 Venerable Śāriputra told her parents of her faith and then presented her to Mahāprajāpatī, who led her to go forth as a novice, ordained her, and gave her instruction. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, she manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free of the attachments of the three realms, her mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of her hands as like space itself. She became cool like wet sandalwood. Her insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. She achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. She had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. She became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

1.25 Now an arhat, she remembered Venerable Śāriputra’s previous kindness and approached him again and again, prostrating herself at his feet and saying, “Thanks to Noble Śāriputra, I was freed from the realms of animal birth and achieved great virtues. It is all due to the difficult task the noble one has done for me.”

1.26 Many monks overheard her saying this over and over again, and immediately asked Venerable Śāriputra, “Venerable Śāriputra, what is this nun thinking, saying this over and over again?”

“Did you see the puppy at the householder’s home?” Venerable Śāriputra asked.

“Yes, Lord Śāriputra, we did,” they replied.

1.27 “The very same one died filled with joy at the thought of me and was reborn in the home of that householder. Now that she remembers her former lives, she speaks these words to me to acknowledge that previous kindness.”

1.28 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what was the action this nun performed that ripened into her birth as a dog? What did she do after she died and took rebirth as a human being that she pleased and did not displease the Blessed One, went forth in the Blessed One’s doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

1.29 The Blessed One replied, “Monks, it was partly her past actions, and it is partly her present actions as well.”

“Lord, what action did she take in the past?”

1.30 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in the city of Vārāṇasī.

1.31 “One day a child was born to him who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. As she grew up she gained faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and asked her parents if she could go forth. Once she had gone forth, she studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of her wisdom and freedom.

1.32 “Having acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick, she thought, ‘How wonderful! With all the profit and acclaim I’ve gained, I can see to the welfare of fellow practitioners of the holy life.’ And she served the

twofold saṅgha in accordance with the Dharma.

1.33 “One day when she was busy, she asked for help from a group of nuns who were on the paths of learning and no more to learn. They replied, ‘We cannot abandon our virtuous works to accomplish your task.’

1.34 “When she heard this she bristled with fury. Seething, the nun shouted at them, ‘You’re like dogs! All I do is look after you and fill your stomachs— can you not help me for even a moment?’

1.35 “Thereupon the nuns thought, ‘It’s not right for this emotionally afflicted person, so abased, to circle in saṃsāra and meet with great suffering.’ Reflecting in this way, they thought, ‘We have to help her,’ and asked, ‘Do you know who we are? And do you know who you yourself are?’

“ ‘I know,’ she replied, ‘that you have gone forth, as have I.’

1.36 “The nuns responded, ‘Though as your elder sisters we have gone forth as you have, you are an ordinary person, bound by every fetter, whereas we have accomplished our task. So acknowledge your mistake as such. Otherwise you are certain to roam in saṃsāra and meet with great suffering.’

“Hearing their words, the nun was flooded with regret, and with renewed vigor she offered her respectful service to the twofold saṅgha and practiced pure conduct all her life.

1.37 “At the time of her death, she prayed, ‘Oh, but by the root of virtue of my having gone forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, my lifetime of practicing pure conduct, and the service I rendered in accord with the Dharma, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine

alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship. May I not meet with the results of the act of speaking harshly to those fellow practitioners of the holy life.’

1.38 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that nun then is now this nun. The ripening of the act of speaking harshly to those fellow practitioners of the holy life caused her to be reborn as a dog for five hundred lifetimes. At the time of her death she prayed, ‘Wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship.’ And that action ripened such that she was born into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

1.39 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased me, not displeased me, go forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. These were her past actions.

1.40 “You may ask, ‘What are her present actions?’ Born as a dog, she was filled with joy at the thought of Śāriputra. Because of this she took birth among humans. These are her present actions.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Little Eyes*



The Dog

Jigme Rigsel / 9 years old

Part One (2)

The Story of
Little Eyes

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Story of Little Eyes

1.41 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

1.42 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and once he was able to walk, his father brought home a puppy and gave it to the child to play with. The child taught the puppy how to eat, and when the puppy had grown, he went out to the road and many others fed him as well.

1.43 The buddhas, the blessed ones, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a

perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

1.44 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

1.45 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

1.46 Just as the blessed buddhas regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night—so too the great listeners regard the world with their listener’s eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night. When Venerable Śāriputra regarded the world with his listener’s eyes, he knew that the time had come to tame the householder and his retinue.

1.47 In the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl,

he went for alms in Śrāvastī. As he went for alms, Venerable Śāriputra eventually came to the home of that householder. The dog caught sight of Venerable Śāriputra, ran with all his might, bit him, and tore his Dharma robes. The householder saw this and immediately stopped the dog. When he had washed Venerable Śāriputra's wounds and wrapped them with cloth, he bowed down at his feet and implored him, "Lord Śāriputra, please take your food here." Venerable Śāriputra assented to the householder by his silence.

1.48 Understanding that by his silence Venerable Śāriputra had given his assent, the householder then prepared a seat for him and said, "Venerable Śāriputra, please sit upon the seat that I have prepared," and Venerable Śāriputra sat on the seat prepared for him. Once the householder knew that Venerable Śāriputra was comfortably seated, by his own hand he contented him with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that he wished.

1.49 After the householder had contented him with many different kinds of good, wholesome foods by his own hand, and had proffered all that he wished, Venerable Śāriputra partook of the day's meal and gave his remaining food to the dog. When he had finished eating it, the dog looked up at Venerable Śāriputra's face. Once the householder knew that Venerable Śāriputra had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, he sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

1.50 Venerable Śāriputra directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature of the householder and his retinue, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. After hearing it, the householder and his retinue destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat. Having seen the truths, they went for refuge and took the

fundamental precepts.

1.51 "Lord Śāriputra," said the householder, "for as long as I live, please accept from me your provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seat, and medicines to cure the sick."

Śāriputra replied, "There are other householders I must help as well. Please allow me to go." At this, he rose from his seat and departed.

1.52 After the householder had seen the truths, gone for refuge, and taken the fundamental precepts, he began to give gifts and make merit. From time to time he would also extend an invitation to Venerable Śāriputra and make food for him. After eating, Venerable Śāriputra would give the remaining food to the dog.

1.53 The dog was very happy with Venerable Śāriputra. He was so happy that whenever Venerable Śāriputra came to the house, he greeted him, licked his feet, and circumambulated him three times while wagging his tail. Whenever Venerable Śāriputra came to give a Dharma talk and the time came for him to leave, the dog escorted him a little distance, then circumambulated him three times before he went away.

1.54 One day Venerable Śāriputra came to the house again, took his food, and gave a Dharma talk to the householder. As he was departing, the dog followed him outside onto the main road, licked his feet, and circumambulated him three times while wagging his tail. As the dog was returning to the house, some other dogs tore him apart, killing him. He died filled with joy at the thought of the elder monk Śāriputra, transmigrated, and took rebirth in the same house, in the womb of the householder's wife.

1.55 Venerable Śāriputra knew just how the dog had been killed by the other dogs after they had parted. He contemplated where the dog would take rebirth, and saw that it would be in the same house, in the womb of the householder's wife. Upon seeing this,

out of love for the dog he went to the householder's home alone, without attendants.

1.56 The householder saw that Venerable Śāriputra was alone, without companions or attendants, and he inquired, "Noble one, why have you come here alone, without companions or attendants? Noble one, is there no one at all who could attend you?"

"Where shall we find attendants, if one such as yourself does not grant them to us?" replied Venerable Śāriputra.

1.57 The householder said to him, "Lord Śāriputra, my wife has conceived, so if we have a son, noble one, I shall offer him to you as an attendant."

"The virtuous keep their promises," said Venerable Śāriputra. Having spoken thus, Venerable Śāriputra departed.

1.58 After nine or ten months had passed, the householder's wife gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, though his eyes were small. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, "What name should we give this child?" And they named him, saying, "Since the child's eyes are small, his name will be Little Eyes."

1.59 They reared young Little Eyes on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

1.60 One day Venerable Śāriputra saw that the time had come for Little Eyes to go forth. In the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went for alms in Śrāvastī. As he went for alms, he eventually came to the householder's home, and there sat on the seat

prepared for him.

1.61 After he had taken his seat, Venerable Śāriputra reminded the householder, "Householder, before this child was born you granted him to me as an attendant. The virtuous keep their promises, do they not? Didn't you yourself make such a promise?"

1.62 "Yes, noble one, I did make just such a promise," the householder replied, and he took the child by his two hands, offered him to Venerable Śāriputra, and told him, "Child, before you were born, I offered you to the noble one. Therefore go, and be an attendant of the noble one."

The child said, "This will be of benefit to me," and with those words he followed Venerable Śāriputra away.

1.63 Venerable Śāriputra brought the child to the monastery, where he led him to go forth as a novice and instructed him. Still in his novitiate, the child cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

1.64 One time after he had attained arhatship, he saw scars on Venerable Śāriputra's feet as he was anointing them and asked, "Preceptor, how did you get these scars?"

"Child," Venerable Śāriputra told him, "think on how I got these scars."

1.65 "I see it was I who bit him in a previous life as a dog," thought the novice. "And I see the life from which I died, transmigrated, and took rebirth as a

dog.” He saw that he had died and taken rebirth as that dog, and he also saw that for five hundred lifetimes he had died as a dog, transmigrated, and taken rebirth only as a dog.

1.66 He thought, “Had my preceptor not thought of me, where would I have taken rebirth in the future when I died there and transmigrated?” Reflecting in this way, he saw himself taking birth again as that very dog. In the same way he saw himself for five hundred future lives dying, transmigrating, and taking birth over and over only as a dog.

1.67 “It was he who saved me from falling so low!” he thought further. “By establishing me in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of *nirvāṇa*, my preceptor undertook a difficult task for me, over and over again. What method is there to repay the kindness of one’s preceptor, other than service and respect? When I take full ordination I won’t be able to offer such service—but oh! By remaining a novice for as long as I live I can continue to serve him respectfully.”

1.68 With this in mind, he said to Venerable Śāriputra, “Preceptor, for as long as I live I shall serve my preceptor with respect,” and Śāriputra replied, “Do as you wish, my child.”

One day the monks asked him, “Little Eyes, why don’t you take full ordination?”

1.69 “I must repay the kindness of my preceptor,” he told them. “By remaining a novice for as long as I live, I shall be able to serve him respectfully.”

“What particular kindness did your preceptor do for you?” they asked.

1.70 He told the monks the story in detail, whereupon the monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, what action did Little Eyes take that ripened into his birth as a dog, such that, if Venerable Śāriputra had not thought of him, he would have taken rebirth only as a dog for five hundred lifetimes, and what action did he take that once he had died as a dog he transmigrated and took birth once again as a

human into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth? What action did he take that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship? What action did he take that ripened into his having small eyes?”

1.71 “Monks,” explained the Blessed One, “Little Eyes committed and accumulated the actions himself at a previous time. Monks, the actions that he committed and accumulated did not ripen into the external element of earth. They did not ripen into the element of water, nor the element of fire, nor the element of wind. The actions he committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but his own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

1.72 “When the time arrives—even if
A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act
That sentient beings amass.

1.73 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in the city of Vārāṇasī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

1.74 “One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. When he grew up he found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened

Buddha Kāśyapa, and after asking for his parents' permission, went forth.

1.75 “Once he had gone forth, he studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of his wisdom and freedom. Having acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick, he thought to himself, ‘How wonderful! With all the profit and acclaim I’ve gained, I can see to the welfare of fellow practitioners of the holy life.’ And he served the twofold saṅgha in accordance with the Dharma.

1.76 “One evening, one of his duties, that of serving the evening drink, fell instead to an arhat monk. After distributing the evening drink to the saṅgha, the arhat was weary, so he went to his quarters, crossed his legs, and sat down.

“The evening drink still needed to be served to the benefactors, who began to ask the other monks, ‘Whose turn is it today to serve the evening drink?’

1.77 “They replied that today it was the monk so-and-so’s turn. The one who was normally appointed to serve them, seething, closed his eyes as if asleep and said, ‘It’s the one whose eyes are like this—I’ll find him!’

1.78 “Having said this, he went to the arhat and said, ‘Lord, for your sake I’ve pleased all our benefactors and patrons, and respectfully served your every need. Now that you’ve enjoyed all I’ve given you in faith, do you come home to sit and sleep like a dog?’

1.79 “Thereupon the arhat thought, ‘It’s not right for this emotionally afflicted person, who has become so abased, to circle in saṃsāra and meet with great suffering.’ Reflecting in this way, he thought, ‘I have to help him.’

1.80 “With this thought he said to the monk, ‘Lord, do you know who I am? And do you know who you yourself are?’

“I know that you have gone forth,’ he replied, ‘as have I.’

1.81 “ ‘Though we two are like brothers in having

gone forth,’ the arhat said, ‘you are an ordinary person, bound by every fetter, whereas I am an arhat, liberated from every fetter. You’ve spoken harshly to me. You must acknowledge your mistake. Otherwise you are certain to roam in saṃsāra and meet with great suffering.’

1.82 “Hearing his words, the monk was flooded with great regret. He bowed down at the monk’s feet, asked his forgiveness, and with renewed vigor offered his respectful service to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. All his life, he practiced pure conduct and served the saṅgha in accord with the Dharma.

1.83 “At the time of his death, he prayed, ‘Oh, but by the root of virtue of my having gone forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, my practice of pure conduct all my life, and the service I rendered in accord with the Dharma, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth! May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship. May I not meet with the results of the wrongful act of speaking harshly to fellow practitioners of the holy life.’

1.84 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was of service then is now the novice Little Eyes. The act of speaking harshly to the arhat ripened such that for five hundred lifetimes he took rebirth as a dog, and had the monk Śāriputra not thought of him, he would have taken rebirth only as a dog for five hundred more lifetimes.

1.85 “The act of becoming angry, closing his eyes in imitation of the arhat, and saying, ‘It’s the one whose eyes are like this—I’ll find him!’ ripened into his birth as a human being whose eyes were just like that. The act of praying at that time, ‘By

this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship, ripened such that he was born into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

1.86 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, go forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Pūraṇa*



The Story of Little Eyes

Yeshey Nyima / 9 years old

Part One (3)

The Story of
Purāṇa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Story of Pūraṇa

1.87 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. But even though they enjoyed themselves and coupled, they had no children.

1.88 They desired a son, so the householder supplicated the gods. He prayed to Paśupati, Varuṇa, Kubera, Śakra, Brahmā, and the rest, and to the deities of the pleasure groves, the forest deities, the deities of the crossroads, the deities of forks in the road, the deities who receive strewn oblations, the deities of his inherited tradition, and the deities who are in constant attendance of righteous persons.

1.89 While it is often said that praying to deities can cause a boy or a girl to be born, this is not true. If children could be made just by praying, every family would have them a thousand times over, like a universal monarch. In fact, there are three circumstances that allow for the birth of a child: a child is born when (1) lust arises in the parents and they have intercourse, (2) the mother still has her menstrual cycle and is approached by a gandharva, and (3) the gandharva's mind is either attached or angry.

1.90 Still, the householder remained intent on his prayers, and a great being took birth in his wife's

womb who was well renowned and had gained his final birth, had the good fortune to soon be liberated due to gathering the accumulations, had his sights set on nirvāṇa and had turned away from saṃsāra, had no desire for the states of rebirth in cyclic existence, and who had now assumed his final body.

1.91 A woman wise in nature possesses five extraordinary abilities. She knows (1) whether a man is attracted to her, (2) the time of her menstrual cycle, (3) that she has conceived, (4) from whom she has conceived, and (5) whether the child is a boy or a girl, for if it is a baby boy it will stay on the right side of the womb, and if it is a girl it will stay on the left side of the womb.

1.92 When the householder's wife conceived a child, she was overjoyed and told her husband, "My lord, I have conceived a boy. He is staying on the right side of my womb, so rejoice, for it is sure to be a boy!"

1.93 At this the householder too was very happy. He puffed out his chest, put his right hand in the air, and expressed his joy, saying, "I shall see the face of the son for whom I have prayed for so long! May everything be right with my son, may nothing go wrong with him, and may he carry on my work! As I care for him, may he care for me in return! May he enjoy my inheritance! May my lineage endure for a long time! And after our passing, when we die, may he give gifts, be they great or small, and make merit! When he does, may he dedicate the merit thus: 'Wherever these two are born, may this go to them!'"

1.94 Now that he knew his wife was pregnant, he ensconced her on the upper levels of their house in order to care for the baby. He provided her with what she needed for winter in the winter, what she needed for summer in the summer, with food that was not too bitter, too sour, too salty, too sweet, too spicy, or too astringent as instructed by the healer,

and he served her food that was not bitter, sour, salty, spicy, sweet, or astringent. He draped her body with garlands and strings of precious stones, and he moved her from divan to divan and seat to seat like a goddess through a joyous garden, never letting her descend to the ground, and never letting her hear an unpleasant word even for a moment.

1.95 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

1.96 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a

buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

1.97 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

1.98 Just as the blessed buddhas regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night—so too the great listeners regard the world with their listener’s eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

1.99 When Venerable Aniruddha regarded the world with his listener’s eyes, he saw a being who was in his final birth taking birth in the home of that householder, and he thought, “Who will tame this being? Will he be tamed by the Buddha, or will he be tamed instead by the listeners?” Then he saw that it was he himself who would tame him and went to the house.

1.100 He gave Dharma teachings to the householder from time to time, and that led the householder to remain steadfast in perfect faith, to take refuge, and to maintain the fundamental precepts. He inspired him to give gifts and to share what they had, and in no time at all his home became like an open well for those in need.

1.101 To strengthen the parents’ resolve, one day Venerable Aniruddha went to the house alone, without companions or attendants. The householder saw that Venerable Aniruddha was alone, without companions or attendants, and asked, “Noble one, why have you come here alone, without companions or attendants? Noble one, is there no one at all who could attend you?”

1.102 “Where shall we find attendants, if one such as yourself does not grant them to us?” replied Venerable Aniruddha.

The householder said to him, “Lord Aniruddha, my wife has conceived, so if we have a son, noble one, I shall offer him to you as an attendant.”

“The virtuous keep their promises,” said Venerable Aniruddha. Having spoken thus, Venerable Aniruddha departed.

1.103 After nine or ten months had passed, the householder’s wife gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And the householder named him, saying, “For so long I wondered when I would have a child, and for so long I prayed and prayed. Since this child has fulfilled my wish, his name will be Pūraṇa.”

1.104 Baby Pūraṇa had eight nurses—two nurses to hold him in their laps, two wet nurses, two nurses to bathe him, and two nurses to play with him. They raised him with a protection cord, and the eye of a peacock feather from the hand of Nārāyaṇa. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

1.105 As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

1.106 One day Venerable Aniruddha saw that the time had come for the child to go forth. In the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went for alms in Śrāvastī. As he went for alms, eventually he came to the householder’s home, and there sat on the seat prepared for him.

1.107 After he had taken his seat, Venerable Aniruddha

reminded the householder, “Householder, before this child was born you granted him to me as an attendant. The virtuous keep their promises, do they not? Didn’t you yourself make such a promise?”

1.108 “Yes, noble one, I did make just such a promise,” the householder replied. Having said this, he took the child by his two hands, offered him to Venerable Aniruddha, and told him, “Child, before you were born I offered you to the noble one. Therefore go, and be the noble one’s attendant.”

The child said, “This will be of benefit to me.” With those words the child followed Venerable Aniruddha away.

1.109 Venerable Aniruddha brought the child to the monastery, where he led him to go forth as a novice, fully ordained him, and instructed him. But despite his commitment to practice earnestly, foregoing sleep from dusk to dawn, the child did not achieve anything of significance. Then he fell ill.

1.110 His parents heard that their child had taken ill, and as soon as they heard this they brought a healer to visit him, and went to the monastery carrying everything he needed. They provided for all his needs, but they could not cure him. They thought, “If we remain here at the monastery we will fall behind on all our work at home. We should bring the child home and care for him there.”

1.111 They bowed down at Venerable Aniruddha’s feet and said, “Noble one, please know that if we stay here, we will fall behind on all our duties at home. We request your permission to bring our child back home, so we can tend to him there.”

1.112 Venerable Aniruddha thought, “His parents and the people of their house will soon be established in the truths, for this monk will manifest arhatship there in the house.” With this in mind, Venerable Aniruddha said, “Do as you wish.”

1.113 As soon as they heard this, the householders brought the monk back to their house and

provided for all his needs according to the healer's instructions. Right there in the house, disillusioned by his illness, the monk cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

1.114 As an arhat he directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature of his two parents and the people of their house, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the householders and their retinue destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

1.115 After establishing his parents in the truth, he thought, "I have recollection of my former states—whence I died and transmigrated, and where I have taken rebirth. I see that from life to life I have died as a human being and taken rebirth as a human being, but I am always very ill, and my lifespan very short.

1.116 "I have been an ordinary person," he thought. "That's why I'm undergoing such agonies. But now that I have done what was before me, what need do I have for such suffering? Let me enter the sphere of peace!"

1.117 After reflecting in this way, he made a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning, and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates.

1.118 After he passed into parinirvāṇa, his parents laid his body on a palanquin festooned with blue, yellow, red, and white cloth, but they were unable to lift it. They went and told this to Venerable Aniruddha, who reflected on this, and, knowing that the monk had prayed it would be so, went and informed the Blessed One.

1.119 The Blessed One said, "Monks, don your Dharma robes, for we shall go and venerate that monk," and set out for the householder's home surrounded

and attended by an assembly of monks.

1.120 Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī also heard that such-and-such a householder's child had go forth and passed into parinirvāṇa, and that even the Blessed One had gone to venerate and pay homage to him. Knowing this, and remembering the child's previous states, she also went to the householder's home with five hundred attendants.

1.121 The householder Anāthapiṇḍada and the queen's attendants, the sages Datta and Purāṇa, also heard this. The lay vow holder Vaiśākhā and the lay vow holder Sujātā also heard that the child of such-and-such a one had go forth and passed into parinirvāṇa, and that even the Blessed One had gone to venerate and pay homage to him. Hearing this, they too went there with their attendants, bowed down at the feet of the Blessed One, and said, "We shall build the monk's funeral pyre. The Blessed One need not trouble himself." The Blessed One assented by his silence.

1.122 Then householder Anāthapiṇḍada and the other lay vow holders, carrying the monk upon the palanquin, walked to the charnel grounds. The Blessed One and the other monks followed them, along with the many lay vow holders performing ritual veneration and eulogy. They bore the palanquin into the charnel ground, heaped together various types of incense, and lit the fire. They later extinguished the fire with milk, gathered up his bones, placed them in vessels, and built a reliquary stūpa there in the same place. They performed a great offering ritual at the stūpa and then sat before the Buddha to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One gave a discourse on impermanence to all four retinues, then returned to the monastery.

1.123 Then the monks inquired of the Blessed One, "What action did the monk Pūraṇa take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and such that he became very ill?"

1.124 “Monks,” explained the Blessed One, “Pūraṇa committed and accumulated the actions himself at a previous time. Monks, the actions that Pūraṇa committed and accumulated did not ripen into the external element of earth, the element of water, the element of fire, or the element of wind. The actions he committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but his own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

1.125 “When the time arrives—and even if
A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act
That sentient beings amass.

1.126 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as forty thousand years, in the royal palace Śobhāvātī there was a brahmin named Agnidatta who was King Śobha’s minister. Agnidatta had two sons, one of whom, upon witnessing old age, sickness, and death, had gone to live in the forest. There, contemplating the thirty-seven wings of enlightenment, he attained unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, and as the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda, he acted for the benefit of beings by thrice turning the wheel of the Dharma in its twelve aspects. The other son indulged his desires. He became heedless, committed adultery with the wives of others, and killed beings. He would go hunting and kill many thousands of beings.

1.127 “One day the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda traveled to Śobhāvātī, and father and son were reunited. During his stay in Śobhāvātī he acted for the benefit of beings. He turned his younger brother away from sin and established him in refuge and the fundamental precepts.

1.128 “The brother went on to build a monastery that was complete in every respect. He offered it to

Buddha Krakucchanda and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, provided for all their needs, and at the time of his death prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a great teacher such as this one. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship.’

1.129 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that young brahmin then is this very Pūraṇa. The act of massacring thousands of beings ripened such that wherever he was born, he was very ill and his life was very short. The act of building a monastery that was complete in every respect, offering it to Buddha Krakucchanda and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, providing for all their needs, and praying at the time of his death, ‘Wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a teacher such as this one. May I achieve such great virtues as his!’ ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and such that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.

1.130 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

1.131 “What action ripened into his passing into nirvāṇa, and caused him to be venerated by the four retinues?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

1.132 “When did he make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely

awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in Vārāṇasī.

1.133 “One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. When he grew up he found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and, having made the request to his parents, went forth in the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa’s doctrine. He cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

1.134 “After he attained arhatship, he thought, ‘I have done what was before me with this saṃsāric body. Let me enter the sphere of peace!’ Reflecting in this way, he made a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning, and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates.

1.135 “His preceptor informed his parents, and his parents and the preceptor performed an elaborate ritual veneration of his remains. His preceptor prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May I achieve such great virtues. When I pass into nirvāṇa, may the Blessed One and all the four retinues venerate me.’

1.136 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that monk then is none other than this very Pūraṇa. The act of performing an elaborate ritual veneration of that arhat and praying ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

1.137 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, go forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship, and when he passed into nirvāṇa, all the four retinues venerated him.”

THE END

Next: *The Person with a Curving Spine: Two Stories*



Part One (4)

The Person with a Curving Spine: Two Stories

4. i The First Story about
“The Person with a Curving Spine”

4. ii The Second Story about
“The Person with a Curving Spine”

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 The Person with a Curving Spine: Two Stories

4. i The First Story about “The Person with a Curving Spine”

1.138 When the Blessed One was in in Śrāvastī there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

1.139 When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

1.140 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

1.141 One day the child fell ill and his spine was made to curve by a disorder of his vital energies. As soon as they saw this condition his parents became very upset and though they brought healers and provided for all his needs, he could not be healed.

1.142 The thought came to the householder, “No healer has been able to heal this child. But the objects of my veneration are so miraculous and powerful that if I pray to them now, they might be able to make my child’s back straight like before.” With this in mind he invited six teachers—Pūraṇa Kāśyapa and the rest—and by his own hand he contented them with many different kinds of good, wholesome food. Then he bowed down at their feet and beseeched them, “What could there be, past, present, or future, that does not come under your purview? My child’s spine has been made to curve by a disorder of his vital energies. I ask you, please heal my child.” But though they gave him mantras and medicines, they were not able to heal him.

1.143 The householder had a close friend, a Buddhist lay vow holder, who advised him, “My friend, why do you seek refuge in those who are not a refuge? Take refuge in the Blessed Buddha, and he will do all manner of good things for you.”

“What does he know?” the householder asked.

“He is omniscient. He knows everything,” replied the lay vow holder.

1.144 When he heard this, the householder felt immense joy and approached the Blessed Buddha. When he arrived, he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him, then sat in silence.

1.145 Once the Blessed One had completed his teaching, the householder rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, and implored the Blessed One, “Please permit me to request that the Blessed One and the saṅgha of monks take your meal at my house tomorrow.” The

Blessed One assented to the householder by his silence.

1.146 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the householder then praised this assurance from the Blessed One, rejoiced, bowed down at his feet, and departed.

1.147 After preparing many good, wholesome foods that night, in the morning the householder rose, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then he reminded the Blessed One that it was time for the midday meal by sending a message that said, “My lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested.”

1.148 That morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks.

1.149 As they arrived at the householder’s reception room, the householder’s son saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance. The body of the Blessed Buddha, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like a tongue of fire stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart.

1.150 Upon seeing the Blessed Buddha, the householder’s son was filled with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years. Filled with such supreme joy at the sight of him, the child respectfully and deliberately stood up from his seat.

1.151 No sooner had he risen from his seat than his curving spine became straight as before, and he was filled with even more joy toward the Blessed One. Full of joy, he approached him, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, kissed them, and

said, “Blessed One, what a difficult task you have done for me! Sugata, what a difficult task you have done for me!”

1.152 Then the Blessed One took his place on the seat prepared for him amid the saṅgha of monks. Once the householder knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Having by his own hand contented them with many different kinds of good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished, once he knew that the Blessed One had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, he sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

1.153 The Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature of the householder and his retinue, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the householder, his retinue, and the child destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry. After the Blessed One had established them in the truths and instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted the householder with a discourse on the Dharma, he rose from his seat and departed.

1.154 One day the young man thought, “The Blessed One has dispelled so many kinds of suffering and anguish, brought me so much happiness and bliss, cleared away so many of my sins and nonvirtues, and secured for me such virtues. Let me give up living at home and, in the presence of the Blessed One, go forth to practice the holy life.”

1.155 Reflecting in this way, he asked for his parents’ permission and approached the Blessed One. He touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed

together, and made this request of him:

1.156 “Lord, if appropriate, I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken and achieve full ordination as a monk. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

1.157 “Come, join me, monk!” replied the Blessed One. “Practice the holy life.” As soon as the Blessed One had finished speaking there they stood, alms bowl and water pitcher in hand, with but a week’s worth of hair and beard, and with the department of a monk who had been ordained for one hundred years. As it is said:

1.158 Garbed in robes, with shaven heads,
And senses stilled by Buddha’s will—
From the very moment the One Thus Gone
Spoke to them, saying, “Come, join me.”

1.159 Thereupon the Blessed One instructed him, and, casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

1.160 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did he take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth? What action did he take that ripened into his spine becoming curved, that after he entrusted himself to the Blessed One his spine became straight like before, and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the

Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

1.161 “Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “such are the actions that this monk committed and accumulated:

1.162 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in the city of Vārāṇasī.

1.163 “When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to twins. At the elaborate feast celebrating their birth they named them according to their clan. They reared them on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when the twins grew up, having found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, they asked for their parents’ permission and went forth as novices in the Buddha Kāśyapa’s doctrine.

1.164 “When he conferred full ordination on them, their preceptor asked, ‘Children, the doctrine of the Blessed One is carried upon two wheels. These two wheels are the wheel of meditation and the wheel of recitation. Which will the two of you undertake?’

1.165 “ ‘For the time being we will put our efforts into recitation. Later we will meditate,’ they replied.

“Their preceptor responded, ‘Do as you please,’ and, for the time being, he had them recite.

1.166 “The younger of the two was very wild inside, whereas the other was stable. One day after their recitation, as the stable, older one was sleeping, the wild one dropped heavy objects on him over and over again, until he said, ‘Venerable one, please

stop hurting me again and again!’ But the wild one did not heed his words. Instead he got angry. To hurt his brother he hefted a nearby brick and let it fall. Then the wild one, who had already attacked and bashed his brother with heavy objects, threw a brick at his back and broke the base of his spine, causing him tremendous pain.

1.167 “Suddenly the younger one saw his brother’s body in tremendous pain, and it caused him great distress. He thought, ‘It was a mistake for me to do such a senseless thing.’ Feeling remorse, he brought healers, provided for all his needs, and tended to his elder brother’s condition. Before long his back had healed.

1.168 “By the time the elder brother had healed, he had become disillusioned with *saṃsāra*. He thought, ‘What is the use of this body—it’s rotten to the core!’ Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

1.169 “The younger brother realized what his brother had accomplished, felt tremendous joy for him, and served him with respect. He likewise served the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha, practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, because I have offered such service to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha, and practiced pure conduct all my life, by this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship. And may the act of harming such a pure being not return to me. Should the results of that action ripen for me, may the Blessed One cure my injured body and mind.’

1.170 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went

forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than this monk. The act of breaking the base of his elder brother’s spine in anger ripened such that wherever he was born, his spine was broken. After that he prayed, ‘Should the results of that action ripen to me, may the Blessed One cure my injured body and mind.’ And so it is that I have now protected him from both of these injuries. The act of praying, ‘Wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship,’ ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

1.171 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”



The First Story about
“The Person with a Curving Spine”

Manuela Chantra Shuri de Borba Vieira Cortina
/ 5 years old

4. ii The Second Story About “The Person with a Curving Spine”

1.172 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there was a nun named Sthūlanandā who lived at a nunnery called The Royal Garden.

1.173 One day she thought, “All of the elder sisters who are śrāvakās that have achieved miraculous powers use their powers to travel east to Videha, north to Kurava, west to Godānīya, and to the celestial realm of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. They travel to valleys that are prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated, where the harvest is good, and they return with many good, wholesome foods to eat.

1.174 “If I attain such magical powers, I too will go from here east to Videha, north to Kurava, west to Godānīya, and to the celestial realm of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. And I will also travel to valleys that are prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated, where the harvest is good, and will return with many good, wholesome foods to eat. Let me too develop magical powers!”

1.175 She continued, thinking, “Who is there that can show me how to perform miracles? I could pay a visit to the nuns, but they are very jealous, so they will not show me the path of miracles. It is difficult for our requests to reach the ears of the monks. If I can’t so much as speak to those staying at the monastery, how can I ask them to show me the path of miracles?”

1.176 “Ah! But if I go see the Band of Six—they are my relatives, and they always wish me well and pray that my aims will be fulfilled—they can show me the path of miracles. What should I do? First I shall treat them well, and ply them with material things. After that I can make my request to them.”

1.177 With this in mind, she extended an invitation to them, and by her own hand contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that

they wished. Then she bowed down at their feet and said, “Noble ones, I wish to perform miracles, and you are accomplished in showing others the path of miracles. I request your instruction in the path of miracles. Through your power I shall begin to perform miracles.”

1.178 The Band of Six asked her, “Sthūlanandā, have you not heard this verse?

‘Secret lore should not be shared;
Rather, take it to your grave.
Only barter lore for lore,
Great wealth, or reverent service.’

1.179 “Nevertheless, if you wish to learn the practice of miracles from us, first you must host us for three months. Then to each of us you must give six different kinds of goods.”

She bowed down at their feet and said, “Please, instruct me in the path of miracles, and I will do this.”

1.180 “Elder sister,” said the Band of Six, “first take care to make your body light. Then, with practice, one day you will have no difficulty with miracles.”

“What should I do to make my body light?” she asked.

1.181 “For a while you have to eat very little,” they told her. “After that, on the first day, climb onto a small chair and jump down from it. The next day, stack two chairs and climb up on them and jump down. In the same way, from the third day on up to the seventh day, stack one chair upon another, then climb up and jump down. Then, in the same way, leap from the second story of a building. At that time, due to your practice, your body will have become light, and after that, due to your practice, you will accomplish miracles.”

1.182 As soon as she heard this, Sthūlanandā began to follow their instructions just as they had said. But on the seventh day, she climbed up on the stack of

seven chairs, jumped down, and broke her hip.

1.183 She said to the Band of Six, “Noble ones, look what happened to me. Now what should I do?”

“We showed you what we know,” replied the Band of Six. Once this method has made your body light, one day you will perform miracles without difficulty. The rest is up to you.”

1.184 When she heard this she was consumed with fury, and she lashed out at all those who came to the nunnery. Brimming with malice, she drove them away from the nunnery with her insults.

1.185 Those to whom she told her story scolded and blamed her. The monks heard it, and they inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why Bhikṣuṇī Sthūlanandā abased herself for the sake of miraculous powers, acting as host for the three months of winter, even portioning out much of her alms and Dharma robes, but did not attain miraculous powers.”

1.186 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, the Band of Six deceived the nun Sthūlanandā and she did not attain her goal. Listen well!

1.187 “Monks, in times gone by, during King Brahmadata’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī, there were certain carpenters at work building for the king a palatial home on the grounds of the royal palace. They would mark the crooked beams with a carpenter’s cord, then plane them down until they were straight.

1.188 “One of the king’s treasurers was a woman with a crooked spine. As she was watching the carpenters mark and straighten all the crooked beams she thought, ‘These carpenters are highly skilled. If they can straighten such rough, crooked beams, they will surely be able to straighten my smooth body as well! How could they not?’

1.189 “She went to them and asked, ‘Can you straighten my curving spine?’

“‘We can,’ they replied, ‘but you have to pay us in

advance. Be host to us for three months. Then give us gifts of clothing and jewelry. After that we will straighten your curving spine.’

“‘As you wish,’ she said.

1.190 “For three months she served them good, wholesome meals. On the last day, she gave them clothing and jewelry and said, ‘There, I have given you gifts. Now you must straighten my curving spine.’

1.191 “‘Elder sister,’ they replied, ‘after we mark our crooked beams with a cord, we plane them down to straighten them. We can mark your back with a cord and pare it straight with an axe, if you can bear the pain.’

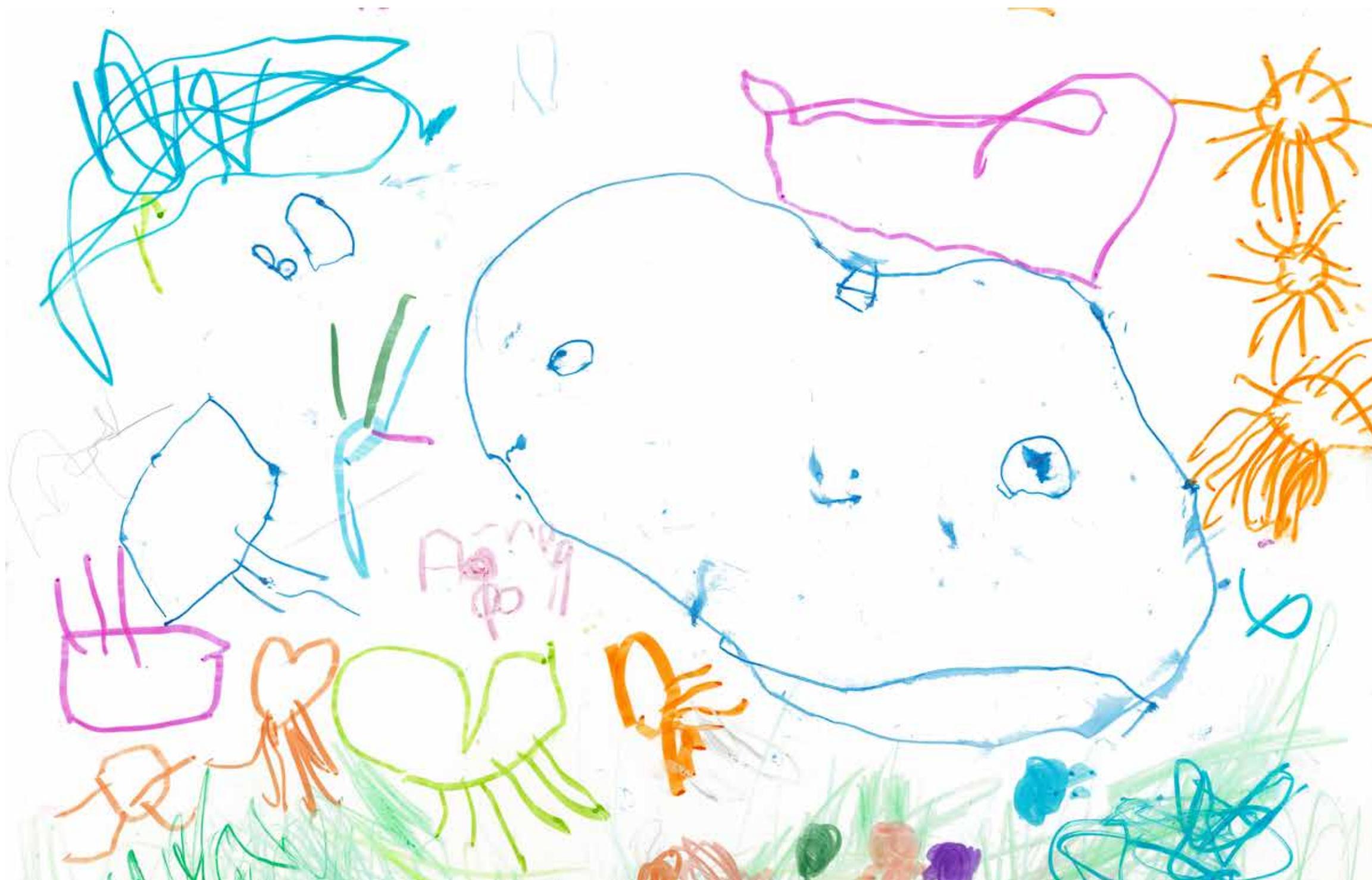
1.192 “‘That technique will kill me. I won’t survive!’ she cried.

“‘That’s all we know,’ the carpenters replied. ‘The rest is up to you.’ She fell silent in embarrassment and dismay. To speak to anyone was more than she could bear.

1.193 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the old woman then is none other than Sthūlanandā. Those who were the carpenters then are none other than the Band of Six. They deceived her then, and she did not accomplish her aims. Now they have deceived her once again, and she has not performed any miracles.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Udayin*



The Second Story About
"The Person with a Curving Spine"

Tsejin Palmo Teo / 3.5 years old

Part One (5)

The Story of
Udayin

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 The Story of Udayin

1.194 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, who had cast away all afflictions and manifested arhatship, thought, “The Blessed One has dispelled so many kinds of suffering and anguish, brought me many kinds of happiness and bliss, cleared away so many of my sins and nonvirtues, and secured for me such virtues. How could I repay the Blessed One’s kindness?”

1.195 Then it occurred to him, “Anytime a buddha arises in the world, it is only to benefit beings. There’s no doubt that I too should act for the benefit of beings!” With this in mind, he wondered, “Whom might I tame?”

1.196 He saw that he could tame many in Kauśāmbī, so after staying in Rājagṛha for as long as he liked, he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went to Kauśāmbī for alms. He eventually arrived at Kauśāmbī, where he stayed in the garden of the householder Ghoṣila.

1.197 Now this monk was also a person of great merit, and was widely known for having gone from being a son of the royal family priest to being a monk. Many people in Kauśāmbī had heard that Noble Piṇḍolabhāradvāja was traveling through the countryside and had now come to the city of Kauśāmbī, where he was staying in the garden of the householder Ghoṣila. Upon hearing this they gathered—group after group and elder after

elder—and convened in Kauśāmbī.

1.198 They approached Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, and upon their arrival they gathered together, bowed down at Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. Then Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, directly apprehending their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, and natures, taught them the Dharma accordingly.

1.199 As soon as they heard it, some of the inhabitants of Kauśāmbī who had gathered there generated heat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing, right where they sat.

1.200 Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

1.201 Having seen the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja with palms pressed together, and beseeched him, “After we entrusted ourselves to you, noble one, you lifted us up from among the hell beings, animals, and anguished spirits. Leading us to live among the gods and humans, you dried up the ocean of blood and tears and led us over the mountain pass of bones to cast away all the afflictive emotions to which we have been

accustomed since beginningless time. Noble one, for as long as we live, please accept from us your provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick.”

1.202 “Friends,” replied Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, “there are other householders I must help as well. Please allow me to go.” The inhabitants of Kauśāmbī who had gathered there rejoiced at what Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja had said to them, touched their heads to Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja’s feet, and departed.

1.203 From time to time those who had seen the truths would visit Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja and listen to the Dharma. One day, as those living in Kauśāmbī were gathering together—group after group and elder after elder—King Udayin of Vatsa arrayed the four divisions of his army and set out to hunt deer.

1.204 When King Udayin of Vatsa saw the assembly of those living in Kauśāmbī going to the garden of the householder Ghoṣila, he immediately asked his ministers, “Where are these country folk going?”

1.205 “Deva,” the ministers replied, “the child of your family priest, the one called Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, has cast aside the royal concerns of home and crown and gone forth. He has now made his way through the countryside to Kauśāmbī, where he is staying in the garden of the householder Ghoṣila. It is him they are traveling to see.”

1.206 As soon as he heard this, the king declared, “For a long time he has pleased me and been dear to my heart, and it is my duty to pay tribute to a preceptor. I will also go to see him and pay him respect.”

1.207 They went to the householder Ghoṣila’s garden, but the elder monk did not receive the king, nor did he so much as stand. When the king saw this, he was instantly consumed with fury. Seething with anger, he paid respect to the elder monk and then departed.

1.208 He said to his ministers, “Behold the renunciant

Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, the child of the country’s royal family priest! He saw me, but he would not receive me—he wouldn’t so much as stand!”

1.209 To this his hateful ministers replied, “Deva, even though he saw you, he did not receive you, nor did he so much as stand! Such behavior is inappropriate.”

1.210 The king was heartbroken about this, and it made him extremely unhappy. After hunting deer with his army, he returned to the area of the monastery in anger, thinking, “Now I am going to go see that monk again. When he sees me, if he does not receive me properly—if he does not so much as stand—I shall lop off his head and throw it away!” With this in mind, he entered the householder Ghoṣila’s garden.

1.211 Now Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja heard that King Udayin of Vatsa was on the way to see him, and as soon as he did, he thought, “Why is King Udayin coming to see me again?” And he saw that the king was thinking, “If that monk fails to receive me properly upon sight—if he refuses even to stand—I shall lop off his head and toss it to the ground!”

1.212 Knowing the king’s thoughts, he rose from meditation and took six steps to receive him. As soon as he did so, the king’s air of splendor disappeared and a fissure appeared in the earth. The king saw this and was immediately afraid.

1.213 “This monk is a person of great miracles and great power,” he thought. “As I was approaching him with spiteful thoughts, through his power my splendor disappeared and the earth split open.”

1.214 Sure of this, he approached Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, bowed down at his feet, and said, “Noble one, please forgive my childish, deluded, uncouth blunder.”

1.215 “Great King, I forgive you, but you must ask forgiveness of your own mind,” the elder monk replied.

“Lord, won’t my kingdom fall now? Won’t I lose my life?” asked the king.

1.216 “Never fear, Great King, never fear!” replied the elder monk. “Your kingdom will not fall, nor will you lose your life. However, Great King, my taking six steps to receive you will cause you to lose your kingdom for six months. Then, after six months have passed, you will regain your kingdom. Furthermore, Great King, you must feel joy toward me. For as soon as you feel joy toward me, you will prevent your fall into the earth, and your air of splendor will return.”

1.217 As soon as he heard this, the king felt joy toward the elder monk, and as soon as he felt this joy, his air of splendor returned and the fissure in the earth closed up. At that moment the king again felt a surge of joy toward the elder monk. Filled with such joy, he touched his head to the elder monk’s feet and departed.

1.218 One day King Udayin of Vatsa again arrayed the four divisions of his army and set out to hunt deer. They saw a deer and approached it, with the army on one side and the king on the other. But on his way through the wilderness the king was separated from his army and became disoriented.

1.219 He wandered into a cattle pen and, not recognizing anyone or being recognized by anyone, he went mad, and remained there in the cattle pen for six months. His children, ministers, and attendants all went looking for him, but were unable to find him. They returned to the royal palace wondering, “What shall we do now if we don’t find him? Where will we go?” And they sat in silence.

1.220 Six months later someone recognized the king and asked, “Deva, what are you doing here?”

1.221 Coming to his senses, the king related to the cowherds all that had taken place. “Take heart, Deva,” the cowherds told him. “We shall bring you to the royal palace.” The cowherds set out

for Kauśāmbī with the king traveling separately behind them.

1.222 After six months had passed, a minister named The Son of Enveloped in the Darkness of Logic remembered which direction the king had gone, and thought, “We must search for him. If we find him alive, he will carry on his reign. If not—if something went wrong—then we shall put his child on the throne.”

1.223 With this in mind, they organized the four divisions of the army. As they searched the villages, towns, cities, kingdom, and royal palaces, The Son of Enveloped in the Darkness of Logic saw King Udayin of Vatsa from a distance. Delighted to see him, he approached the king, inquired after his health, and asked him, “Deva, where did you go?” whereupon King Udayin of Vatsa related the story in detail.

1.224 “Deva,” said The Son of Enveloped in the Darkness of Logic, “it is all just as Noble Piṇḍolabhāradvāja prophesied.”

1.225 Hearing this, the king felt a surge of joy toward the elder monk and thought, “For now let me put off returning to the city. I will go and pay respect to Noble Piṇḍolabhāradvāja.”

1.226 With this in mind he bypassed Kauśāmbī and went to the householder Ghoṣiḷa’s garden. He traveled as far as he could by vehicle, then descended from his vehicle and continued to the garden on foot. There he approached Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, bowed down at his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The elder monk taught him a Dharma particularly suited to him.

1.227 When Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja had completed his discourse, King Udayin of Vatsa rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja with his palms together, and implored him, “Noble one, please permit me to

request you and the saṅgha of monks to take your food at my house for seven days.”

1.228 Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja assented by his silence. Understanding that by his silence Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja had given his assent, King Udayin of Vatsa rose from his seat, bowed down at Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja’s feet, and departed.

1.229 Once he had contented Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja and his retinue with many good, wholesome foods for seven days, at the end of the last day he offered each of them a set of robes fashioned from cotton and then sat before them to listen to the Dharma. Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted them with a discourse on the Dharma particularly suited to them. After he had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted them, he rose from his seat and departed.

1.230 One day the Blessed One, having stayed in Rājagṛha for as long as he liked, donned his Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, set out for Kauśāmbī, surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. He made his way through the countryside until he arrived in Kauśāmbī, where he stayed in the householder Ghoṣila’s garden.

1.231 King Udayin of Vatsa heard that the Blessed One was traveling through the country of Vatsa and had arrived in Kauśāmbī, where he was staying in the householder Ghoṣila’s garden. Hearing this, he approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took a seat at one side.

1.232 Once King Udayin of Vatsa had taken a seat at one side, the Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma. After he had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma, he sat without speaking.

1.233 Knowing that the Blessed One had completed his discourse, King Udayin of Vatsa then rose from

his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and said, “Please permit me to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick for the three months of winter.” The Blessed One assented by his silence.

1.234 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, King Udayin of Vatsa then provided for all their needs there in the householder Ghoṣila’s garden. After respectfully providing for all the needs of the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months, he offered the Blessed One very costly food on the last day. Then he offered each of the other monks a set of cotton robes, and they departed.

1.235 From time to time he approached the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma. After hearing the Dharma from the Blessed One, he always made a point of going to offer his respectful service to Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja. When the monks saw him, they became suspicious.

1.236 “Why should this king make a point of going to offer such respectful service to Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja?” they wondered.

1.237 Then they heard the story in detail. After they heard it, they asked the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why King Udayin of Vatsa approached Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja with spiteful thoughts, which caused his air of splendor to disappear, and just as he was about to fall into a narrow fissure, his mind again became filled with joy and his splendor returned, and the narrow fissure closed up as well.”

1.238 “Not only now, monks,” the Blessed One explained, “but this happened in times past as well, and in the same way, during King Meru’s reign in the city called Flourishing Rice. The kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments

had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma, and he treated the kingdom like a beloved only child.

1.239 “When the time came for the king’s family priest to marry, he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

1.240 “They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, the holding of the ritual vase, the *R̥g Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

1.241 “He came to see that his father administrated the affairs of the kingdom both righteously and unrighteously. Recognizing this he thought, ‘After my father dies, I shall rule the kingdom without a crown. Let me then give up living at home and go to live in the forest.’ Reflecting in this way, he asked for his parents’ permission and went to live in the forest. There he generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

1.242 “One day he went to the royal palace in the city of Flourishing Rice. Upon his arrival in the park his father fashioned him a hut of branches and leaves, and began to provide for all his needs. Many people would come from time to time to see him and to listen to the Dharma.

1.243 “Then one day King Meru arrayed the four divisions of the army and set out to hunt deer. The king saw many people entering the park, and he asked, ‘Where are all these people going?’

1.244 “ ‘Deva,’ his ministers replied, ‘the child of the royal family priest not only has gone forth, but is a person of great miracles and great power as well. They are all going to see him.’

1.245 “Thereupon the king thought, ‘He pleases me and is dear to my heart, and it is my duty to pay tribute to a preceptor. I will also go and see him.’ The king went to see the sage. But upon seeing the king, the sage did not receive him, nor did he so much as stand.

1.246 “When the king saw this, he was suddenly consumed with fury. ‘This is the child of my family priest! When I arrive, he does not receive me—he does not so much as stand! I shall have his head!’ he thought, and no sooner had he thought this than the air of splendor surrounding the king’s body disappeared, and a fissure appeared in the earth and he began to sink into it.

1.247 “Seeing this, the king was suddenly afraid. ‘This sage is a person of great miracles and great power,’ he thought. Reflecting on this, he was filled with great joy, and he bowed down at the sage’s feet and asked his forgiveness.

1.248 “ ‘Great King,’ replied the sage, ‘though I forgive you, you must ask forgiveness of your own mind.’

“In fear the king asked the sage, ‘But, sage, won’t my kingdom fall now? Won’t I lose my life?’

1.249 “ ‘Never fear, Great King, never fear!’ said the sage. ‘Your kingdom will not fall, and you will not lose your life. However, Great King, it is because of your spiteful thoughts toward me that your air of splendor disappeared and the earth cracked open. Great King, as soon as you again feel joy toward me, your air of splendor will return.’ As soon as he heard this, the king felt joy toward the sage, and as soon as he felt this joy, his air of splendor returned

and the crack in the earth closed up.

1.250

“O monks, what do you think? The one who was the sage then is none other than Venerable Piṇḍolabhāradvāja. The one who was King Meru then is none other than King Udayin of Vatsa. At that time, as soon as he had spiteful thoughts toward the elder monk, his air of splendor disappeared and the earth cracked open, and as soon as he felt joy toward him, his aura of splendor returned and the fissure in the earth closed up. And again, recently he had spiteful thoughts toward him, his splendor disappeared, and the earth cracked open. But no sooner did he feel joy toward him then his aura of splendor returned, and the crack in the earth closed up.”

THE END

Next: *Victory Banner*



Part One (6)

Victory
Banner

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 Victory Banner

1.251 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there was a king named Brahmadata who reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. His kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma, and he treated the kingdom like a beloved only child.

1.252 One day the queen conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named her, saying, “Since she is both the child of the king of Kāśī and very beautiful, her name will be Kāśīsundarī (Beauty of Kāśī).”

1.253 Kāśīsundarī had eight nurses—two nurses to hold her in their laps, two wet nurses, two nurses to bathe her, and two nurses to play with her. These eight nurses reared her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake. As she grew up she became versed in the arts. She found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, and having asked for her parents’ permission, she offered her service to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.

1.254 When she had grown people said, “This daughter

of the king of Kāśī is well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful—in all the world there’s none like her,” and her fame spread far and wide.

1.255 Now there were six neighboring kings who were shot with arrows of lust upon hearing this, and they all sent envoys to Brahmadata, the king of Kāśī, bearing the message, “Please give your daughter to me.”

1.256 When he heard this, King Brahmadata immediately sat and reflected. “If I give my daughter to one of them,” he thought, “the others will become my enemies. To whom then should I give her?” In light of this he did not want to give her to anyone.

1.257 One day the six neighboring kings thought, “He will not give his daughter to any of us of his own free will. Therefore we must go and take her away by force.” With this in mind, on the same day they all armored the four divisions of their armies and went to Vārāṇasī, where they surrounded the entire perimeter of the city.

1.258 Then King Brahmadata, realizing that the enemy armies were a threat to him, climbed to the roof of the palace. There he sat and brooded with his cheek resting on his palm, wondering, “What shall I do now?” Kāśīsundarī came to the roof of the palace, where she found her father sitting with his cheek resting on his palm, and asked him, “Father, why have you come to the roof of the palace to brood with your cheek resting on your palm?”

“It is because of you, my child,” said the king.

1.259 “Is my appearance so poor, father?” the young woman asked. “Why should my father sit and brood because of me?”

“My child,” replied the king, “it is because your every limb is endowed with beauty that I sit and brood, and it is because of you that the six quarreling neighboring kings have arrayed the four divisions of their armies and advanced on Vārāṇasī, surrounding the city in siege.”

1.260 “Can a daughter not choose a spouse for herself, father?” Kāśisundarī wondered.

“A daughter may choose,” said the king.

1.261 “Father,” the young woman said, “please permit me to choose my own spouse.”

“Oh child,” he replied, “please wait for me to inform the neighboring kings.”

1.262 King Brahmadata told the neighboring kings, “Kāśisundarī shall make her own choice regarding a spouse. Therefore I ask that you accept her decision.”

At this they all thought, “Kāśisundarī will not forsake one such as me to choose another,” and replied, “She will not err—let her choose her husband!”

1.263 The envoys went and relayed this to King Brahmadata, and he was very pleased to hear it. After he had replied to each in turn, they cut their thumbs and swore an oath. Then on a wide and suitable place, they all built multistory structures in a long row, in which each of them sat, surrounded by their retinues, on highly ornamented lion thrones.

1.264 Kāśisundarī—astride a fine mount, attended by a band of young women, and hoisting a victory banner of colored cloth—emerged from Vārāṇasī into their midst. Then she faced Ṛṣivadana, cast her bridal bouquet in the direction of the Blessed One, and crying out, “I take refuge in the Blessed Buddha!” she oriented her chariot toward Ṛṣivadana.

1.265 The kings and everyone in the great crowd realized to their astonishment that they had never seen so desirable a form as the fine one before them, and they trailed behind her, saying, “Let’s see what she does!”

1.266 Kāśisundarī rode as far toward Ṛṣivadana as she could by vehicle, then descended from her vehicle and continued to the garden on foot. There she approached the Blessed One, touched her head to

the feet of the Blessed One, drew down the right shoulder of her upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.” The Blessed One called Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, and Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī led her to go forth as a novice, conferred on her full ordination, and instructed her.

1.267 Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, she manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, her mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of her hands as like space itself. She became cool like wet sandalwood. Her insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. She achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. She had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. She became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

1.268 The entire crowd of people was astonished, and all of them approached the Blessed One, touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught them the Dharma particularly suited to them, and after they heard the Dharma from the Blessed One, each of them returned home.

1.269 “Blessed One,” the monks asked, “what action did Kāśisundarī take that ripened into her birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that she was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful—an unmatched figure; and that she pleased and did not displease the Blessed One, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of her prayers,” the

Blessed One replied.

1.270 “Lord, where did she make these prayers?”

“Monks,” explained the Blessed One, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in the city of Vārāṇasī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

1.271 “When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they named her according to their clan. They reared her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake.

1.272 “When she grew up, she found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. She asked for her parents’ permission, built a monastery that was complete in every respect, offered it to Buddha Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, and provided for all their needs. Then she made another request of her parents and went forth as a novice in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Once she had gone forth, she studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of her wisdom and freedom.

1.273 “Thereupon she thought, ‘I have completed my studies. Now I will put my effort into meditation.’ She received instructions for contemplation, and

through her earnest practice, foregoing sleep from dusk to dawn, she developed meditative stabilization on love and there practiced pure conduct all her life.

1.274 “At the time of her death she prayed, ‘I have given gifts, made merit, gone forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and practiced pure conduct all my life. By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful—an unmatched figure. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

1.275 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth as a nun in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is now Kāśisundarī. At that time she gave gifts, made merit, went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and practiced pure conduct all her life.

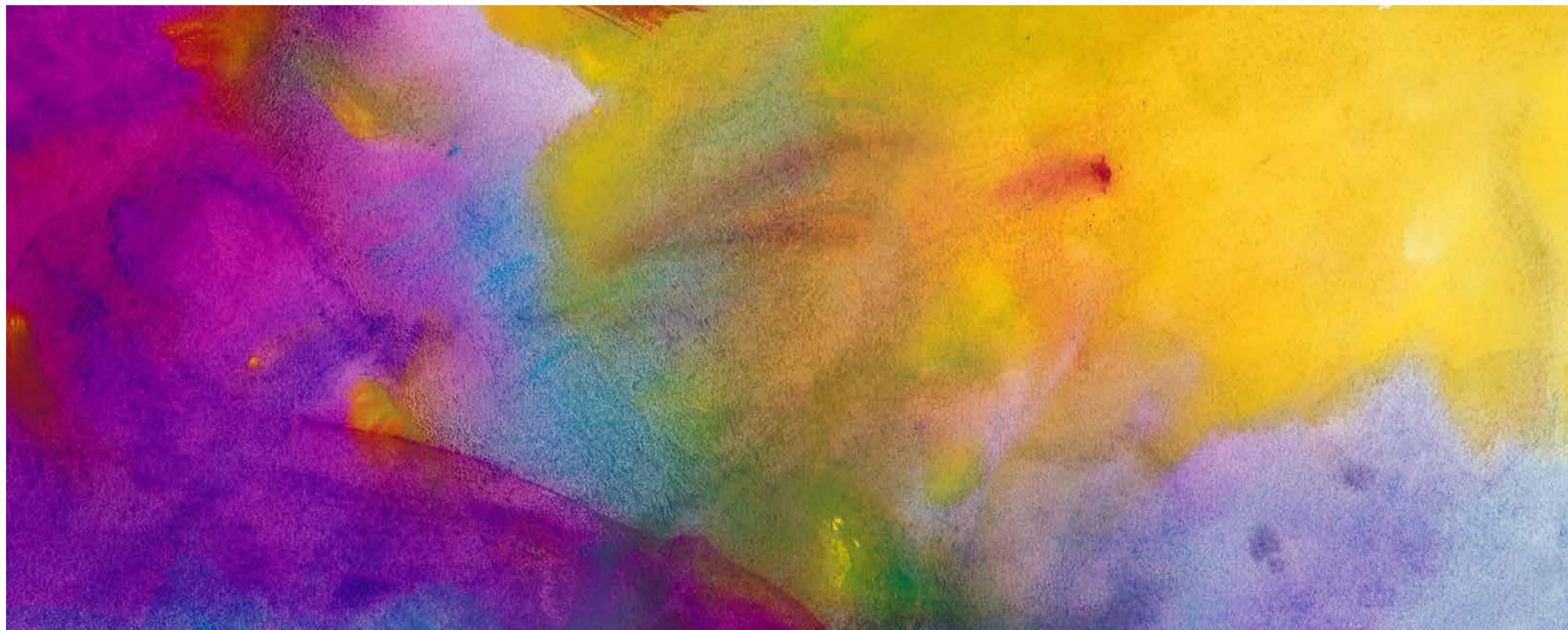
1.276 “At the time of her death she prayed, ‘Wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful—an unmatched figure. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship.’ Those acts ripened such that she was born into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth and was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful—an unmatched figure.

1.277 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely

awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. And her development of meditative stabilization on love ripened such that wherever she was born, her beauty was unmatched.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Kṣemā*



Victory Banner

Marissa Ma / 5 years old

Part One (7)

The Story of
Kṣemā

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Story of Kṣemā

1.278 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, King Prasenajit reigned in the city of Śrāvastī and King Brahmadata reigned in Vārāṇasī. The two did not agree with one another, and from time to time a great many people were killed. One day King Brahmadata arrayed the four divisions of his army and advanced on the kingdom of Kośāla, where they made camp and stayed on the banks of the Ajiravatī River.

1.279 King Prasenajit heard that King Brahmadata had arrayed the four divisions of his army and come to the city gates to wage war, so he arrayed the four divisions of his army too and set out to wage war against Brahmadata, King of Kāśī. They too made camp and hunkered down on the banks of the Ajiravatī River. Many on each side were slaughtered while the two armies were stationed there. Both sides were formidable and resistant to assault, and so it continued, with neither side able to defeat the other.

1.280 One day as they were hunkered down there, a daughter was born to King Prasenajit who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. A son who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful had also been born to King Brahmadata of Kāśī, so celebratory music resounded from both of their camps.

1.281 Hearing the music coming from both sides, the

kings asked, “What is all this celebratory music?”

King Brahmadata’s ministers replied, “It is for the birth of King Prasenajit’s daughter, and for you, Deva, upon the arrival of your son,” and King Prasenajit’s ministers replied, “It is for you, Deva, upon the arrival of your daughter, and for the birth of King Brahmadata’s son.”

1.282 When they heard this, both were in good spirits, and thought, “We should not treat each other as enemies now that we have the means to become kin!”

King Brahmadata sent an envoy to King Prasenajit with the message, “Please give your newborn daughter to my son in marriage.”

1.283 King Prasenajit thought, “This will be a way to make friends with King Brahmadata for the rest of my life,” and sent an envoy to King Brahmadata with the response, “I shall comply with your wish.” The two asked forgiveness of one another and made friends. One sent a great wealth of clothing and finery for the girl, and the other sent much clothing and finery for the boy. As friends, the two now departed the region with their arms around each other’s shoulders.

1.284 King Prasenajit thought, “Since the birth of my daughter, I am happy with King Brahmadata,” so he named her Kṣemā (She Who Brings Happiness) at the elaborate feast celebrating her birth. They reared her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake. When she grew up she found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed Buddha, went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts, made merit, and went continually to the nunnery to listen to the Dharma.

1.285 So it was that one day she manifested the resultant state of non-return and attained miraculous powers. Endowed with great power and magical abilities, she achieved concentration on the eight liberations. She demonstrated the miracle of her magical abilities for her parents, and said, “Mother, Father, now that I have achieved

these things, I cannot engage in sexual relations, so I am asking for your kind permission to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

1.286 “My child, we cannot allow this,” her parents said, “for we betrothed you as soon as you were born. We have already sent our word and set aside our dispute, but still—when the wedding party comes for you, you can make your request to the groom and go forth, should he agree.”

1.287 Then King Prasenajit sent an envoy to King Brahmadata with the message, “Our daughter Kṣemā wishes to go forth. We cannot stop her. Do not delay in making her a bride.”

King Brahmadata likewise sent an envoy with the response, “I shall come on such-and-such a date. Start making preparations for her to be sent away as a bride.”

1.288 When King Prasenajit heard this, he began making preparations to send her away as a bride. King Brahmadata then sent his son with great riches and a great show of force, whereupon King Prasenajit respectfully led the delegation into Śrāvastī.

1.289 Once the wedding delegation had been led in, an altar was erected and decorated with ornaments, and many people gathered there. They clad the young woman in every type of adornment and led her to her place at the decorated altar. Then the young man too was led to the decorated altar, and he turned and beckoned to young Kṣemā. Suddenly she rose up into the sky and gave a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning.

1.290 When the young man and the many others saw this they experienced a surge of tremendous joy toward Kṣemā, and the young man thought, “How could she engage in sexual relations with me, now that she has attained such great virtues?”

1.291 He called out to her, “Fine woman, come down! I’ll let you decide as you please!”

Kṣemā told him, “Lord, I cannot engage in sexual relations with you—please give your consent to my

going forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

1.292 “Given,” the young man replied. Young Kṣemā immediately descended and gave a Dharma teaching to the people. Then she asked for her parents’ permission, went to the garden of Prince Jeta, approached the Blessed One, touched her head to the Blessed One’s feet, and requested, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.” Thereupon the Blessed One presented her to Mahāprajāpatī.

1.293 Mahāprajāpatī led her to go forth as a novice, conferred on her full ordination, and instructed her. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, she manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, her mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of her hands as like space itself. She became cool like wet sandalwood. Her insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. She achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. She had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. Her state was such that Indra, Upendra, and the other gods worshiped and venerated her and addressed her with respect, and the Blessed One commended her as foremost among the wise.

1.294 After Kṣemā had gone forth in this way, the king’s son thought, “If even a woman can have such realizations of the Dharma, surely I can go forth in the Blessed One’s doctrine as well.” With this thought, he likewise asked for his parents’ permission, and, casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

1.295 The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, what actions did young Kṣemā and the king’s son take that ripened into their births into families of great

means, prosperity, and wealth; that they pleased and did not displease the Blessed One; and that they went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“This happened due to the power of their prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

1.296 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” explained the Blessed One, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in the city of Vārāṇasī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

1.297 “When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. Then one day they both found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and said to one another, ‘Good spouse, seeing as we have neither sons nor daughters, after we die all that we have will become property of the king. So while we yet live, let us carry only that which we can take with us into the next life.’

1.298 “The two spouses built a monastery that was complete in every respect, offered it to the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, provided for all their needs, and served them with respect.

1.299 “One day they had an idea and said, ‘Let us give up living at home to go forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.’ Casting away household affairs, they gave gifts and made merit, went forth as novices in the doctrine

of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and received full ordination.

1.300 “They practiced pure conduct all their lives, and while they may not have attained any great virtues, at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘While we may not have attained any great virtues, still we have gone forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, given gifts, made merit, and practiced pure conduct all our lives. By this root of virtue, wherever we are born, may it be into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and may we be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

1.301 “O monks, what do you think? The two who were married then are none other than Kṣemā and the king’s son. The acts of giving gifts, making merit, practicing pure conduct all their lives, and praying at the time of their deaths ripened such that wherever they were born, it was into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and they were well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.

1.302 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Maṅgalya*



Part One (8)

The Story of
Maṇiprabha

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Story of Maṇiprabha

1.303 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there was a young god named Maṇiprabha, who had hoops in his ears and necklaces around his neck, and whose body was graced with strings of precious stones. He had a luminous celestial mansion of exquisite, divine jewels. This exalted being of light filled the front of his long shirt with divine flowers—lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers—and when night had fallen he went to the garden of Prince Jeta in Śrāvastī to see the Blessed One. Upon his arrival, he scattered the divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers over the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

1.304 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the young god destroyed the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection with the thunderbolt of wisdom, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. Having seen the truths, he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, circumambulated him three times, and disappeared on the spot.

1.305 When that happened, the monks, who were making continued, earnest, and sleepless efforts at

dusk and dawn, noticed that the garden of Prince Jeta was suffused with a great light and wondered, “What was this? Last night, did Sahāṃpati Brahmā, or Śakra, King of the Gods—or perhaps the four great kings—come to offer respect to the Blessed One?”

1.306 Thinking this, they asked the Blessed One, “Lord, last night, did Sahāṃpati Brahmā, or Śakra, King of the Gods—or perhaps the four great kings—come to see the Blessed One?”

1.307 “Monks,” the Blessed One replied, “last night it was neither Sahāṃpati Brahmā, nor Śakra, King of the Gods, nor the four great kings who came to see me, but rather a young god named Maṇiprabha, a very exalted being of light with a luminous celestial mansion of exquisite, divine jewels, who came to see me and to offer his respect. I taught him the Dharma, and after he heard the Dharma from me he manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Having seen the truths, he went back to where he belongs.”

1.308 “Lord, what action did Maṇiprabha take that ripened into his birth as a god, that he attained a luminous celestial mansion of exquisite, divine jewels, and that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

1.309 “Monks,” explained the Blessed One, “Maṇiprabha committed and accumulated the actions himself at a previous time. The actions he committed and accumulated did not ripen into the external element of earth. They did not ripen into the element of water, nor the element of fire, nor the element of wind. The actions he committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but his own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

1.310 “When the time arrives—and even if
A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act

That sentient beings amass.

1.311 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate age when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in Vārāṇasī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa— with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

1.312 “That householder constructed a stūpa enshrining the hair and nail relics of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and a monastery that was complete in every respect, and he provided for all the monastery’s needs. Even the rain gutters of the stūpa dangled with jewels, such that the monastery associated with it shone night and day. He offered the monastery to the Blessed Buddha Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks. He also offered his respectful service to the monks, and provided for all their needs. After going for refuge and maintaining the fundamental precepts all his life, he took birth among the gods, where he obtained a celestial mansion of exquisite jewels.

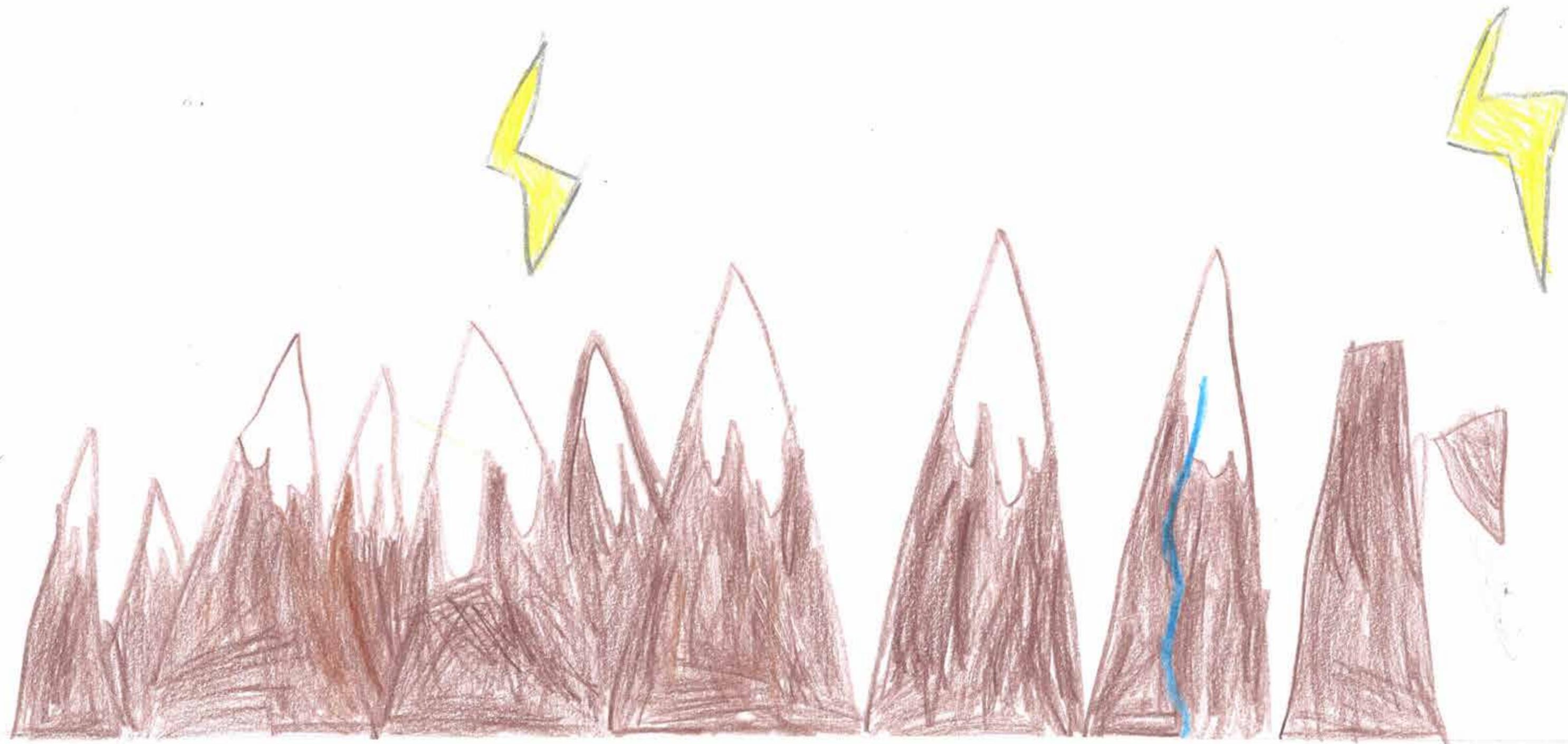
1.313 “O monks, what do you think? The householder who at that time built the reliquary stūpa enshrining the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and his teachings, and the monastery associated with it, and who hung jewels on the stūpa, is none other than the young god Maṇiprabha. The acts of building the reliquary stūpa and the associated monastery, complete in every respect, offering them to the Blessed Buddha Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, and hanging jewels on the stūpa ripened into his taking

birth among the gods.

1.314 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me and not displeased me.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Jasmine*



Part One (9)

The Story of
Jasmine

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 The Story of Jasmine

1.315 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled.

1.316 The householder had no heir and desired a son, so he supplicated the gods. He prayed to Paśupati, Varuṇa, Kubera, Śakra, Brahmā, and the rest, and to the deities of the pleasure groves, the forest deities, the deities of the crossroads, the deities of forks in the road, the deities who receive strewn oblations, the deities of his inherited tradition, and the deities who are in constant attendance of righteous persons.

1.317 While it is often said that praying to deities can cause a boy or girl to be born, this is not true. If children could be made just by praying, every family would have them a thousand times over, like a universal monarch. In fact, there are three circumstances that allow for the birth of a child: a child is born when (1) lust arises in the parents and they have intercourse, (2) the mother still has her menstrual cycle and is approached by a gandharva, and (3) the gandharva's mind is either attached or angry.

1.318 Nevertheless, he remained intent on his prayers,

and a great being took birth in his wife's womb who was well renowned and had gained his final birth, had the good fortune to soon be liberated due to gathering the accumulations, had his sights set on nirvāṇa and had turned away from saṃsāra, had no desire for the states of rebirth in cyclic existence, and who had now assumed his final body.

1.319 A woman wise in nature possesses five extraordinary qualities. She knows (1) whether a man is attracted to her, (2) the time of her menstrual cycle, (3) that she has conceived, (4) from whom she has conceived, and (5) whether the child is a boy or a girl, for if it is a baby boy it will stay on the right side of the womb, and if it is a girl it will stay on the left side of the womb.

1.320 When the householder's wife conceived a child, she was overjoyed and told her husband, "My Lord, I have conceived a boy. He is staying on the right side of my womb, so rejoice, for it is sure to be a boy!"

1.321 At this the householder too was very happy. He puffed out his chest, put his right hand in the air, and expressed his joy, saying, "I shall see the face of the son for whom I have prayed for so long! May everything be right with my son, may nothing go wrong with him, and may he carry on my work! As I care for him, may he care for me in return! May he enjoy my inheritance! May my lineage endure for a long time! And after our passing, when we die, may he give gifts, be they great or small, and make merit! When he does, may he dedicate the merit thus: 'Wherever these two are born, may this go to them!'

1.322 Now that he knew his wife was pregnant, he ensconced her on the upper levels of their house in order to care for the baby. He provided her with what she needed for winter in the winter, what she needed for summer in the summer, with food that was not too bitter, too sour, too salty, too sweet, too spicy, or too astringent as instructed by the healer,

and he served her food that was not bitter, sour, salty, sweet, spicy, or astringent. He draped her body with garlands and strings of precious stones, and he moved her from divan to divan and seat to seat like a goddess through a joyous garden, never letting her descend to the ground, never letting her hear an unpleasant word even for a moment.

1.323 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

1.324 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a

buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

1.325 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

1.326 Just as the blessed buddhas regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night—so too the great listeners regard the world with their listener’s eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

1.327 When Venerable Aniruddha regarded the world with his listener’s eyes, he saw a being who was in his final birth taking birth in the home of that householder, and thought, “Who will tame this being? Will he be tamed by the Buddha, or will he be tamed instead by the listeners?” Then he saw that it was he himself who would tame him, and since he was already a spiritual friend of the house, to strengthen the householder’s resolve, he went to the householder’s home alone, without companions or attendants.

1.328 The householder saw that Venerable Aniruddha was alone, without companions or attendants, and he asked, “Noble one, why have you come here alone, without companions or attendants? Noble one, is there no one at all who could attend you?”

1.329 “Where shall we find attendants, if one such as yourself does not grant them to us?” replied Venerable Aniruddha.

“Noble one,” said the householder, “my wife has conceived, so if we have a son, I shall offer him to you as an attendant.” Venerable Aniruddha said, “The virtuous keep their promises,” and having spoken thus, he departed.

1.330 After nine or ten months had passed, the householder’s wife gave birth to a child who

was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, and from all over whose body the fragrance of jasmine flowers arose, suffusing the entire house with the scent of jasmine. A rain of jasmine flowers fell all about the house as the child entered his mother's womb and again at the time of his birth.

1.331 At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth, when they were asked, "What name should we give this child?" they named him, saying, "Since a rain of jasmine flowers fell all about the house as the child entered his mother's womb and again at the time of his birth, his name will be Jasmine." They reared young Jasmine on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

1.332 As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

1.333 One day Venerable Aniruddha saw that the time had come for the child to go forth. He went to the householder's home and reminded him by saying, "Householder, before this child was born you granted him to me as an attendant. The virtuous keep their promises, do they not? Didn't you yourself make such a promise?"

1.334 "Yes, noble one," the householder replied, "I did make just such a promise." After he said this, he took the child by his hands, offered him to Venerable Aniruddha, and told him, "My child, before you were born, I offered you to the noble one. Therefore go, and be an attendant of the noble one."

1.335 The child said, "This will be of benefit to me," and with those words he followed Venerable Aniruddha away. After Venerable Aniruddha had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted the

householder with a discourse on the Dharma, he rose from his seat and departed.

1.336 Having brought the child to the monastery, Venerable Aniruddha led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

1.337 He also achieved miraculous abilities and great power, such that he reached the concentrations, liberations, meditative stabilizations, and attainments. He could enter and emerge from equipoise quickly, passing from one meditation to the next in the time it takes to thread a needle, and re-emerging just as quickly.

1.338 One day Venerable Jasmine thought, "The Blessed One has dispelled so many kinds of suffering and anguish, brought me many kinds of happiness and bliss, cleared away so many of my sins and nonvirtues, and secured for me such virtues. How could I repay the Blessed One's kindness? Anytime a buddha arises in the world, it is only to benefit beings, so surely I too should act for the benefit of beings!"

1.339 Reflecting in this way, he wondered, "Whom might I tame?" He looked out, and right away he saw his two parents. Upon seeing them he thought, "But by what method can I tame them?" and he realized he could tame them with a display of miracles. So he disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and

reappeared at his parents' house, floating in midair before them. He made a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning, then descended and took a seat.

1.340 He taught his parents the Dharma particularly suited to them. Hearing it, the householders and their retinue destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat. He led them to go for refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts. Having seen the truths, they gave gifts and made merit.

1.341 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did Venerable Jasmine take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful; that at his birth, the scent of jasmine flowers arose from all over his body; that as he entered the womb, a rain of jasmine flowers fell all about the house; and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship? And his parents—what action did they take that, entrusting themselves to him completely, they pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

1.342 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in

Vārāṇasī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's.

1.343 “When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.

1.344 “As he grew up he found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. He asked for his parents' permission and went forth. After going forth, he studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of his wisdom and freedom. He led his parents to live a life of perfect faith, and to go for refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts, and he inspired them to give gifts and to share what they had.

1.345 “One day he thought, ‘I have completed whatever educational duties were before me. Now let me serve the saṅgha!’ With this thought he called upon his parents, the brahmins, and others of faith, and they offered the saṅgha cooked rice, soup, drink, porridge, and provisions such as clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick, and they offered them residences as well.

1.346 “He anointed all the stūpas containing hair and nail relics with an unguent of sesame oil and fragrant ointments; offered rows of butter lamps, garlands of jasmine flowers, and parasols; and scattered loose jasmine petals over them.

1.347 “Then he prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. From all over my body may the fragrance of jasmine flowers arise. As I enter my mother's womb, may a rain of jasmine flowers also fall all about the house. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin

prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship.

1.348 “ ‘May I have a sharp intellect. May I attain the concentrations, liberations, meditative stabilization, and attainments. May I enter and emerge from equipoise quickly, passing from one meditation to the next in the time it takes to thread a needle, and re-emerging just as quickly.’

1.349 As they saw him sitting there praying his parents asked, ‘Child, what prayers are you making?’

“ ‘I prayed like this . . .’ he told them, and related it all in detail.

1.350 His parents said, ‘May you alone again become our son. May the two of us again become your parents. Entrusting ourselves to you completely, may we please and not displease the Blessed Buddha.’

1.351 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that monk then is none other than Jasmine now. At that time he went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and rendered service in accord with the Dharma. He served the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha with respect, and the act of praying ripened such that wherever he was born it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful; from all over his body the fragrance of jasmine flowers arose; and a rain of flowers fell all about the house as he entered his mother’s womb, and again at the time of his birth.

1.352 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; that his intellect became

sharp; that that he reached the concentrations, liberations, meditative stabilizations, and attainments; and that he can enter and emerge from equipoise quickly, passing from one meditation to the next in the time it takes to thread a needle, and re-emerging just as quickly.

1.353 “The ones who were his parents then are none other than his parents now. At that time they prayed, ‘Entrusting ourselves to you completely, may we please and not displease the king of the Śākyas,’ and now, entrusting themselves to him completely, they have pleased me, and not displeased me.”

THE END

Next: *Give It to Me!*



The Story of Jasmine

Bella Jensen / 10 years old

Part One (10)

Give
It to Me!

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 Give It to Me!

1.354 One morning when the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms. A little brahmin child stood not far from the Blessed One and watched as a householder offered a *laḍḍū* treat of a hundred flavors, big enough to fill his stomach.

1.355 When the brahmin child saw the *laḍḍū* treat, great craving arose in him for it, and he approached the Blessed One and said, “Hey Gautama, gimme that *laḍḍū*!”

The Blessed One answered the brahmin child, “Child, if you say, ‘I don’t need that *laḍḍū* treat,’ I’ll hand it over.”

1.356 So he said to Gautama, “Hey Gautama, I don’t need that *laḍḍū* treat,” and the Blessed One handed the *laḍḍū* treat to him.

1.357 At that time, not far from the Blessed One was sitting the householder Anāthapiṇḍada, who thought, “It won’t be possible for the Blessed One to take alms again today. There’s nowhere else, no other opportunity.”

1.358 Realizing that there was no other place and no other opportunity for the Blessed One to take alms, he pulled the brahmin child aside and said, “Little brahmin, give that *laḍḍū* treat back to the Blessed One and I’ll give you five hundred gold coins.”

1.359 “As you wish, householder,” the brahmin child said, and he put the *laḍḍū* treat back into the Blessed One’s alms bowl. The Blessed One finished his alms round and returned to the monastery. Meanwhile,

the householder Anāthapiṇḍada brought the brahmin child home, gave him something to eat, and handed him the five hundred gold coins.

1.360 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why the Blessed One would not give the brahmin child the *laḍḍū* treat when he begged the Blessed One for it, but the Blessed One gave the *laḍḍū* treat to him after the child said, ‘Hey Gautama, I don’t need that *laḍḍū* treat.’”

1.361 “Monks,” explained the Blessed One, “for many thousands of lifetimes, that brahmin child frequently indulged, became addicted, and ended up wanting more. Thus I’ve lured him with a *laḍḍū* treat to turn him away from his preoccupation with acquiring things; that will be the sole cause of his going forth and giving up his aggregates.”

1.362 “Lord, when will this brahmin child give up his aggregates?”

“Monks, in the future a totally and completely awakened Buddha named Mountain, who will far surpass the listeners and solitary buddhas, will emerge in the world. It is in his doctrine alone that, having obtained a human birth, he will go forth, cast away the afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of She Who Gathers*



Part One (11)

The Story of
She Who Gathers

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

11 The Story of She Who Gathers

1.363 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, there was a king named Padmagarbha who reigned in Takṣaśīla. His kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma, and he treated the kingdom like a beloved only child.

1.364 As he and the queen enjoyed themselves and coupled, the queen conceived, and her mind became filled with thoughts like, “If only I could debate the scriptural exegetes!” and other fervent wishes of that sort. When the king heard of this, he took her to the soothsayers.

1.365 “Deva,” the soothsayers said, “she has such fervent wishes in her mind because the being in her womb will understand all the treatises and defeat all scriptural exegetes.”

“Wise ones, what will happen if we can’t get this wish out of her mind?” asked the king.

“The heir born to you will have missing limbs,” the soothsayers replied.

1.366 The king thought, “I can’t bear for my child to be born with missing limbs!” So he sat the queen behind a curtain, assembled all the scriptural exegetes, and, after appointing impartial observers,

had them debate the scriptures with her.

1.367 Once she had defeated all of the scriptural exegetes, her fervent desire subsided. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named her, saying, “Since her mother defeated all the other scriptural exegetes before a great gathering of people, the child’s name will be She Who Gathers.”

1.368 Young She Who Gathers was raised by eight nurses—two nurses to hold her in their laps, two wet nurses, two nurses to bathe her, and two nurses to play with her. They raised her with a protection cord, and the eye of a peacock feather from the hand of Nārāyaṇa. They reared her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake.

1.369 As she grew up, she sat behind a curtain in the royal palace and studied letters on her own. She perfected her reading skills, studied all the treatises on her own, and defeated all the scriptural exegetes in Takṣaśīla from behind the curtain.

1.370 One day the king asked the young woman, “To whom should I give you in marriage?”

“Award me to any with the skill to defeat me in scriptural debate,” the young woman replied.

1.371 When the king heard this he thought, “She has such an ability to speak. I must not give her to one who is merely good looking, or of high caste, or great influence, but to one who can defeat her in debate, and none other.” After that, word spread quickly. As soon as they heard, all the scriptural exegetes from neighboring lands began to arrive, and the young woman defeated them all.

1.372 In the south there lived a scriptural exegete named Riu who feared no text. He was well educated and knowledgeable, well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and had an excellent complexion.

He heard that in Takṣaśīla, King Padmagarbha's daughter had defeated all the scriptural exegetes, and he heard as well about the promise her father had made to them.

1.373 Astounded to hear all this, he thought, "Let me go there and see for myself." So with a retinue of five hundred he made his way through the villages, towns, forest settlements, and cities small and large, defeating all the other scriptural exegetes as he went, until eventually he arrived in Takṣaśīla.

1.374 There he approached King Padmagarbha and said, "I heard that you, Deva, have a daughter who has defeated all the scriptural exegetes. As I have studied treatises under great masters myself, I too would like to converse with her."

"As you wish," the king replied.

1.375 The king called together the scriptural exegetes, placed each of their philosophical texts before them, and the young woman took her place behind the curtain. But as soon as the young woman saw the scriptural exegete Riu—who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and excellently complected—an arrow of lust shot through her, and she thought, "I won't find a spouse like this anywhere. He alone should be my spouse. I want no one else," and she allowed him to defeat her.

1.376 Thereupon the king thought, "I promised that I would give my daughter to a capable debater—not to one who is merely good looking, of high caste, or of great influence, but to one who can defeat her in debate, and none other. This man is not only capable in debate, but he is also well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. I shall not find one better than him, nor will I find a more excellent scriptural exegete. I will not give her to anyone but him!" With this thought, he undertook all that custom required of him. The king gave the young woman to the man and appointed him to a great lordship.

1.377 She Who Gathers and Riu enjoyed themselves and coupled. One day the young woman conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, "What name should we give this child?" And they named him, saying, "Since the name of his clan is Kātyāyana, and he is the child of She Who Gathers, his name will be Kātyāyana Who Gathers."

1.378 They reared young Kātyāyana on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction.

1.379 Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences. At age sixteen he understood all the treatises and defeated all the scriptural exegetes. He started to feel arrogant and thought that in all Jambudvīpa not even one person was his equal, much less his superior, and this made him despise everyone.

1.380 One day a lay vow holder said to him, "Child, don't be haughty, arrogantly thinking that not even one person is your equal, much less your superior. Child, there was a young Śākya born in Magadha, about whom the brahmin soothsayers and augurs made this prediction:

1.381 "If he remains here at home, he will become a universal monarch, but if he shaves his head and face and dons the colorful religious robes, and if he goes forth from home to live as a mendicant with nothing short of perfect faith, he will be renowned throughout the world as a tathāgata, an arhat, a

totally and completely awakened buddha.’

1.382 “Compared to the one who, as prophesied, shaved his head and face, donned the colorful religious robes, and with nothing short of perfect faith went forth from home to live as a mendicant—the Buddha, who has fully and completely awakened unto unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment—your form and wisdom are not even a thousandth, not even a hundred thousandth, not even a millionth or a billionth, not even an incalculably small fraction of his.”

1.383 When the young man heard the name Buddha, a sound unlike any he had heard before, it gave him goosebumps, and he was eager to see him. So he asked for his parents’ permission, saying, “Mother, Father, I ask for your kind permission to travel to Magadha and practice the holy life in the presence of the Blessed One.”

1.384 His parents thought, “We will not be able to stop him,” and knowing this to be the case, they said, “Join us. We both want to give up our householder duties and go with you to practice the holy life in the presence of the Blessed One.” Having said this, they gave up their householder duties, gave gifts, made merit, and set out for Magadha.

1.385 When they finally arrived in Rājagṛha and went to see the Blessed One, the young man and his parents saw him from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart.

1.386 The sight of the Blessed One filled them with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years. Seeing the Blessed Buddha in this way, they were filled with supreme joy, and

they approached the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

1.387 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

1.388 Having seen the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and made this request: “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

1.389 The Blessed One led the father and son to go forth by saying “Come, monks!” and, conferring on them full ordination, instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

1.390 After that the Blessed One called Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī. She led She Who Gathers to go forth as a novice, conferred on her full ordination and instructed her. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, she

manifested arhatship.

1.391 The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did Kātyāyana Who Gathers take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful; that he understood all the treatises, and defeated all the other scriptural exegetes; that he pleased the Blessed One and did not displease him; that he went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away the afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; that his parents also became superior scriptural exegetes; and that, entrusting themselves to him, they pleased the Blessed One and did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

1.392 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain brahmin in the city of Vārāṇasī.

1.393 “When the time came for him to marry he took a wife. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

1.394 “When he grew up he found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and asked for his parents’ permission, saying ‘Mother, Father, I ask for your kind

permission to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.’

1.395 “His parents replied, ‘Son, you are the only child we have—beloved, delightful, dear, and agreeable—so there is no way we can allow this.’ But since they had no way to stop him, his parents consented, and he went forth as a novice in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and then received full ordination.

1.396 “He studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of his wisdom and freedom. He acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick. He led his parents to live a life of perfect faith, as well as to go for refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts, and he inspired them to give gifts and to share what they had.

1.397 “One day he thought, ‘I have completed whatever duties were before me in terms of my education. Now I will serve the saṅgha in accord with the Dharma!’ With this thought he called together his parents and patrons and other donors, and after offering food to the Blessed Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, he venerated a stūpa containing hair and nail relics, and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.’

1.398 “Since the preceptor who had led him to go forth had himself understood all the treatises at sixteen years of age and defeated all the other scriptural exegetes, and since both his parents had likewise been supreme scriptural exegetes and defeated all the other scriptural exegetes, he also prayed, ‘Just as my preceptor understood all the treatises at sixteen years of age and defeated all the other scriptural exegetes, and just as both my parents were likewise supreme scriptural exegetes and defeated all the other scriptural exegetes, may I too understand all

the treatises at sixteen years of age and defeat all the other scriptural exegetes, and may both my parents likewise become supreme scriptural exegetes.

1.399 “ ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

1.400 “When his parents saw him sitting there praying, they asked, ‘Child, what prayers are you making?’ and he told them what kind of prayers he was making, relating all in detail.

“His parents said, ‘May you alone be our son. May the two of us be your parents. Entrusting ourselves to you completely, may we please and not displease the Blessed Buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

1.401 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than Kātyāyana Who Gathers. Those who were his parents then are none other than his parents now. The act of giving gifts, making merit, and praying at that time ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful; and that he understood all the treatises and defeated all the other scriptural exegetes.

1.402 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

1.403 “At that time his parents prayed, ‘As your parents, may the two of us become supreme scriptural

exegetes. Entrusting ourselves to you, may we please and not displease the Blessed Buddha,’ and so it is that those two have now become supreme scriptural exegetes, and entrusting themselves to him, they have pleased me and not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Tailor*



Part One (12)

The Tailor

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

12 The Tailor

1.404 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder. One day the householder's wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was paraplegic and unable to walk. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, "What name should we give this child?" And they named him, saying, "Since the child is one who moves about by crawling, his name will be Paṅgu."

1.405 They reared young Paṅgu on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when he had grown, his father thought, "What kind of work could my child perform while seated? Let me train him as a craftsman so he can earn his livelihood." Then he thought, "Aha! My son should train as a tailor. Then he can earn his livelihood." With this in mind he had his child learn tailoring, and indeed the young man became a great master of the trade.

1.406 Meanwhile, another householder borrowed clothing and jewelry from another house for his wife to wear to a festival. When he brought them home, his wife put them on, got herself ready for the festival, and departed. Out of carelessness, she tore the fabric at its hem. She was afraid of her husband, so she didn't let anyone see what she had done. By the time she returned home from the festival her husband had gone to another village and while he was gone, she brought the tailor to their house, latched the door so that no one would see him, and had him mend the torn hem.

1.407 While the tailor was still in the house, her husband came home and began to call out and knock on the door. His wife recognized his voice and was scared stiff—not only because she had brought the tailor inside their house, but also on account of the torn hem. Terrified, she explained everything to the tailor, stuck him in a basket, sealed it, and left him there. She opened the door and the householder entered. She fawned over him, brought him things, and then lay down with him.

1.408 As they lay there, thieves broke into the house. Upon entering the upper level of the house, the first thing they picked up was the basket, and they thought, "This basket is sealed so tightly and is so heavy—it must be full of precious jewels! This will last us for seven generations. This alone will suffice; we won't need anything else."

1.409 With this thought, they took only the basket and carried it off deep into the forest. As they were traveling, the moon rose and the man sitting inside the basket started to urinate. The urine seeped through the basket and began to leak out. The thieves thought, "As the moon rises, water drips from within—there must be a magic water crystal inside! We're sure of it!" They were ecstatic.

1.410 Supporting the basket with the last of their strength, they arrived at their destination deep in the forest, where the leader of the bandits and others among them asked, "What have you brought here in that basket?"

1.411 "Be glad, boss," they replied, "for today we bring an end to our poverty! Be glad, for today we have come upon a basket full of jewels!" The leader and the rest of the bandits likewise grew ecstatic and said, "Open the basket—let's see what kinds of jewels are in there!" Unlatching the lid of the basket, they opened it and looked inside.

1.412 There sat Paṅgu in the basket, just as he had been left. At the sight of him they thought, "We walked and walked, lugging this basket—this *paṅgu* made

the whole night miserable.” They were anguished. Those who had stayed behind broke into hysterics, laughing at the bandits who had traveled through the night and saying, “Oh, such misery! How miserable!”

1.413 At about this time the householder’s wife awoke. When she got up, she walked through the house and saw that it had been broken into and the basket stolen. But the sight also gladdened her, and she spoke in verse, saying,

1.414 “My house was broken into, my basket is gone,
I’m half delighted, half morose.
The thieves who bore it off into the trees
Are surely laughing, even as they weep.”

1.415 The thieves who had stolen the basket grumbled angrily, saying, “So what if the paraplegic made us unhappy? Since we have to make a sacrifice to the yakṣa at any rate, we’ll just have to sacrifice him!” They spread a circle of cow dung before the yakṣa and set forth pots brimming with burning incense, flowers, and ritual offerings. Then they took up long, sharp knives, and set the man before the yakṣa to begin the ritual.

1.416 The tailor realized that he was about to be sacrificed to a yakṣa. Terrified at the thought, he wondered, “To whom could I go for refuge, other than the Blessed One? Who else could save my precious life?” Thinking this, he made a silent prayer to the Blessed One: “Lord, Blessed One, if there is nothing past, present, or future that you do not see, know, or directly perceive, then heed me now, Blessed One, for I am in distress, desolate, and bereft. Protect me! Please save my precious life!”

1.417 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the

six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

1.418 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

1.419 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

1.420 When the Blessed One looked, he directly apprehended that the time had come to tame the paraplegic and the five hundred bandits, so he appeared there in divine dress in the form of the very deity they were propitiating.

The five hundred bandits marveled, “Our god

has appeared to us in bodily form!” Their hair stood on end, and with their palms pressed together they hunkered down around him, saying, “Blessed One, what advice can you grant us?”

1.421 The Blessed One replied, “I do not require human sacrifice, therefore give it up. If you wish for Dharma, give up your sacrifices and supplications, gather round, and I shall teach you the Dharma.”

“We will do as you wish,” they said, and they and abandoned their sacrifice, touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

1.422 The Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature of Paṅgu and the bandits, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the five hundred bandits destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat. Paṅgu also manifested the resultant state of non-return.

1.423 Once they had seen the truths, the Blessed One made his divine dress disappear, and sat before them in his own natural body. They beheld the Blessed One and were ecstatic. Full of joy, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and made this request: “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

1.424 The Blessed One replied to the bandits, saying, “Come, join me, monks! Practice the holy life.” As soon as the Blessed One had finished speaking there they stood, alms bowl and water pitcher in hand, with a week’s worth of hair and beard, and with the deportment of a monk who had been

ordained for one hundred years. As it is stated,

1.425 Garbed in robes, with shaven heads,
And senses stilled by Buddha’s will—
From the very moment the One Thus Gone
Spoke to them, saying, “Come, join me.”

1.426 Then the Blessed One instructed them, and casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

1.427 Paṅgu thought, “If my body weren’t like this, I too would go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, in order to ford the floodwaters and escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort.” No sooner had he thought this than every facet of his body was completely whole and manifest, and he was especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One.

1.428 Joyfully, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, and made this request of the Blessed One: “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

1.429 The Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice by saying, “Come, monk! Practice the holy life,” then conferred on him full ordination and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

1.430 The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, what

action did Paṅgu take that ripened into his becoming paraplegic? What action did he take that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

1.431 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that he committed and accumulated:

1.432 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened Buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain two householders in Vārāṇasī who were brothers.

1.433 “One of them, upon hearing the Dharma from the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, manifested the resultant state of non-return, gave up his unwholesome ways, and devoted himself single-mindedly to wholesome activities.

1.434 “His younger brother worked in the fields, and thought, ‘I have to deal with cold in winter and heat all summer, while he’s snug at home, enjoying his bliss.’ Irate, he spoke harshly to the non-returner: ‘While I have to deal with cold in winter and heat all summer and handle all the work, you spend your time at home like some paraplegic! Don’t you want to do anything at all?’

1.435 “Then the non-returner thought, ‘My little brother is speaking so harshly to me. Let me be of help to him so that it doesn’t ruin him for good.’ With this thought, he made a display of miracles before him and said, ‘You must confess the mistake you’ve made by speaking harshly to me. Otherwise you are certain to roam in saṃsāra and meet with great suffering.’

1.436 “As soon as he heard this, the younger brother was seized with regret. He bowed down at his

brother’s feet, asked his forgiveness, and said, ‘I will give up living at home to go forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.’

1.437 “The non-returner told him, ‘Give up household affairs, and both of us will go forth.’

“ ‘Let’s do that,’ the brother replied. They gave up their household affairs and both of them went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

1.438 “After the non-returner went forth, he cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship. The other brother went forth, and after practicing pure conduct all his life, at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I not meet with the results of the act of speaking harshly to such a pure being. Should it happen that the results of that action ripen to me, may I then feel a sense of renunciation, may that misfortune vanish, and may I be fortunate instead. While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

1.439 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and became a monk then is none other than Paṅgu. At that time he spoke harshly to his elder brother, and wherever he was born, he was paraplegic. He felt regret, went forth, and after practicing the conduct leading to liberation all his life, at the time of his death prayed, ‘May I not meet with the results of the act of speaking harshly to such a pure being. Should that action ripen to me, then as soon as I feel a sense of renunciation, may that misfortune immediately vanish and may I be fortunate instead.’

1.440 “Now he has felt a sense of renunciation, and immediately all his limbs have become complete. At that time he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

1.441 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

1.442 The monks requested the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why, after the five hundred bandits met the paraplegic tailor, they went forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

1.443 “Not only now, monks” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, these five hundred bandits met this selfsame paraplegic tailor, went forth, and generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Listen well!

1.444 “Monks, in times past there were five hundred bandits who lived deep in the forest. They ransacked the mountain villages, carrying off much of their food and wealth. There was also a man who lived and dwelled deep in that forest, and the bandits captured him to sacrifice him to their yakṣa. There in the forest they spread a circle of cow dung before the yakṣa, and set forth offering pots and the man himself. Then they took up long, sharp knives and seated themselves before the yakṣa to begin the ritual.

1.445 “Thereupon the man thought, ‘After they kill me, they are going to offer me as a sacrifice to the yakṣa.’ Terrified at the thought, he wondered, ‘To whom can I go for refuge? Who can save my precious life?’

1.446 “Not far from there, on the mountain in an

ascetic hermitage there lived a certain sage. At that very moment the man thought of the sage, and with a faithful mind began praying to him: ‘Blessed One, if there is nothing past, present, or future that you do not see, know, or directly perceive, then heed me now, Blessed One, for I am in distress, desolate, and bereft. Protect me! Please save my precious life! Please, lift this burden from me!’ A god who was fond of the sage heard those thoughts and alerted him. As soon as he heard, the sage disappeared from his hermitage and arrived before the bandits.

1.447 “When they saw the sage, the bandits were overcome with joy. Full of joy they said, ‘Sage, what advice can you grant us?’

“ ‘Release the man and sit before me, and I shall teach you the Dharma,’ said the sage.

1.448 “ ‘We will do as the sage wishes,’ the bandits replied, and they released the man, bowed down at the sage’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. After the sage taught the Dharma to them, both the man and the five hundred bandits went forth in his very presence, and generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

1.449 “O monks, what do you think? I myself was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that man then is this paraplegic tailor now. Those who were those five hundred bandits then are none other than these five hundred bandits. At that time, because of that man, they went forth and generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges, and now too, because of this paraplegic tailor they have gone forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

1.450 *This concludes Part One of “The Hundred Deeds.”*

THE END

Next: Part Two *The Chariot: Four Stories*





The Hundred Deeds

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Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Part Two

1. The Chariot: Four Stories
 1. i The First “Chariot” Story
 1. ii The Second “Chariot” Story
 1. iii The Third “Chariot” Story
 1. iv The Fourth “Chariot” Story
 2. The Story of Earnest
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 4. The Story of Keśinī
 5. The Story of Lotus Color
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 10. The Story of Abhaya
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-

◆
Part Two (1)

The Chariot:
Four Stories

- 1. i The First “Chariot” Story
- 1. ii The Second “Chariot” Story
- 1. iii The Third “Chariot” Story
- 1. iv The Fourth “Chariot” Story

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Chariot: Four Stories

1. i The First “Chariot” Story

2.2 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain brahmin who wished to perform a ritual offering, so he climbed onto his chariot and rode into Śrāvastī. That morning, when the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī, the brahmin was filled with joy, circumambulated the Blessed One, and departed. At that moment, the Blessed One smiled.

2.3 Now it is the nature of the blessed buddhas’ smiles that when they smile, colorful beams of blue, yellow, red, and white light radiate from their mouths, with some traveling up and others traveling down.

2.4 Those that travel down go to the beings in the Reviving Hell, the Black Thread Hell, the Crushing Hell, the Shrieking Hell, the Screaming Hell, the Hot Hell, the Hell of Extreme Heat, the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, the Blistering Hell, the Bursting Blister Hell, the Hell of Chattering Teeth, the Hell of Lamentation, the Cold Whimpering Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Blue Lotus Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Lotus Hell, and the Splitting Open Like a Great Lotus Hell, and as they descend they cool the beings in the hot hells, and warm the beings in

the cold hells.

2.5 In this way they soothe the particular injuries of those beings, who wonder, “Have we died and been reborn somewhere other than this place?” Then, to engender faith in them, the blessed ones radiate an emanation, and when the beings see it, they think, “Alas, it is neither that we have died and left this place, nor that we have been born elsewhere. Rather it is because of the unprecedented appearance of this emanation that our particular injuries have been soothed.” They feel real joy toward the emanation, exhausting the deeds that brought them to experience the hells. Now, as fit vessels of the truths, they take rebirth among the gods and humans.

2.6 The rays of light that travel up go to the following gods: those of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations, and the Heaven of Brahmā’s Assembly; those of the realms called Brahmin Priests, Great Brahmā, Limited Splendor, Immeasurable Splendor, Radiant Heaven, Lesser Virtue, Immeasurable Virtue, Extensive Virtue, and the Cloudless Heaven; and those of the realms called Increasing Merit, Great Result, None Greater, Sorrowless, Sublime Vision, Great Vision, and Supreme. There they sound a cry of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness, and they echo the following two verses:

2.7 Cultivate renunciation,
Practice the Buddha’s teaching—
Trample the lord of death’s army
Like an elephant in a house of reeds!

2.8 Those who mind their way along the path
Of this Dharma and Vinaya
Will abandon the round of rebirth

And put an end to suffering.

2.9 Then the rays of light circle through the trichiliocosm and come back to the blessed ones. Should the blessed one wish to make a revelation about past deeds, they will disappear into the blessed one's back. Should he wish to foretell the future, they will disappear into the chest. Should he wish to prophesy about a hell birth, they will disappear into the soles of the feet. Should he wish to prophesy about an animal birth, they will disappear into the heels. Should he wish to prophesy about birth as an anguished spirit, they will disappear into the big toe. Should he wish to prophesy about a human birth, they will disappear into the knees.

2.10 Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a great universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the left hand. Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the right hand. Should he wish to prophesy about a god birth, they will disappear into the navel. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the listeners, they will disappear into the mouth. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, they will disappear into the hair between the eyebrows. Should he wish to prophesy about an unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, they will disappear into the crown of the head.

2.11 After these particular rays of light had circled the Blessed One three times, they disappeared into the hair between the Blessed One's eyebrows. Then Venerable Ānanda joined his palms in reverence and praised the Blessed One with the following verse:

2.12 "From your mouth's great gate spill forth
Scores of thousand-colored spectra.

Like the shining of the sun,
They illumine everything."

2.13 He then supplicated him with the following verses:

"The lords of beings, the buddhas who cast off
disconsolation,
Are rid of savagery and pride, and are themselves
the cause of all that's good.
These victors over every rival, in the absence of
cause and condition
Do not display their smiles, which are the color of
conch and lotus root.

2.14 "So if you know it's time, for your mind never
falters,
Then come—ascetic, victor—quell your disciples'
hesitation.
O sage, greatest of the herd, with speech unrivaled,
sure, and good,
Reassure those prone to doubt.

2.15 "Mountain still, and vast as oceans,
Buddha, fully awakened lord,
Your smile is no mundane event.
Hero, make it manifest so that many might pay
heed.

2.16 "With speech like a clap of thunder,
Graceful like a royal bull,
Oh tell the fruits awaiting those,
The peerless ones, who praise you!

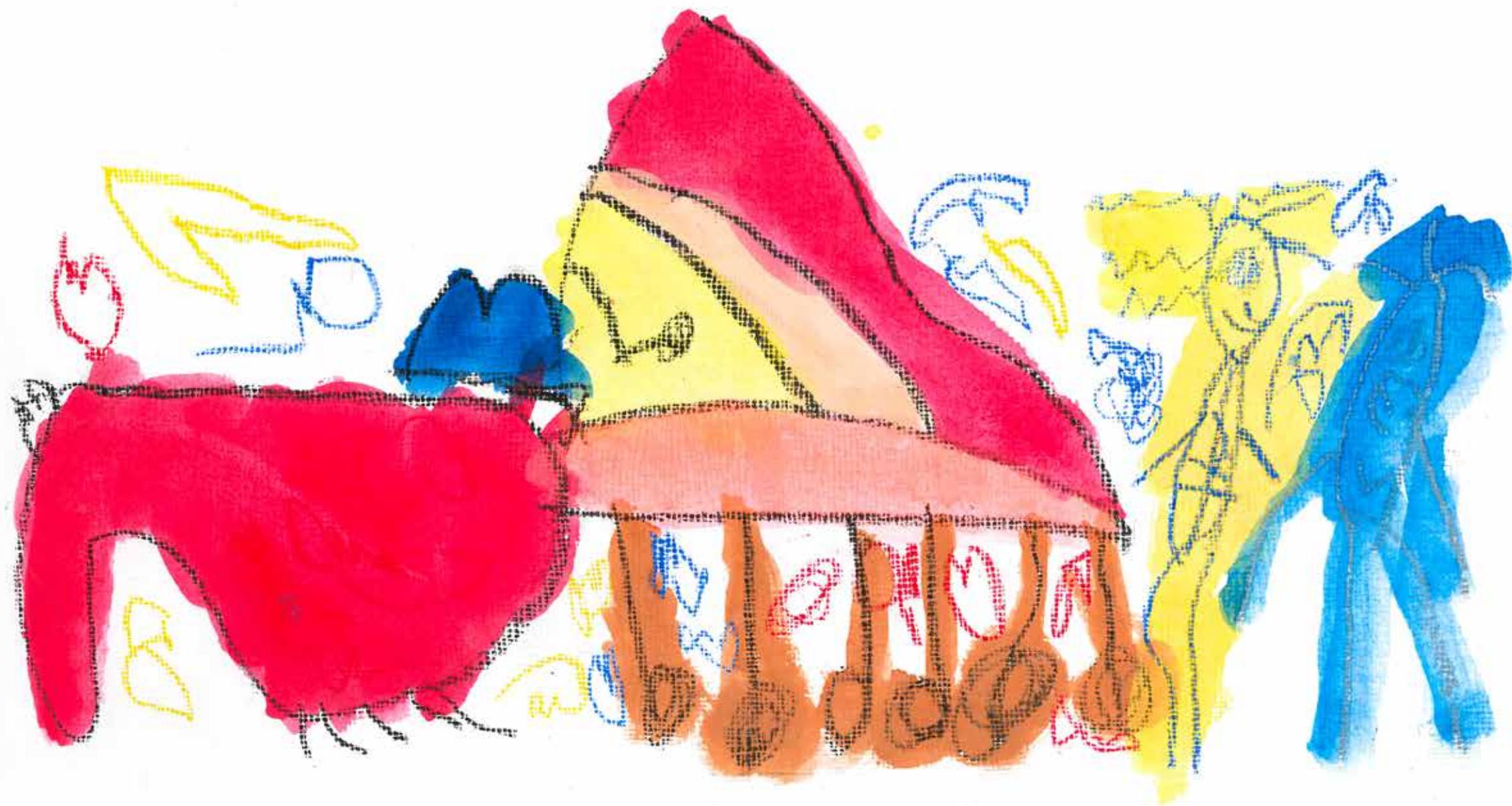
2.17 "Lord, if in the absence of the right causes and
conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally
and completely awakened buddhas do not smile,
what are the causes and conditions that make them
smile?"

2.18 "Ānanda, so it is," replied the Blessed One.
"It is just as you say, Ānanda. Without the right

causes and conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas do not smile. Ānanda, did you see the brahmin who circumambulated the Tathāgata and departed?”

“Yes, Lord, I saw him,” Ānanda said.

2.19 “Ānanda, because of the root of virtue of this brahmin’s action, he will not fall to the lower realms for thirteen eons. For thirteen eons he will take rebirth among gods and humans. After circling in saṃsāra, in his final rebirth, his final dwelling place, he will take birth as a human being. Then he will go forth and manifest the thirty-seven wings of enlightenment without a teacher or any instruction. He will manifest the enlightenment of a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddha known as Circumambulating. That is what shall come of his act of generosity.”



The First "Chariot" Story

Shiva / 5 years old

1. ii The Second “Chariot” Story

2.20 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain young brahmin who performed his sacrifice, climbed onto his chariot, and, attended by his host of servants, rode into Śrāvastī. As the Blessed One returned from Śrāvastī where he had gone for alms, the young man gazed at the Blessed One joyfully, and at that moment the Blessed One smiled.

2.21 Now it is the nature of the blessed buddhas’ smiles that when they smile, colorful beams of blue, yellow, red, and white light radiate from their mouths, with some traveling up and others traveling down.

2.22 Those that travel down go to the beings in the Reviving Hell, the Black Thread Hell, the Crushing Hell, the Shrieking Hell, the Screaming Hell, the Hot Hell, the Hell of Extreme Heat, the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, the Blistering Hell, the Bursting Blister Hell, the Hell of Chattering Teeth, the Hell of Lamentation, the Cold Whimpering Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Blue Lotus Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Lotus Hell, and the Splitting Open Like a Great Lotus Hell, and as they descend they cool the beings in the hot hells, and warm the beings in the cold hells.

2.23 In this way they soothe the particular injuries of those beings, who wonder, “Have we died and been reborn somewhere other than this place?” Then, to engender faith in them, the blessed ones radiate an emanation, and when the beings see it, they think, “Alas, it is neither that we have died and left this place, nor that we have been born elsewhere. Rather it is because of the unprecedented appearance of this emanation that our particular injuries have been soothed.” They feel real joy toward the emanation, exhausting the deeds that brought them to experience the hells. Now, as fit vessels of the truths, they take rebirth among the

gods and humans.

2.24 The rays of light that travel up go to the following gods: those of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations, and the Heaven of Brahmā’s Assembly; those of the realms called Brahmin Priests, Great Brahmā, Limited Splendor, Immeasurable Splendor, Radiant Heaven, Lesser Virtue, Immeasurable Virtue, Extensive Virtue, and the Cloudless Heaven; and those of the realms called Increasing Merit, Great Result, None Greater, Sorrowless, Sublime Vision, Great Vision, and Supreme. There they sound a cry of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness, and they echo the following two verses:

2.25 Cultivate renunciation,
Practice the Buddha’s teaching—
Trample the lord of death’s army
Like an elephant in a house of reeds!

2.26 Those who mind their way along the path
Of this Dharma and Vinaya
Will abandon the round of rebirth
And put an end to suffering.

2.27 Then the rays of light circle through the trichilocosm and come back to the blessed ones. Should the blessed one wish to make a revelation about past deeds, they will disappear into the blessed one’s back. Should he wish to foretell the future, they will disappear into the chest. Should he wish to prophesy about a hell birth, they will disappear into the soles of the feet. Should he wish to prophesy about an animal birth, they will disappear into the heels. Should he wish to prophesy about birth as an anguished spirit, they will disappear into the big toe. Should he wish to prophesy about a human

birth, they will disappear into the knees.

2.28 Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a great universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the left hand. Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the right hand. Should he wish to prophesy about a god birth, they will disappear into the navel. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the listeners, they will disappear into the mouth. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, they will disappear into the hair between the eyebrows. Should he wish to prophesy about an unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, they will disappear into the crown of the head.

2.29 After these particular rays of light had circled the Blessed One three times, they disappeared into the hair between the Blessed One's eyebrows. Then Venerable Ānanda joined his palms in reverence and praised the Blessed One with the following verse:

2.30 "From your mouth's great gate spill forth
Scores of thousand-colored spectra.
Like the shining of the sun,
They illumine everything."

2.31 He then supplicated him with the following verses:

"The lords of beings, the buddhas who cast off
disconsolation,
Are rid of savagery and pride, and are themselves
the cause of all that's good.
These victors over every rival, in the absence of
cause and condition
Do not display their smiles, which are the color of
conch and lotus root.

2.32 "So if you know it's time, for your mind never

falters,

Then come—ascetic, victor—quell your disciples'
hesitation.

O sage, greatest of the herd, with speech unrivaled,
sure, and good,

Reassure those prone to doubt.

2.33 "Mountain still, and vast as oceans,
Buddha, fully awakened lord,
Your smile is no mundane event.
Hero, make it manifest so that many might pay
heed.

2.34 "With speech like a clap of thunder,
Graceful like a royal bull,
Oh tell the fruits awaiting those,
The peerless ones, who praise you!

2.35 "Lord, if in the absence of the right causes and
conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally
and completely awakened buddhas do not smile,
what are the causes and conditions that make them
smile?"

2.36 "Ānanda, so it is," replied the Blessed One. "It
is just as you say, Ānanda. Ānanda, did you see
the young brahmin who felt joy as he gazed at the
Tathāgata?"

"Yes, Lord, I saw him," Ānanda said.

2.37 "Ānanda, because of the root of virtue of this
brahmin's action, he will not fall to the lower
realms for thirteen eons. For thirteen eons he
will take rebirth among gods and humans. After
circling in saṃsāra, in his final rebirth, his final
dwelling place, he will take birth as a human being.
Then he will go forth and manifest the thirty-seven
wings of enlightenment without a teacher or any
instruction. He will manifest the enlightenment of
a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddha
known as Joy. That is what shall come of his act of
generosity."



1. iii The Third “Chariot” Story

2.38 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, one morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī, where there was a certain brahmin who had climbed into his chariot and set out to ride through the country. At first, thinking that the sight of the Blessed One was inauspicious, he rushed on ahead. Out of compassion for him the Blessed One simply stood still, and as the brahmin rode past all four of the city gates, he saw the Blessed One standing before each one.

2.39 Then the brahmin thought, “My, the ascetic Gautama is a person with great miracles and great power!” and he was filled with joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he scattered a handful of flowers upon the Blessed One, and at that moment the Blessed One smiled.

2.40 Now it is the nature of the blessed buddhas’ smiles that when they smile, colorful beams of blue, yellow, red, and white light radiate from their mouths, with some traveling up and others traveling down.

2.41 Those that travel down go to the beings in the Reviving Hell, the Black Thread Hell, the Crushing Hell, the Shrieking Hell, the Screaming Hell, the Hot Hell, the Hell of Extreme Heat, the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, the Blistering Hell, the Bursting Blister Hell, the Hell of Chattering Teeth, the Hell of Lamentation, the Cold Whimpering Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Blue Lotus Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Lotus Hell, and the Splitting Open Like a Great Lotus Hell, and as they descend they cool the beings in the hot hells, and warm the beings in the cold hells.

2.42 In this way they soothe the particular injuries of those beings, who wonder, “Have we died and been reborn somewhere other than this place?” Then,

to engender faith in them, the blessed ones radiate an emanation, and when the beings see it, they think, “Alas, it is neither that we have died and left this place, nor that we have been born elsewhere. Rather it is because of the unprecedented appearance of this emanation that our particular injuries have been soothed.” They feel real joy toward the emanation, exhausting the deeds that brought them to experience the hells. Now, as fit vessels of the truths, they take rebirth among the gods and humans.

2.43 The rays of light that travel up go to the following gods: those of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations, and the Heaven of Brahmā’s Assembly; those of the realms called Brahmin Priests, Great Brahmā, Limited Splendor, Immeasurable Splendor, Radiant Heaven, Lesser Virtue, Immeasurable Virtue, Extensive Virtue, and the Cloudless Heaven; and those of the realms called Increasing Merit, Great Result, None Greater, Sorrowless, Sublime Vision, Great Vision, and Supreme. There they sound a cry of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness, and they echo the following two verses:

2.44 Cultivate renunciation,
Practice the Buddha’s teaching—
Trample the lord of death’s army
Like an elephant in a house of reeds!

2.45 Those who mind their way along the path
Of this Dharma and Vinaya
Will abandon the round of rebirth
And put an end to suffering.

2.46 Then the rays of light circle through the trichiliocosm and come back to the blessed ones.

Should the blessed one wish to make a revelation about past deeds, they will disappear into the blessed one's back. Should he wish to foretell the future, they will disappear into the chest. Should he wish to prophesy about a hell birth, they will disappear into the soles of the feet. Should he wish to prophesy about an animal birth, they will disappear into the heels. Should he wish to prophesy about birth as an anguished spirit, they will disappear into the big toe. Should he wish to prophesy about a human birth, they will disappear into the knees.

2.47 Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a great universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the left hand. Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the right hand. Should he wish to prophesy about a god birth, they will disappear into the navel. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the listeners, they will disappear into the mouth. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, they will disappear into the hair between the eyebrows. Should he wish to prophesy about an unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, they will disappear into the crown of the head.

2.48 After these particular rays of light had circled the Blessed One three times, they disappeared into the hair between the Blessed One's eyebrows. Then Venerable Ānanda joined his palms in reverence and praised the Blessed One with the following verse:

2.49 "From your mouth's great gate spill forth
Scores of thousand-colored spectra.
Like the shining of the sun,
They illumine everything."

2.50 He then supplicated him with the following verses:

"The lords of beings, the buddhas who cast off
disconsolation,
Are rid of savagery and pride, and are themselves
the cause of all that's good.
These victors over every rival, in the absence of
cause and condition
Do not display their smiles, which are the color of
conch and lotus root.

2.51 "So if you know it's time, for your mind never
falters,
Then come—ascetic, victor—quell your disciples'
hesitation.
O sage, greatest of the herd, with speech unrivaled,
sure, and good,
Reassure those prone to doubt.

2.52 "Mountain still, and vast as oceans,
Buddha, fully awakened lord,
Your smile is no mundane event.
Hero, make it manifest so that many might pay
heed.

2.53 "With speech like a clap of thunder,
Graceful like a royal bull,
Oh tell the fruits awaiting those,
The peerless ones, who praise you!

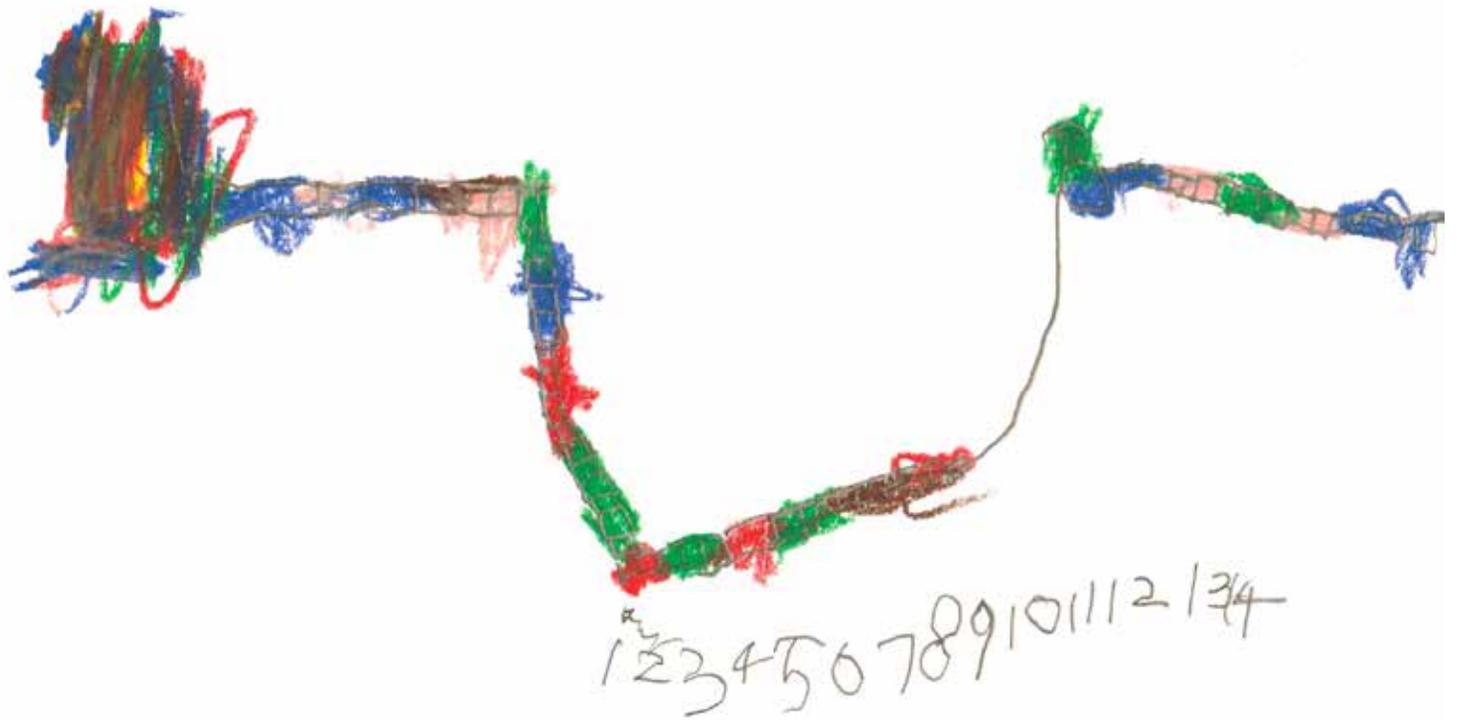
2.54 "Lord, if in the absence of the right causes and
conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally
and completely awakened buddhas do not smile,
what are the causes and conditions that make them
smile?"

2.55 "Ānanda, so it is," replied the Blessed One. "It is
just as you say, Ānanda. Without the right causes
and conditions the tathāgatas, arhats, totally and
completely awakened buddhas do not smile.
Ānanda, did you see the brahmin who scattered
flowers on the Tathāgata?"

“Yes, Lord, I saw him,” Ānanda said.

2.56

“Ānanda, because of the root of virtue of this brahmin’s action, he will not fall to the lower realms for thirteen eons. For thirteen eons he will take rebirth among gods and humans. After circling in saṃsāra, in his final rebirth, his final dwelling place, he will take birth as a human being. Then he will go forth and manifest the thirty-seven wings of enlightenment without a teacher or any instruction. He will manifest the enlightenment of a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddha known as Flower Guru. That is what shall come of his act of generosity.”



1. iv The Fourth “Chariot” Story

2.57 One day when the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī and was traveling from Śrāvastī to Rājagṛha, a brahmin riding in a chariot met him along the way. When the brahmin saw the Blessed One he climbed down from his chariot and offered him the chariot. Out of compassion for him the Blessed One hovered in the air above the chariot. This delighted the brahmin, and filled with such great delight, he took leave of the Blessed One. At that moment the Blessed One smiled.

2.58 Now it is the nature of the blessed buddhas’ smiles that when they smile, colorful beams of blue, yellow, red, and white light radiate from their mouths, with some traveling up and others traveling down.

2.59 Those that travel down go to the beings in the Reviving Hell, the Black Thread Hell, the Crushing Hell, the Shrieking Hell, the Screaming Hell, the Hot Hell, the Hell of Extreme Heat, the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, the Blistering Hell, the Bursting Blister Hell, the Hell of Chattering Teeth, the Hell of Lamentation, the Cold Whimpering Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Blue Lotus Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Lotus Hell, and the Splitting Open Like a Great Lotus Hell, and as they descend they cool the beings in the hot hells, and warm the beings in the cold hells.

2.60 In this way they soothe the particular injuries of those beings, who wonder, “Have we died and been reborn somewhere other than this place?” Then, to engender faith in them, the blessed ones radiate an emanation, and when the beings see it, they think, “Alas, it is neither that we have died and left this place, nor that we have been born elsewhere. Rather it is because of the unprecedented appearance of this emanation that our particular injuries have been soothed.” They feel real joy

toward the emanation, exhausting the deeds that brought them to experience the hells. Now, as fit vessels of the truths, they take rebirth among the gods and humans.

2.61 The rays of light that travel up go to the following gods: those of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations, and the Heaven of Brahmā’s Assembly; those of the realms called Brahmin Priests, Great Brahmā, Limited Splendor, Immeasurable Splendor, Radiant Heaven, Lesser Virtue, Immeasurable Virtue, Extensive Virtue, and the Cloudless Heaven; and those of the realms called Increasing Merit, Great Result, None Greater, Sorrowless, Sublime Vision, Great Vision, and Supreme. There they sound a cry of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness, and they echo the following two verses:

2.62 Cultivate renunciation,
Practice the Buddha’s teaching—
Trample the lord of death’s army
Like an elephant in a house of reeds!

2.63 Those who mind their way along the path
Of this Dharma and Vinaya
Will abandon the round of rebirth
And put an end to suffering.

2.64 Then the rays of light circle through the trichiliocosm and come back to the blessed ones. Should the blessed one wish to make a revelation about past deeds, they will disappear into the blessed one’s back. Should he wish to foretell the future, they will disappear into the chest. Should he wish to prophesy about a hell birth, they will disappear into the soles of the feet. Should he wish to prophesy about an animal birth, they

will disappear into the heels. Should he wish to prophesy about birth as an anguished spirit, they will disappear into the big toe. Should he wish to prophesy about a human birth, they will disappear into the knees.

2.65 Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a great universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the left hand. Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the right hand. Should he wish to prophesy about a god birth, they will disappear into the navel. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the listeners, they will disappear into the mouth. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, they will disappear into the hair between the eyebrows. Should he wish to prophesy about an unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, they will disappear into the crown of the head.

2.66 After these particular rays of light had circled the Blessed One three times, they disappeared into the hair between the Blessed One's eyebrows. Then Venerable Ānanda joined his palms in reverence and praised the Blessed One with the following verse:

2.67 "From your mouth's great gate spill forth
Scores of thousand-colored spectra.
Like the shining of the sun,
They illumine everything."

2.68 He then supplicated him with the following verses:

"The lords of beings, the buddhas who cast off
disconsolation,
Are rid of savagery and pride, and are themselves
the cause of all that's good.
These victors over every rival, in the absence of
cause and condition

Do not display their smiles, which are the color of
conch and lotus root.

2.69 "So if you know it's time, for your mind never
falters,
Then come—ascetic, victor—quell your disciples'
hesitation.
O sage, greatest of the herd, with speech unrivaled,
sure, and good,
Reassure those prone to doubt.

2.70 "Mountain still, and vast as oceans,
O Buddha, fully awakened lord,
Your smile is no mundane event.
Hero, make it manifest so that many might pay
heed.

2.71 "With speech like a clap of thunder,
Graceful like a royal bull,
Oh tell the fruits awaiting those,
The peerless ones, who praise you!

2.72 "Lord, if in the absence of the right causes and
conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally
and completely awakened buddhas do not smile,
what are the causes and conditions that make them
smile?"

2.73 "Ānanda, so it is," replied the Blessed One. "It is
just as you say, Ānanda. Without the right causes
and conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally
and completely awakened buddhas do not smile.
Ānanda, did you see the brahmin who proffered his
chariot to the Tathāgata?"

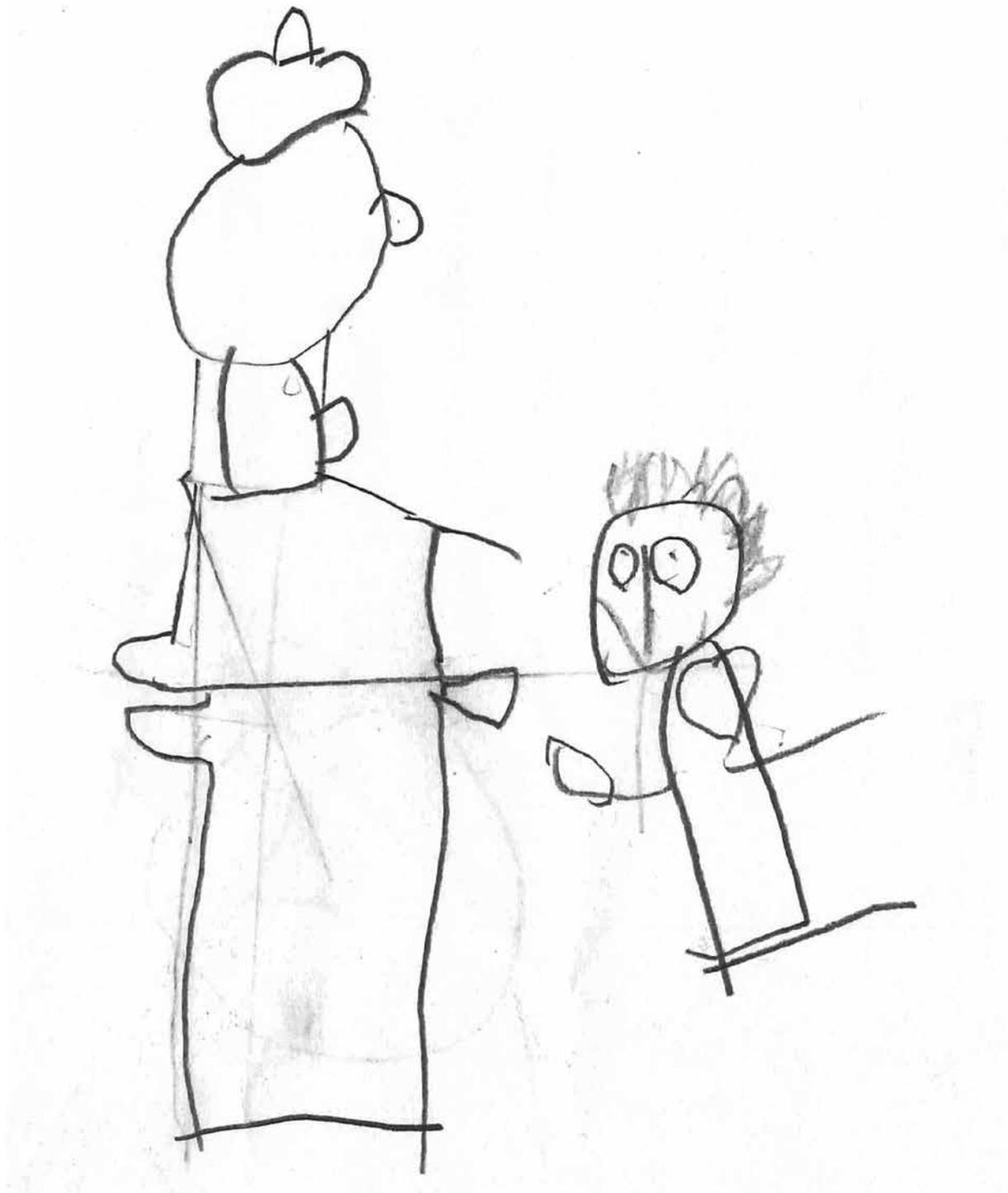
"Yes, Lord, I saw him," Ānanda said.

2.74 "Ānanda, because of the root of virtue of this
brahmin's action, he will not fall to the lower
realms for thirteen eons. For thirteen eons he
will take rebirth among gods and humans. After
circling in saṃsāra, in his final rebirth, his final
dwelling place, he will take birth as a human being.

Then he will go forth and manifest the thirty-seven wings of enlightenment without a teacher or any instruction. He will manifest the enlightenment of a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddha known as He Who Gave a Chariot. That is what shall come of his act of generosity.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Earnest*



The Fourth "Chariot" Story

Kalsang Sonam / 6 years old

◆
Part Two (2)

The Story of
Earnest

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟུ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Story of Earnest

2.75 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there was a certain being who was reborn as a blind hell being. The entirety of his immense body was covered by a continuous mass of sores, and worms bored into him from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. Unable to tolerate his condition, he ran to and fro.

2.76 When he fled to the plains, there were iron-fanged lions, tigers, leopards, and bears that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

When he submerged himself in the water, there were crocodiles with fangs of iron that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

2.77 When he fled into the sky above there were crows, vultures, and woodpeckers with beaks of iron that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

When he fled into the dense forest, there were sword-leafed śālmali trees, and swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears that rose up on the wind and hailed down on him.

2.78 When he tried to flee behind walls or into mountain ravines or into any kind of shelter there were human beings who were there because of their past actions that took up swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears, and struck, cut, and sliced his entire body. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, unbearable,

excruciating agony, and he wept and wailed in torment.

2.79 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

2.80 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

2.81 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame

Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

2.82 When the Blessed One focused his mind and the time had come to tame the inhabitants of Śrāvastī, he considered whether they would be tamed by subjugation, or whether they would be tamed by praise, or whether they would be tamed by disillusionment with saṃsāra. When the Blessed One saw that they would be tamed by disillusionment with saṃsāra, he miraculously summoned that same being to engender their disenchantment.

2.83 He set him down on the bank of the Ajiravatī River, and there as well he was unable to tolerate his condition and ran to and fro.

When he fled to the plains, there were iron-fanged lions, tigers, leopards, and bears that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

When he submerged himself in the water, there were crocodiles with fangs of iron that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

2.84 When he fled into the sky above there were crows, vultures, and woodpeckers with beaks of iron that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

When he fled into the dense forest, there were sword-leaved śālmali trees, and swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears that rose up on the wind and hailed down on him.

2.85 When he tried to flee behind walls or into mountain ravines or into any kind of shelter there were human beings who were there because of their past actions that took up swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears, and struck, cut, and sliced his entire body. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, unbearable, excruciating agony, and he wept and wailed in torment.

2.86 All of Śrāvastī was filled with his cries. The people of Śrāvastī heard these dreadful sounds

and thousands upon thousands of people emerged from Śrāvastī and headed toward the source of the cries by the Ajiravatī River. From a distance the people caught sight of the being that was in the throes of such agony, and when they saw him they wondered, “Who is this being in the throes of such agony?”

2.87 Naturally, from time to time, to sustain themselves, the blessed buddhas make their way through the monasteries, charnel grounds, mountains, and rivers. This is why the Blessed One, who wanted to visit the river, said to Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, go and give a message to the monks that the Tathāgata will visit the river. Inform them that those who wish to travel with the Tathāgata should prepare their robes.” After he gave him these instructions and the monks were thus informed, the Blessed One set out for the Ajiravatī River surrounded and attended on by an assembly of monks.

2.88 When the people gathered there saw the Blessed One in the distance, those without faith said, “They say the mendicant Gautama takes no joy in spectacles, but such a spectacle as this lures even him.”

2.89 Those with faith replied, “This being will surely be instrumental in an extraordinary Dharma teaching by the Blessed One.” They prepared a seat for the Blessed One, saying, “This way, Blessed One—if you please! Welcome, Blessed One, very good! O Blessed One, please have a seat on this cushion we have prepared for you!”

2.90 The Blessed One took his place on the seat prepared for him, and thought, “The best thing will be for me to enter into a meditation such that this being can remember his former lives and converse with me in a human tongue.” So the Blessed One entered into a meditation such that that being remembered his former lives and could converse with him in a human tongue.

2.91 Then the Blessed One addressed him, saying,
“My friend, are you Earnest?”

“Yes, Blessed One, I am Earnest.”

“My friend, are you Earnest?”

“O Sugata, I am Earnest.”

2.92 “Are you now experiencing the repercussions of
your misconduct of body, speech, and mind?”

“Indeed I am, Blessed One.”

2.93 “Are the repercussions of your misconduct of
body, speech, and mind hideous?”

“Yes, Blessed One, they are.”

“Who guided you to such nonvirtue?”

“My own mind,” he replied.

2.94 Now, hearing this, the people wondered, “Who
is this being who remembers his former lives
and converses with the Blessed One in a human
tongue?”

The ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult
to reach, so since they were not able to put their
question to the Blessed One they inquired of
Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, who is this being
who remembers his former lives and converses
with the Blessed One in a human tongue?”

2.95 “Put your question to the Blessed One,”
Venerable Ānanda replied.

“The ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult
to reach, and his presence is overwhelming. We
cannot ask the Blessed Buddha ourselves,” they
said.

Venerable Ānanda replied, “Though the ears of
the blessed buddhas are difficult to reach for me as
well, out of compassion for you I shall ask.”

2.96 Venerable Ānanda drew down the right shoulder
of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed
One with palms pressed together, and inquired
of the Blessed One, “Lord, who is this being who
remembers his former lives and converses with the
Blessed One in a human tongue?”

2.97 At that, the Blessed One spoke to Venerable
Ānanda, saying, “Ānanda, this being is one who

committed nonvirtuous actions over and over
again. The nonvirtuous actions he committed were
manifold.

2.98 “Ānanda, in times past when the one who
transcended the levels of the listeners and solitary
buddhas, the totally and completely awakened
buddha, the blessed one, the tathāgata, the arhat,
the totally and completely awakened buddha
possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the knower
of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer,
the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and
gods, the blessed buddha known as Prabhāvan was
in the world, there was a certain arhat who, as he
made his way through the countryside with a group
of five hundred arhats, came to the royal palace,
where they entered the royal gardens.

2.99 “One by one, according to age, they spread grass
beneath a different tree, crossed their legs, and
knew bliss as they entered states of concentration,
liberation, meditation, and equipoise.

2.100 “Now at this time, a certain King Earnest reigned
in that very palace. The king rose early in the
morning and went to the garden, attended by his
harem. Arriving there he seated himself at one
side as the women, hearts set on flowers and fruit,
wandered about here and there. They happened
upon the five hundred monks sitting beneath the
trees as if asleep, legs crossed, their bodies drawn
up like nāga kings. Delighted to have found them,
they paid homage at their feet, and the eldest
among them sat before the arhats to listen to the
Dharma.

2.101 “When the king heard a man’s voice out in the
gardens, he laid a sharp sword across his shoulders
and went to where the monks were, spotting all five
hundred monks from a distance. Seeing them he
thought, ‘No monk should lay an eye on my harem!’
Consumed with fury at the sight of the monks, the
king summoned the royal guard and commanded
them, ‘Lash these monks!’ and they lashed the

monks with whips for some time, until their bodies were like raw meat.

2.102 “Once the king had slaked his passion by beating the monks, he handed them over to the executioners, saying, ‘Go now, take these ascetics. Impale some of them on stakes, and run them through with swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears while they yet live! Feed others alive to the dogs! Chop the rest into six pieces and scatter them in every direction!’

2.103 “The king’s men replied, ‘As you wish,’ and they impaled some of the five hundred monks on stakes and pierced them with swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears while they yet lived. Others they fed alive to the dogs. They chopped the bodies of the rest into six pieces and scattered them in every direction.

2.104 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that king then is none other than this being now. The act of murdering the five hundred arhats ripened into his birth as a being in the Hell of Ceaseless Agony.

2.105 “The act of looking upon the monks with a feeling of hatred ripened into his taking birth as a blind person, and the act of lashing the monks with whips ripened into his entire body being covered by a continuous mass of sores, with worms boring into him from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet.

2.106 “After he handed the monks over to their executioners, some of them were impaled on stakes and pierced with swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears while they yet lived. Others were fed alive to the dogs. The rest had their bodies chopped into six pieces while they were still alive and scattered in every direction.

2.107 “Those actions ripened such that when he fled to the plains, there were iron-fanged lions, tigers, leopards, and bears that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

“When he submerged himself in the water, there were crocodiles with fangs of iron that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

2.108 “When he fled into the sky above there were crows, vultures, and woodpeckers with beaks of iron that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

“When he fled into the dense forest, there were sword-leafed *śālmali* trees, and swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears that rose up on the wind and hailed down on him.

2.109 “When he tried to flee behind walls or into mountain ravines or into any kind of shelter there were human beings who were there because of their past actions that took up swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears, and struck, cut, and sliced his entire body. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, unbearable, excruciating agony, and he wept and wailed in torment. Monks, from the time of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Prabhāvan until the present he has died as a hell being and transmigrated only to take rebirth as a hell being, and has known only suffering.”

2.110 “Lord, when will this being be freed from these sufferings?”

“This being will die as a hell being only to take rebirth as a hell being and know only suffering until five hundred buddhas have appeared in this fortunate eon. After that, once he has exhausted his sufferings as a hell being, he will take rebirth as a human being into a low caste household. When he is grown he will set out to hunt deer, and so doing will venture into a grove of perfect shade, full of perfect fruits and flowers. When he gets there he will think, ‘The deer must gather in places like this,’ and begin to set up mechanical traps, deadfall traps, and different types of snares.

2.111 “At that time there will have appeared in the world a certain solitary buddha who dwells in that

forest at night. On that day, catching his scent, the deer will not enter the grove. When the hunter approaches and finds nothing more than the solitary buddha alone in the grove, he will think, 'Ascetics love places like this! If he is staying here, he will do me harm. I should definitely kill him.' The hunter will kill the solitary buddha and then take rebirth in the Hell of Ceaseless Agony after his own death. There he will experience the sufferings of the hell beings for thousands upon thousands and hundreds of thousands of years.

2.112 "Then, once he has exhausted those actions, he will again achieve a human birth, and the totally and completely awakened Buddha Guru will appear in the world. It is in his doctrine that this one will go forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.

2.113 "After achieving arhatship he will go to the royal palace and establish a dwelling in the king's garden, whereupon the king will go to the garden, attended by his harem, and the women, their hearts set on flowers and fruit, will wander here and there in the garden. They will happen upon him and sit before him to listen to the Dharma.

2.114 "The king, hearing the voice of a man, will draw near to them. Angry at the sight of the man, the king will lash him with a whip, chop his body into six pieces, impale him, run him through with swords, spears, lances, single-tipped vajras, and flat-bladed spears, and then feed him to the dogs. Only then will his suffering come to an end."

As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. "Spiraling through saṃsāra we are sure to experience horrible sufferings such as these," they thought.

2.115 The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief and taught them the Dharma accordingly, and some among those assembled generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or

generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha. Having established them in these states, the Blessed One returned to the monastery.

THE END

Next: *The Story of Gopā*



Part Two (3)

The Story of
Gopā

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Story of Gopā

2.116 When the Blessed One was in Kapilavastu, Devadatta killed Utpalavarṇā and was banished from the country by King Prasenajit. He then withdrew to Kapilavastu, thinking, “I was not able to kill the ascetic Gautama, nor have I achieved a buddha’s skillful means, so now I will go and lay hold of Siddhārtha’s harem and keep company with them. Once I have usurped his kingdom, I shall be king.”

So he sent an envoy to Yaśodharā with the following message:

2.117 “Dear Yaśodharā,

Behold the work of one who delights in wrongdoing! What was the use of taking 60,000 women as his wives and calling them ‘beloved’? Why would anyone even bother keeping so many women if he has no interest in enjoying them? Now, if you like, I can become king and you will be restored to your former glory and fortune.”

2.118 When Yaśodharā received the message, she related it to Gopā, saying, “Gopā, Devadatta sent me quite a message.”

Gopā responded, “Let’s trick him into coming here. If we disgrace him and throw him out, he’ll know his place.” So they sent an envoy to Devadatta with the following response:

2.119 “Dear Devadatta,

Please come to the royal palace. When you get here we can talk about how to make you king.”

When Devadatta got their message he was very

pleased. “Now that the women are excited,” he thought, “the kingdom is within my grasp!”

2.120 He traveled to the royal palace, but as he was preparing to sit on the Bodhisattva’s throne, the gods made it vanish. Gopā had taken a seat at the top of the staircase near the side door to the women’s quarters.

“Devadatta, why don’t you have a seat!” she called down. “Come into the women’s quarters where we can talk.”

2.121 When he heard this, Devadatta sat down in front of her and interlaced his fingers. Then Gopā took his folded hands into her own and squeezed them so tight that blood ran from his fingers, and Devadatta was helpless with pain as she wrung them out. Gopā led him up the stairs, kicked him in the head, and threw him from the top of the staircase. Some of the other women smeared cow dung all over his body. Others poured scalding oil on him.

2.122 Then, his body wounded and weak, he went to see Kokālika, Khaṇḍadravya, Kaṭamorakatiṣya, and Samudradatta. When they saw him, they joked, “Ah, Devadatta! It seems you’ve experienced the pleasures of the royal harem!”

2.123 When the monks heard about all this they asked the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why Devadatta was humiliated by Gopā.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, Devadatta was humiliated by Gopā. Listen well!”

2.124 “Monks, in times past King Brahmadata reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī and King Mahendrasena reigned in Videha. The two did not agree with one another, and from time to time a great many people were killed.

2.125 “One day King Brahmadata of Kāśī called together an assembly of his ministers and began a discussion on the topic of women. ‘Who among you has seen a woman who is well proportioned,

pleasing to the eye, and beautiful?’ he asked.

2.126 “Those who had seen such women told the king about them as he had requested. Then each of them said in turn, ‘Deva, you can forget them all! How could any woman ever compare to the face and form of the queen of Videha?’

2.127 “When the king heard this an arrow of lust shot through him, and he thought, ‘Since I don’t get along with King Mahendrasena, there’s no way for me to have any contact with her. Let me enter into negotiations with him. After that it will be easy.’

2.128 “So it was that King Brahmadata entered into negotiations with the king of Videha, whereupon he sent a messenger to King Mahendrasena’s queen with a message that said, ‘I want you to know that my negotiations with King Mahendrasena are all for your sake, so that you and I might meet face to face.’

2.129 “After she received this message Mahendrasena’s queen told the king, ‘Deva, King Brahmadata is making overtures to me. Deva, with your permission I wish to humiliate him.’

2.130 “‘As you wish,’ he replied. ‘But whatever you do, make sure he falls into my hands.’

“‘Not to worry, Deva,’ she said. ‘I shall act in accord with your wishes.’

“Then she sent an envoy with the following message:

2.131 “‘Dear Brahmadata,

As my king yet lives, I shall not be able to meet you face to face. Dispatch with him! After that, I shall meet with you.’

2.132 “Brahmadatta thought, ‘Failing some dispute, I cannot kill him. Let me then fabricate some dispute with him.’ So King Brahmadata began a dispute with King Mahendrasena. He armed the four divisions of his army and advanced on Videha, where they besieged the city, massacring many of the inhabitants in the siege.

“Thereupon Queen Mahendrasena sent an

envoy with the following message:

2.133 “‘Dear Brahmadata,

If you have come here and done all this for my sake, then what need have we for so many to die? By disguising yourself as an ordinary person you can come into the city to see me now.’

2.134 “Now no sooner had King Brahmadata of Kāśi heard this than he entered the royal palace by just the method she had suggested. When she saw him there, Queen Mahendrasena seized him, brought him before the king, and said, ‘Deva, here is Brahmadata. Do with him as you please.’

2.135 “King Mahendrasena assembled all his princes and ministers, chiefs of merchandise, aristocrats, and caravan leaders, and they kicked Brahmadata, King of Kāśi, in the head.

“‘Let’s kill him, so he can never sleep with another man’s wife again!’ they cried.

2.136 Then the queen said to King Mahendrasena, ‘Deva, is this humiliation not worse than being killed? What need is there now to kill him? Let him go.’ So they released him and spared his life.

2.137 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was Mahendrasena, King of Videha then, and who lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was the queen then is none other than Gopā. The one who was King Brahmadata of Kāśi then is none other than Devadatta. At that time many people kicked and humiliated him, just as they have now.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Keśinī*



Part Two (4)

The Story of
Keśinī

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 The Story of Keśinī

2.138 When the Bodhisattva was dwelling in Tuṣita Heaven, King Siṃhahanu reigned in Kapilavastu. As he and the queens enjoyed themselves and coupled, the queens gave birth to four sons named Śuddhodana, Śuklodana, Droṇodana, and Amṛtodana, and four daughters named Śuddhā, Śuklā, Droṇā, and Amṛtā.

2.139 At the same time, as King Śākya Suprabuddha and his queens enjoyed themselves and coupled in Vṛjī, the queens gave birth to two daughters. One they named Māyā, and the other Mahāmāyā. They reared them on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and they flourished like lotuses in a lake. When the priests versed in reading signs examined them, they predicted that their daughter Māyā would give birth to a child of marvelous character, and that Mahāmāyā would give birth to a universal monarch. Both daughters' hair grew like a drop of sesame oil poured into water.

2.140 When King Siṃhahanu heard this, he sent an envoy to King Śākya Suprabuddha with a message saying, "Betroth your two daughters to my son. Though the Śākyas have an agreement among themselves that no one may take two wives in marriage, if I can get them to agree to this then you can marry them both." King Siṃhahanu made a request of all the Śākyas, and, in accord with the tradition among householders, Śuddhodana took both young women as his queens. After marrying them, King Śākya Suprabuddha granted them a

young woman named Keśinī to look after their hair.

2.141 Seven days after the Bodhisattva's birth, Mahāmāyā passed away and took rebirth in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. Young Keśinī missed her so much that she clutched at strands of Mahāmāyā's hair and flung herself on the ground in grief, wailing and beating her chest. She was inconsolable.

2.142 When the Bodhisattva had grown, upon witnessing old age, sickness, and death, he went to live in the forest, where he practiced austerities for six years until he achieved unexcelled wisdom. His actions for the benefit of those to be tamed eventually led him to stay in Kapilavastu and he led many Śākyas there to go forth, including Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī. Keśinī too was not only ordained, she also cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship, and the Blessed One commended her for her superlative efforts.

2.143 Afterward, the monks asked the Blessed One, "Lord, what action did Keśinī take that ripened into her birth as a Śākya, into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth? What action did she take that ripened into her becoming a servant of other women?"

"It came about by the power of her prayers," replied the Blessed One.

2.144 "Lord, where did she make these prayers?"

"Monks, in times past, in the ninety-first eon, when the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Vipāśyin was in the world, after he fully and completely awakened unto unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, he visited the city of Bandhumatī.

2.145 "Two women there offered him food, and one of them prayed, 'May I give birth to one as precious

as this. May I please and not displease him,’ while the other prayed, ‘Wherever I am born, may it be as your sibling. May I rear one as precious as this.’

2.146 “The young woman who looked after the two sisters’ hair was also there, and she overheard them making their prayers. As soon as she heard them, she began to venerate the totally and completely awakened Buddha Vipasyin herself, praying, ‘Oh, but by this root of virtue, wherever these two are born, may I again look after their hair and serve them with great respect! May I please and not displease their precious children.’ Such were her prayers.”

2.147 “Lord, what action did she take that she pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him; that she went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; and that the Blessed One also commended her for her superlative efforts?”

2.148 The Blessed One replied, “She went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and the preceptor who led her to go forth was also commended for her superlative efforts by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

2.149 “Then after practicing pure conduct all her life, at the time of her death she prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended my preceptor for her superlative efforts, may Buddha Śākyamuni, king of the Śākyas, also commend me for my superlative efforts.’

2.150 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and became a nun then is this very Keśinī. There she practiced pure conduct all her life, and at the time of her death, she prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended my preceptor for her superlative efforts, may Buddha Śākyamuni, king of the Śākyas, also commend me for my superlative efforts.’

2.151 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship, and that I have now commended her for her superlative efforts.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Lotus Color*



The Story of Kešini

Adelaide Athena Sanche & Oliver Aurelious
Zeus Sanche / 6 & 4 years old

◆
Part Two (5)

The Story of
Lotus Color

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 The Story of Lotus Color

2.152 Once when the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, Venerable Upasena was making his way through the countryside in the country of Avanti, where in time he came to a mountainside hermitage.

2.153 Now at that time in the mountainside hermitage there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's.

2.154 When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. But even though they enjoyed themselves and coupled, they had no children. Head in hands, the householder sat and brooded, thinking, "My house may be filled with all kinds of riches, but seeing as I have no heir, after I die, all I have will become property of the king."

2.155 The ascetics and brahmins, fortune tellers, his friends, his close family, and his other kin all told him, "You should supplicate a deity." So, since he had no heir and desired a son, he supplicated the gods.

2.156 He prayed to Paśupati, Varuṇa, Kubera, Śakra, Brahmā, and the rest, and to the deities of the pleasure groves, the forest deities, the deities of the crossroads, the deities of forks in the road, the deities who receive strewn oblations, the deities of his inherited tradition, and the deities who are in

constant attendance of righteous persons.

2.157 While it is often said that praying to the deities can cause a boy or a girl to be born, this is not true. If children could be made just by praying, every family would have them a thousand times over, like a universal monarch. In fact, there are three circumstances that allow for the birth of a child: a child is born when (1) lust arises in the parents and they have intercourse, (2) the mother still has her menstrual cycle and is approached by a gandharva, and (3) the gandharva's mind is either attached or angry.

2.158 Nevertheless, he remained intent on his prayers, and a great being took birth in his wife's womb who was well renowned and had gained his final birth, had the good fortune to soon be liberated due to gathering the accumulations, had his sights set on nirvāṇa and had turned away from saṃsāra, had no desire for the states of rebirth in cyclic existence, and who had now assumed his final body.

2.159 A woman wise in nature possesses five extraordinary qualities. She knows (1) whether a man is attracted to her, (2) the time of her menstrual cycle, (3) that she has conceived, (4) from whom she has conceived, and (5) whether the child is a boy or a girl, for if it is a baby boy it will stay on the right side of the womb, and if it is a girl it will stay on the left side of the womb.

2.160 When the householder's wife conceived a child she was overjoyed and told her husband, "My Lord, I have conceived a boy. He is staying on the right side of my womb, so rejoice, for it is sure to be a boy!"

2.161 At this the householder too was very happy. He puffed out his chest, put his right hand in the air, and expressed his joy, saying, "I shall see the face of the son for whom I have prayed for so long! May everything be right with my son, may nothing go wrong with him, and may he carry on my work! As I care for him, may he care for me in return! May

he enjoy my inheritance! May my lineage endure for a long time! And after our passing, when we die, may he give gifts, be they great or small, and make merit! When he does, may he dedicate the merit thus: ‘Wherever these two are born, may this go to them!’ ”

2.162 Now that he knew his wife was pregnant, he ensconced her on the upper levels of their house in order to care for the baby. He provided her with what she needed for winter in the winter, what she needed for summer in the summer, with food that was not too bitter, too sour, too salty, too sweet, too spicy, or too astringent as instructed by the healer, and he served her food that was not bitter, sour, salty, sweet, spicy, or astringent. He draped her body with garlands and strings of precious stones, and he moved her from divan to divan and seat to seat like a goddess through a joyous garden, never letting her descend to the ground, and never letting her hear an unpleasant word even for a moment.

2.163 Then after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with a fine complexion the color of the center of a lotus, a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since this child has a complexion like the color of the center of a lotus, his name will be Lotus Color.”

2.164 They reared young Lotus Color on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up, he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of

examination.

2.165 Venerable Upasena was one of the householder’s relatives, and with his support, young Lotus Color found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One. He asked for his parents’ permission, went forth as a novice, and received full ordination in the presence of Venerable Upasena. One day he left his mountainside hermitage on an errand without notifying his preceptor. He made his way through the countryside and eventually arrived in Mathurā, where he stayed at Donkey Grove. Then Venerable Lotus Color donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Mathurā.

2.166 Being unfamiliar with the area, he eventually came to the house of a sex worker while going for alms. The sex worker was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and alluring. She saw Venerable Lotus Color in the distance, and an arrow of lust shot through her. Compelled by lust, she rose without delay, went up to Venerable Lotus Color, and said, “Noble one, please have a seat on this cushion.”

2.167 And as Venerable Lotus Color sat on the seat, wondering, “Who is this lay vow holder?” the intensity of her lust grew too much for her to bear, and she said to him, “Lord, your young body is in full bloom, and every inch of me is so enticing. Sleep with me.”

2.168 As soon as she said this Venerable Lotus Color covered his ears with his hands and said, “To commit such a sin would be to forsake all the Buddha has taught us. I could not bear it.”

“How dare you spurn me like this!” the woman said. “Why have you come to the house of a sex worker, if not to indulge your desires?”

2.169 “I’m new here,” Venerable Lotus Color replied, “and I’m not familiar with the area. That’s why I ended up here. I’m not chasing after desires. It wouldn’t be right for me to do such a thing.”

“If you refuse me, I shall put a spell on you,” she said. “Come to bed.”

2.170 At this, Venerable Lotus Color rose from his seat in fear and returned to the monastery without taking alms. After all this had taken place and he was gone, the sex worker, searing with lust, sent for a woman of lower caste who had the power to cast spells.

She told her the story in detail and then said, “Bring me together with that monk, and I shall give you a great deal of gold.”

2.171 “As you wish,” she replied. Then the woman of lower caste adorned herself, and once she had set up the house as a kind of temple, she spread a circle of cow dung on the floor. After setting forth the ritual incense, flowers, and food, she lit a fire, cast a mantra onto white mustard seeds, and tossed them into the flames.

2.172 The venerable monk returned to the house of the sex worker, drawn there by the power of the mantra. When the woman of lower caste saw that Venerable Lotus Color had come to the house, she looked at him and said, “Lord, now that you have returned to this house, you have but two choices. Sleep with this sex worker, or leap into the fire!”

2.173 When he heard this, Venerable Lotus Color thought, “If the Tathāgata’s appearance in this world is so rare it can be likened only to the udumbara flower, and if birth as a human in a central land is also difficult to achieve, then it’s better for me to jump into the fire than to be with this woman.” With this thought he took off his garments and handed them to the woman of lower caste, saying, “Elder sister, take these garments to the monastery and offer them to my fellow practitioners of the holy life.”

2.174 “Venerable One, what are you doing?” the woman of lower caste asked.

“Jumping into the fire,” Venerable Lotus Color replied.

2.175 When she heard his words, the woman of lower caste was distraught, and thought, “Alas, because of my poverty all I do is cause trouble for those worthy of offerings like him. It’s not my place to make such beings unhappy.” With this thought, she gave up performing all those rituals and prostrated herself at his feet with the greatest respect, saying, “Pure being, please forgive me! I am mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift me up!”

2.176 “I forgive you,” Venerable Lotus Color said. “But you will not be forgiven by your actions.”

Seeing all this, the sex worker’s lust suddenly gave way, and she felt joy toward him. Full of such joy she prostrated herself at his feet and said, “Fortunate One, driven by my lust I’ve caused you such unhappiness. Please forgive me.”

2.177 The young sex worker and the woman of lower caste both sat down in front of Venerable Lotus Color to listen to the Dharma. Venerable Lotus Color taught them the Dharma particularly suited to them, and they manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat. Having seen the truths, they requested, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

2.178 Venerable Lotus Color brought them to the nunnery and presented them to the nuns. The nuns led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly

profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

2.179 Venerable Lotus Color thought, “So far, I’ve been able to purify the mindstreams of others, but not my own mindstream. The Blessed One tells us, ‘Studying well has five benefits for those who undertake it: knowledge of the aggregates, knowledge of the elements, knowledge of the sense bases, knowledge of dependent arising, and knowledge of the proper and the improper.’ Thus, I too must strive to eliminate afflictive emotions.”

2.180 With this thought, he cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. His state was such that Indra, Upendra, and the other gods worshiped and venerated him and addressed him with respect.

2.181 After achieving arhatship and staying long enough in Mathurā, he traveled to Śrāvastī. When he got there, he told the story in detail to the monks. The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why this young sex worker was driven by her lust to make Venerable Lotus Color unhappy, but then with his support went forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

2.182 “For five hundred lifetimes this young woman was his wife,” the Blessed One explained. “It was on the basis of her previous habitual tendencies that she fell in love with him at first sight.”

2.183 “Lord, what action did Venerable Lotus Color take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he pleased

the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

2.184 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in Vārāṇasī who had two wives.

2.185 “One day the householder found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and told his wives, ‘My dears, I am going to go forth in the doctrine of the Buddha Kāśyapa. You should continue with your duties at home.’

2.186 “‘Lord, if you are going to go forth, then afterward we will go forth too,’ they said.

“The householder replied, ‘If you also wish to go forth, then let you two go forth first, and I shall go forth after you.’ Having said this, the householder brought both his wives to the nunnery and presented them to the nuns.

2.187 “The nuns led them to go forth as novices and conferred on them full ordination. After they had gone forth, the householder gave gifts, made merit, and went forth in the doctrine of the Buddha Kāśyapa. Once he had gone forth, he studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of his wisdom and freedom. He acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick.

2.188 “After their going forth, the two women became quarrelsome and abusive. One of them called out to

the other nuns, ‘You untouchables!’ and the other shouted ‘You whores!’ at them. The monk soon put a stop to the nuns being so quarrelsome, and he inspired them to give gifts and to share what they had.

2.189 “After he had offered food to the Blessed Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, he venerated the stūpas containing hair and nail relics, and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.190 “When the two nuns saw him sitting there praying, they asked him, ‘Noble one, what kind of prayers are you making?’ He told them in detail, and after they listened, they prayed in the same way: ‘With your support, noble one, may we too please and not displease the Blessed Buddha. May we go forth in only his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. May we not meet with the results of the act of speaking harshly to the group of nuns.’

2.191 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that monk then is none other than Lotus Color. Those who were those two nuns then are none other than these two nuns now. The monk’s acts at that time of making offerings to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, venerating the stūpas containing hair and nail relics, and praying thus ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

2.192 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that

he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

2.193 “Monks, at that time the two nuns prayed, ‘With your support, noble one, may we too please and not displease the Blessed Buddha. May we go forth in only his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.194 “So it is that with his support these two have pleased and not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. But one of them called out to the nuns, ‘You untouchables!’ and the other shouted, ‘You whores!’ so those actions ripened such that one was born into a family of lower caste, and the other became a sex worker.”

2.195 “Lord, what action did Lotus Color take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with a complexion the color of the center of a lotus?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

2.196 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past the guardian deity of a pleasure grove was dwelling on a mountainside in her grove of perfect shade. The grove was full of perfect fruits and flowers and all its perfect ponds teemed with blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and the cries of geese, ducks, and other waterfowl. In times when a blessed buddha has not arisen in the world, the solitary buddhas appear out of compassion for the destitute and suffering and take up residence in remote places. Solitary as the rhinoceros, they are the only ones in the entire world that are worthy of offerings. So it was that a solitary buddha had taken up residence in that pleasure grove.

2.197 “The caretaker of the pleasure grove rose early

one morning and went into the grove. She happened upon the solitary buddha sitting beneath a tree as if asleep, legs crossed, his body drawn up like a nāga king, and she was delighted to have found him. Tenderly, she requested that the solitary buddha please take his food in that very pleasure grove and offered him something to eat.

2.198 “Then she scattered lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus over him, and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May my complexion be the color of the center of a lotus. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues.’

2.199 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the caretaker of that pleasure grove then is none other than Lotus Color. The act of venerating that solitary buddha and saying that prayer ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, as one who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with a complexion the color of the center of a lotus. Monks, I am more exalted than even one hundred billion solitary buddhas, and now he has pleased and not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Butcher*



The Story of Lotus Color

Zhi-Sel Padma Dorji / 6 years old

◆
Part Two (6)

The
Butcher

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟུ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Butcher

2.200 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain butcher, and when the time came for him to marry he took a wife. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. His parents loved and cherished him greatly, and held him dear to their hearts. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan. They raised him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up his parents gave him many good, wholesome foods, and prevented him from doing any work.

2.201 One day, as his father started to teach him his trade, the young man exclaimed, “Father, I would rather kill myself than take a life!”

The butcher’s wife said, “Lord, please don’t harm the child! We can hire help to do this work,” so the butcher let the young man do as he liked.

2.202 Soon after that, their son found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, and from time to time he would go to the garden of Prince Jeta to hear the Dharma from the Blessed One. One day the idea came to him to go forth, and he thought, “I will give up living at home to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

2.203 He asked for his parents’ permission, went forth as a novice in the doctrine of the Blessed One, and then received full ordination. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and

effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

2.204 Then, after achieving arhatship, he wondered, “Whom might I tame?” He looked out and saw that he could tame his two parents. Recognizing this he went to his parents and gave them a Dharma teaching, turning them away from nonvirtuous actions, establishing them in the truths, and leading them to go for refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts. He inspired them to give gifts and to share what they had, until their home became like an open well for those in need. They supplied their arhat monk son with many good, wholesome foods, and he partook of them himself and shared them with other practitioners of the holy life.

2.205 After that, the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did this monk take that ripened into his birth into a butcher’s family, one of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he did not think to commit nonvirtuous actions; that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Buddha, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; that after having been a householder, he went forth; and that he received such good, wholesome foods?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

2.206 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past, a certain group of butchers

was living on a mountainside. They had gone into a grove and set forth many good, wholesome foods when a solitary buddha came into the grove seeking alms, and one of the butchers happened upon him. The butcher was delighted to have found the solitary buddha, and cordially offered good, wholesome foods to him. Great persons teach the Dharma not with their words but through their actions, so the solitary buddha accepted the alms and then rose into the sky.

2.207 This delighted the butcher, and, full of joy, he prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a butcher’s family, one of great means, prosperity, and wealth, where I may enjoy many good, wholesome foods. May I also not perform nonvirtuous actions. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.208 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that butcher then is none other than this monk. The actions of offering food to the solitary buddha and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth where he could enjoy many good, wholesome foods, and where he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, and where he did not perform any nonvirtuous actions. Monks, I am more exalted than even one hundred billion solitary buddhas, and now he has pleased me and not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

2.209 “Furthermore, he had gone forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and after practicing pure conduct all his life, at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened

Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.210 “Monks, the monk who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than this monk. Back then, he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.211 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me and not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Golden Color*



Part Two (7)

The Story of
Golden Color

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Story of Golden Color

2.212 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain man who belonged to a lower caste. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to an exceptionally ugly baby who was ugly in eighteen different ways. As soon as they saw her, her parents were crestfallen.

“A daughter like this is no use to us,” her father said. “When night falls, we’ll toss her out to the dogs!”

2.213 “My lord, don’t say such things! Murder is disgraceful. Not only that but this child is our daughter. We can’t just abandon her as soon as she’s born, even if she is ugly in eighteen different ways. Wait until she’s grown—then we’ll throw her out. By that time she’ll be able to make a living for herself somehow.”

“Very well, that is what we’ll do.”

2.214 Her parents raised her in secret and no one knew about her. When she was old enough to walk, she was still so ugly that her parents threw her out of the house and abandoned her. After that she begged for alms and lived where she could on the streets. She lived on the bare ground and ate wretched food, and as a result she became leprous and covered in sores. In time she became very sick, and collapsed in the street, near death. It was then that Venerable Ānanda saw her.

2.215 As soon as he saw her, Venerable Ānanda was filled with compassion for her, and he went to her and asked, “Sister, what happened?”

“Lord Ānanda, I have failed to collect any merit. That’s how I came to be like this. Lord Ānanda,” she pleaded, “please help me put an end to all this nonvirtue, come what may.”

2.216 “Don’t worry, sister,” Venerable Ānanda replied. “Take heart. I shall dispel your nonvirtuous actions.”

With this, Venerable Ānanda went to find sesame oil and incense for her. He returned and said to her, “Rise, sister. Go and offer this incense to the stūpas containing the hair and nail relics of the Blessed One.” As she heard this, the young woman was filled with joy, and she rose and followed Venerable Ānanda. Then Ānanda led her to make offerings of sesame oil ointment, blended incense ointment, and saffron ointment to the Tathāgata’s stūpa.

2.217 The householder Anāthapiṇḍada had also come to the region, and when he saw Venerable Ānanda, he asked him, “Lord Ānanda, what are you doing here?”

“I am putting an end to this young woman’s poverty,” said Venerable Ānanda.

Anāthapiṇḍada saw her sitting there naked and gave her clothing.

2.218 The Blessed One also came to the region purely out of compassion for that young woman. She saw the Blessed One in the distance and he was beautiful and handsome, his senses were at peace, his heart was at peace, and his mind was perfectly tame. He was graced with tranquility, shining and brilliant like a golden pillar. Upon seeing him, the young woman was overcome with joy and thought, “If one can attain great results from just venerating a stūpa with his hair and nails, then surely I can attain an even greater result if I worship him in person!”

2.219 Filled with joy, she took the clothes Anāthapiṇḍada

had given her, approached the Blessed One, offered him the clothing, folded her hands, and sat there studying him. She died shortly thereafter with joy toward the Blessed One in her heart, transmigrated, and took rebirth in the womb of the foremost wife of a merchant householder there in Śrāvastī.

2.220 After nine or ten months had passed, the wife gave birth to a child with a golden complexion. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named her, saying, “Since this child is well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and has a golden complexion, her name will be Golden Color.” They reared young Golden Color on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids. Seven years after her birth, she found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, asked for her parents’ permission, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship, becoming a person of great miracles and great power.

2.221 After she had achieved arhatship she asked herself, “Whence did I die, that I have taken rebirth here?” She saw that she had previously taken rebirth there in Śrāvastī as a girl of lower caste who was ugly in eighteen different ways and that, with the help of Noble Ānanda, she had given up her births as a woman of lower caste. When she saw all this, she thought, “Look at the difficult task Venerable Ānanda has done for me!” And keeping this in mind, she continually went to venerate him.

2.222 The monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, what action did Golden Color take that ripened into her birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and with a golden complexion, and that she pleased and did not displease the Blessed One, went forth in the Blessed One’s doctrine, cast away all her afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

2.223 The Blessed One replied, “Did you see, right

here in Śrāvastī there was a young woman of lower caste, who was ugly in eighteen different ways?”

“Yes, Blessed One, we saw her.”

2.224 “After she died, she transmigrated and took rebirth here. She made offerings of sesame oil ointment, blended incense ointment, saffron ointment, and other incense ointments to a reliquary stūpa. Then she offered me clothing and passed away, filled with joy toward me. Those acts ripened into her birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and such that she is now well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and has a golden complexion.”

2.225 “Lord, what action did this young woman take that ripened into her birth into a family of lower caste, and that she was ugly in eighteen different ways?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that she committed and accumulated:

2.226 “Monks, in times past in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the totally and completely awakened buddha, the one endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in Vārāṇasī.

2.227 “When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they named her according to their clan. They reared her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when she grew up, she found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

2.228 “She asked for her parents’ permission and went

forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha, but soon she became quarrelsome and abusive. Arrogant about her well-proportioned body, youthfulness, and high caste, she spoke harshly to many nuns on the paths of learning and no more to learn, ridiculing their bodies as ugly and even calling them low class. In time she came to regret this.

2.229 “Then after practicing pure conduct all her life, she prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. May I not meet with the results of the wrongful act of speaking harshly to fellow practitioners of the holy life.’

2.230 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and became a nun then is none other than the ugly girl. At that time, out of arrogance about her well-proportioned body, youthfulness, and high caste, she spoke harshly to many nuns, slandering them terribly by calling them ugly and saying they were low class. Those acts ripened such that wherever she was born, it was as a person of lower caste who was ugly in eighteen different ways.

2.231 “Then she practiced pure conduct all her life, and at the time of her death, she prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.232 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become

the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased and not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Cowherds*



◆
Part Two (8)

The
Cowherds

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Cowherds

2.233 One time when the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, King Prasenajit hosted the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months in the garden of Prince Jeta and provided for all their needs. The garden of Prince Jeta was close to where the cows and water buffalo were penned, so all the monks enjoyed the cow and buffalo buttermilk. At the end of three months of respectfully providing for all the needs of the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, King Prasenajit offered to the saṅgha foods of a hundred flavors and to the Blessed One very costly robes.

2.234 After he had provided each of the monks with everything they needed, the king discharged the cow herders and buffalo herders back to their homes and departed. The cowherds thought, “This king is a true sovereign and a consummate ruler. While he goes on giving gifts and making merit, we are but the servants of others, deferential toward them, and subsist by eating their food. Their achievement of such a state is entirely the result of these three things: generosity, self-control, and self-restraint. Oh, but doubtless then we should adopt and adhere to a bit of virtuous Dharma!”

2.235 The five hundred cowherds resolved to extend an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks. They prepared many good, wholesome foods and in the morning they rose, filled the water pots, and sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was time for the midday meal:

“Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested.”

2.236 So that morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. They arrived at the appointed place near the cowherds’ pens and took a seat. Once the cowherds knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by their own hands they contented them with many good, wholesome foods and with buttermilk from the cows and buffalo, proffering all that they wished. When they knew that they had finished eating and that their bowls had been taken away and their hands washed, the cowherds brought in very low seats and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

2.237 The Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature of all five hundred of the cowherds, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. When they heard it, the five hundred cowherds and their families destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

2.238 They saw the truths and implored the Blessed One, “Blessed One, let us give up living at home to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape our fetters with diligence, practice, and effort.” They appealed to King Prasenajit, handed their herds of cattle over to other cowherds, and bid farewell to everyone at home.

2.239 Then they approached the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and made this request: “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates,

and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

2.240 The Blessed One replied, “Come, join me, monks!” As soon as the Blessed One had finished speaking there they stood, alms bowl and water pitcher in hand, with but a week’s worth of hair and beard, and with the deportment of a monk who had been ordained for one hundred years. As it is stated,

2.241 Garbed in robes, with shaven heads,
And senses stilled by Buddha’s will—
From the very moment the One Thus Gone
Spoke to them, saying, “Come, join me.”

2.242 The Blessed One conferred on them instruction, and, casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

2.243 After attaining arhatship they wondered, “Whom might we tame?” They saw they could tame their relatives, and, recognizing this, they went to their relatives and taught them the Dharma. They led them to live lives of perfect faith, to go for refuge, to maintain the fundamental precepts, and inspired them to give gifts and share what they had.

2.244 There was one cowherd among their relatives who did not have faith. Since she had not been able to go and see the Blessed One the other cowherds took her and brought her to the Blessed One. The

cowherd saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When she saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled her with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

2.245 Experiencing such delight at the sight of the Blessed One, she looked around wondering, “Where can I get flowers to offer to the Blessed One?” Then she spotted some kośataka flowers not far in the distance. After gathering them up, she went to the Blessed One and scattered the kośataka flowers over him. She then touched her head to the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

2.246 The Blessed One thought, “This young woman’s life will be very short. It is not long before she will die.” Realizing this, he taught her the Dharma particularly suited to her, and when she had understood all that the Blessed One had said, she took leave of him. Not long after she had gone, her bodily elements fell into disequilibrium. She died with a mind filled with joy toward the Blessed One, transmigrated, and passed on to rebirth in the realm of the gods.

2.247 Now when young gods and goddesses are born they possess three different types of innate knowledge. They know (1) whence they have died and transmigrated, (2) where they have been born, and (3) why they have taken birth there.

2.248 When she saw that she had scattered kośataka flowers over the Blessed One and felt joy toward him in her past life, she thought, “It’s been a whole

day since I approached the Blessed One and offered him my respect. This isn't proper of me. Not a day should pass without my seeing the Blessed One and offering him my respect."

2.249 So she decorated herself with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on a crown decorated with various types of precious jewels, and perfumed her body with saffron, tamala, spr̥ka, and other herbs. Thus nobly attired, that night she filled the front of her long shirt with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers, and she approached the Blessed One. She scattered the divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers over the Blessed One, touched her head to the Blessed One's feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

2.250 The Blessed One directly apprehended her thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught her the Dharma accordingly. When she heard it, the goddess destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where she sat. Having seen the truths, she rose from her seat, touched her head to the Blessed One's feet, circumambulated the Blessed One three times, and disappeared on the spot.

2.251 When she did that, the monks committed to practicing earnestly by foregoing sleep from dusk to dawn noticed many great rays of light spreading forth from the garden of Prince Jeta and wondered, "What was this? Last night, did Sahāṃpati Brahmā, or Śakra, King of the Gods—or perhaps the four great kings—come to offer respect to the Blessed One?"

2.252 They went to the Blessed One, and when they arrived, they touched their heads to his feet, and asked him, "Lord, we monks were maintaining our

strict effort not to sleep at dusk and dawn, and we noticed many great rays of light spreading forth from the garden of Prince Jeta. Lord, what was this? Last night, did Sahāṃpati Brahmā, or Śakra, King of the Gods—or perhaps the four great kings—come to offer respect to the Blessed One?"

2.253 "Monks, last night it was neither Sahāṃpati Brahmā, nor Śakra, King of the Gods, nor the four great kings who came to see me. Did you see the cowherd who offered me worship with kośataka flowers, touched her head to my feet, heard the Dharma from me, and departed?"

"Yes, Blessed One, we saw her."

2.254 "Not long after she left, filled with joy at the thought of me, she died, transmigrated, and took rebirth as a god in the realm of the gods. Then she came here to see me and I taught the Dharma to her. Hearing the Dharma from me, she saw the truths, and having seen the truths, she went back to where she belongs."

2.255 "Lord, what action did this cowherd take that ripened into her birth into a family of poor cowherds? What action did she take that after she died, she transmigrated and took rebirth in the realm of the gods? What action pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?"

"Monks, it was partly her past actions, and it is partly her present actions as well," the Blessed One replied.

2.256 "What actions did she commit in the past?"

"After she went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely enlightened Buddha Kāśyapa and became a nun," recounted the Blessed One, "she became quarrelsome and abusive. In anger she spoke harshly to a group of nuns, calling them cowherds.

2.257 "Then after practicing pure conduct all her life, at the time of her death she felt regret, and prayed, 'While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of

the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May I not meet with the results of the wrongful act of speaking harshly to fellow practitioners of the holy life.’

2.258 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that nun then is now this selfsame cowherd. At that time she practiced pure conduct all her life, and at the time of her death, she prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

2.259 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased me and not displeased me. These were her past actions.

2.260 “As for her present actions, the one who became that cowherd offered me worship with kośataka flowers, felt joy toward me, and took rebirth in the realm of the gods. Monks, these are her present actions.”

2.261 “Lord, what action did the other cowherds commit that ripened into their births into families of poor cowherds? What action did they take that ripened into their pleasing the Blessed One, not displeasing him, going forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, casting away all afflictive emotions, and manifesting arhatship?”

2.262 “After they went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa,” recounted the Blessed One, “they became quarrelsome and abusive. In anger they spoke harshly to the other monks, calling them cowherds. Then they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May

we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. And may we not meet with the results of the act of speaking harshly to those monks.’

2.263 “O monks, what do you think? The five hundred monks who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then are none other than these five hundred monks who gave up cowherding to go forth. At that time, after they went forth, at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.264 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. At that time, in anger they spoke harshly to the other monks, calling them cowherds, and they also failed to give gifts. So it is that they became poor cowherds, subsisting on the food of others.”

THE END

Next: *A Band of Friends*



The Cowherds

Edward Wang / 9 years old

Part Two (9)

A Band of
Friends

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 A Band of Friends

2.265 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a band of five hundred friends. From time to time when the flowers were blooming, they would walk into the gardens for fun playing music, enjoying themselves, and coupling. Then one day, as the lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers were in bloom, to have some fun they clad themselves in every type of adornment; took up garlands of lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers; festooned themselves with hats, earrings, and flower arrangements; and, each carrying an arrangement of blue lotuses, left Śrāvastī, and walked to the gardens with a flourish of cymbals.

2.266 The Blessed One had come to the region purely out of compassion for them, and in the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī. The band of friends saw him from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart.

2.267 When they saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled them with supreme joy. Full of such joy, they approached him, touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet, scattered lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers over him, struck

the cymbals, then circumambulated him three times and departed. At that moment the Blessed One smiled.

2.268 Now it is the nature of the blessed buddhas' smiles that when they smile, colorful beams of blue, yellow, red, and white light radiate from their mouths, with some traveling up and others traveling down.

2.269 Those that travel down go to the beings in the Reviving Hell, the Black Thread Hell, the Crushing Hell, the Shrieking Hell, the Screaming Hell, the Hot Hell, the Hell of Extreme Heat, the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, the Blistering Hell, the Bursting Blister Hell, the Hell of Chattering Teeth, the Hell of Lamentation, the Cold Whimpering Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Blue Lotus Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Lotus Hell, and the Splitting Open Like a Great Lotus Hell, and as they descend they cool the beings in the hot hells, and warm the beings in the cold hells.

2.270 In this way they soothe the particular injuries of those beings, who wonder, "Have we died and been reborn somewhere other than this place?" Then, to engender faith in them, the blessed ones radiate an emanation, and when the beings see it, they think, "Alas, it is neither that we have died and left this place, nor that we have been born elsewhere. Rather it is because of the unprecedented appearance of this emanation that our particular injuries have been soothed." They feel real joy toward the emanation, exhausting the deeds that brought them to experience the hells. Now, as fit vessels of the truths, they take rebirth among the gods and humans.

2.271 The rays of light that travel up go to the following gods: those of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, the Heaven of the Masters of Others' Creations, and the Heaven of Brahmā's Assembly;

those of the realms called Brahmin Priests, Great Brahmā, Limited Splendor, Immeasurable Splendor, Radiant Heaven, Lesser Virtue, Immeasurable Virtue, Extensive Virtue, and the Cloudless Heaven; and those of the realms called Increasing Merit, Great Result, None Greater, Sorrowless, Sublime Vision, Great Vision, and Supreme. There they sound a cry of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness, and they echo the following two verses:

- 2.272 Cultivate renunciation,
Practice the Buddha's teaching—
Trample the lord of death's army
Like an elephant in a house of reeds!
- 2.273 Those who mind their way along the path
Of this Dharma and Vinaya
Will abandon the round of rebirth
And put an end to suffering.
- 2.274 Then the rays of light circle through the trichiliocosm and come back to the blessed ones. Should the blessed one wish to make a revelation about past deeds, they will disappear into the blessed one's back. Should he wish to foretell the future, they will disappear into the chest. Should he wish to prophesy about a hell birth, they will disappear into the soles of the feet. Should he wish to prophesy about an animal birth, they will disappear into the heels. Should he wish to prophesy about birth as an anguished spirit, they will disappear into the big toe. Should he wish to prophesy about a human birth, they will disappear into the knees.
- 2.275 Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a great universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the left hand. Should he wish to prophesy about someone's becoming a universal monarch, they will disappear into the

palm of the right hand. Should he wish to prophesy about a god birth, they will disappear into the navel. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the listeners, they will disappear into the mouth. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, they will disappear into the hair between the eyebrows. Should he wish to prophesy about an unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, they will disappear into the crown of the head.

- 2.276 After these particular rays of light had circled the Blessed One three times, they disappeared into the hair between the Blessed One's eyebrows. Then Venerable Ānanda joined his palms in reverence and praised the Blessed One with the following verse:
- 2.277 "From your mouth's great gate spill forth
Scores of thousand-colored spectra.
Like the shining of the sun,
They illumine everything."
- 2.278 He then supplicated him with the following verses:
- "The lords of beings, the buddhas who cast off
disconsolation,
Are rid of savagery and pride, and are themselves
the cause of all that's good.
These victors over every rival, in the absence of
cause and condition
Do not display their smiles, which are the color of
conch and lotus root.
- 2.279 "So if you know it's time, for your mind never
falters,
Then come—ascetic, victor—quell your disciples'
hesitation.
O sage, greatest of the herd, with speech unrivaled,
sure, and good,
Reassure those prone to doubt.

2.280 “Mountain still, and vast as oceans,
Buddha, fully awakened lord,
Your smile is no mundane event.
Hero, make it manifest so that many might pay heed.

2.281 “With speech like a clap of thunder,
Graceful like a royal bull,
Oh tell the fruits awaiting those,
The peerless ones, who praise you!

2.282 “Lord, if in the absence of the right causes and conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas do not smile, what are the causes and conditions that make them smile?”

2.283 “Ānanda, so it is,” the Blessed One replied. “It is just as you say, Ānanda. Without the right causes and conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas do not smile. Ānanda, did you see the band of friends who were venerating me?”

“Yes, Lord, I saw them,” replied Ānanda.

2.284 “Ānanda, because of their roots of virtue, their states of mind, and the wholeheartedness of their generosity, they will not fall to the lower realms for thirteen eons. For thirteen eons they will take rebirth among gods and humans. After circling in saṃsāra, in their final rebirth, their final dwelling place, they will take birth as human beings. Then they will go forth and manifest the thirty-seven wings of enlightenment without a teacher or any instruction. They will manifest the enlightenment of a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddhas known as The Wishless Ones. That is what shall come of their act of generosity.”

2.285 The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, what wondrous actions did the Blessed One perform that ripened into the band of five hundred friends venerating him with lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers?”

2.286 “Monks,” replied the Blessed One, “the Tathāgata

committed and accumulated the actions himself at a previous time. The actions I committed and accumulated did not ripen into the element of earth. They did not ripen into the external element of water, nor the element of fire, nor the element of wind. The actions I committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but my own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

2.287 “When the time arrives—and even if
A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act
That sentient beings amass.

2.288 “Monks, in times gone by, two incalculable eons ago, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Dīpaṃkara was in the world.

2.289 “One day as the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara was traveling through the countryside, he came to the royal palace known as Dīpavatī. During King Dīpa’s reign at Dīpavatī, the kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good, quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma. He ruled the kingdom gently and mercifully, as a parent cares for a beloved only child.

2.290 “King Dīpa invited the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara into the city so that his feet might touch the ground there. In addition to King Dīpa, there was another king named Vāsava. King Dīpa sent him an envoy with a message that stated, ‘I am requesting the totally and completely

awakened Buddha Dīpaṅkara to come to the city so that his feet might touch the ground here. Come, for we must worship him.’

2.291 “King Vāsava had been performing twelve years of ritual offerings, and at the end of them he was to set forth five magnificent offerings: a golden staff, a small golden vase, a golden basin, a bed ornamented with four precious gems, five hundred gold coins, and a young woman wearing every type of adornment.

2.292 “At the same time there were two young brahmins from another province who were learning Vedic recitation from their teachers. They knew that they were expected to make offerings not only to the preceptor who instructed them in the Dharma, but also to their spiritual master as well, and they sat wondering how this might be done.

2.293 “Then they heard that King Vāsava was to distribute five magnificent offerings at the end of his offering ritual, and that he would be granting them to the brahmin with the greatest mastery of recitation. Because the two of them had studied and memorized so much, they thought that they might go and win the offerings, as well as find out for certain which of them was the best. With all this in mind they set out for the city of King Vāsava.

2.294 “The gods informed the king about this, saying, ‘Two young brahmins named Sumati and Mati are coming here. You should make your magnificent offerings to the one called Sumati. Great King, the fruits of making such magnificent offerings to Sumati will be much greater than the fruits of all the ritual offerings you have performed these last twelve years.’

2.295 “The king thought, ‘These two young men must truly be great if the gods themselves are informing me about them.’ The king saw the young brahmins from a distance, their faces sweet and beautiful. When they arrived at the ritual offering site, they took their seats in the row reserved for brahmins.

When King Vāsava saw the two of them, he thought, ‘No doubt this is the Sumati the gods were telling me about.’

2.296 “The king went to the row and asked the young brahmin Sumati, ‘Are you the brahmin Sumati?’

“‘I am he,’ he replied.

2.297 “Then King Vāsava placed the young brahmin at the head of the row, gave him food, and presented him with the five magnificent offerings. The young brahmin Sumati accepted four of the great gifts: the golden staff, the vase, and so forth. But he left one of the magnificent offerings aside—the only gift he did not accept was that of the young woman. He explained, ‘I am practicing the holy life.’

2.298 “The young woman saw that the young brahmin Sumati was well proportioned and beautiful, and she became quite attached to him and fell in love. She said to the young brahmin Sumati, ‘Brahmin Sumati, please, accept me.’

“‘It wouldn’t be right for me to do so,’ he said.

2.299 “Since the king had set her at liberty, expecting to give her away, and the young brahmin Sumati had refused her as well, the young woman traveled to Dīpavatī, the royal city of King Dīpa. When she got there, she removed all the adornments from her body and handed them to a flower-garland maker.

2.300 “‘These adornments are very valuable,’ she said, ‘so now, every day, you must give me a blue lotus so that I can worship my deity.’ After handing him the golden adornments just as she had said, she began her veneration of the deity.

2.301 “Meanwhile, the young brahmin Sumati gathered up all four of the other magnificent offerings and approached his preceptor. When he got there he presented all four of those magnificent offerings to his preceptor. Of those four, the preceptor likewise kept only three and gave the five hundred gold coins back to Sumati.

2.302 “That night Sumati had ten different dreams: that he was drinking a great ocean; that he was

flying; that he touched the radiant sun and moon and took them up into his arms; that he caused kings to carry a chariot; and that he rode atop a sage, a white elephant, a swan, a lion, and a great boulder. He awoke from these dreams, and when he did, he wondered who might prophesy about their significance.

2.303 “Not far off there lived a sage who had all the five superknowledges. The young brahmin Sumati approached the sage to dispel his doubts about his dreams. He made pleasant conversation with him, told him about his dreams, and made his request, saying, ‘Please divine the meaning of these ten dreams.’

2.304 “‘I cannot divine your dreams,’ the sage told him. ‘You should go to the royal palace of Dīpavatī instead. King Dīpa has invited the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara so that his feet might touch the ground there. He will divine these dreams for you.’

2.305 “King Vāsava, heeding King Dīpa’s message, had gone to King Dīpa’s palace with a suite of eighty thousand ministers. After seven days had passed, King Dīpa thought, ‘I shall invite the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara into the city so that his feet might touch the ground here.’ He began to gather all the flowers from the city and the surrounding countryside. Then the day arrived on which King Dīpa had invited the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara to come to the city so that his feet might touch the ground there.

2.306 “This was also the same day on which the young brahmin Sumati arrived. The king had already gathered up all the flowers, so when the young woman, thinking to venerate her deity, went to the flower-garland maker and said, ‘One blue lotus, please, for the veneration of my deity,’ the garland maker replied, ‘Today the king has gathered up all the flowers for the Buddha’s arrival.’

2.307 “‘Go and look in that flower pond, there,’ she

replied, ‘for, because of my merit, you may find a blue lotus there that has not been plucked.’

“By the power of Sumati’s merit, seven blue lotuses had indeed appeared in the lotus pond. The garland maker went there and saw them, and the young woman asked him, ‘Can you pluck those blue lotuses for me?’

2.308 The garland maker responded, ‘I cannot pluck them. His Highness will punish me.’

“‘You plucked all the flowers before to offer to the king, didn’t you?’ she asked.

“‘Yes, I did,’ he replied.

2.309 “‘Then it is by the power of my merit that these have grown,’ said the young woman, ‘so pluck them, please, and give them to me.’

The garland maker asked her, ‘How will you carry them away from the lake without His Highness seeing you?’

2.310 “‘They grew by the power of my merit,’ said the young woman, ‘so please pick them. I’ll hide them in my water jug, and carry them that way.’ Reassured, the garland maker plucked the flowers and gave them to the young woman. She took them and put them inside her water jug, then filled the jug with water and set out for the city.

2.311 “Sumati had already arrived in the city, and he thought to himself, ‘It’s not right of me to be without an offering for the Blessed One.’ He went around to the homes of all the flower-garland makers, hoping for any kind of flower, but he could not find a single one. When at last he emerged from the western gate of the city, he circled from garden to garden, hoping for any kind of flower, but still he could not find a single one.

2.312 “Then, after circling all about, the young brahmin Sumati was walking into a garden just as the young woman was coming out of it and he bumped right into her. By the power of Sumati’s merit, all the blue lotus flowers rose out of the water jar.

2.313 “When he saw the flowers, Sumati said to the

young woman, 'I'll pay you five hundred gold coins to give me all those blue lotuses.'

2.314 " 'You wouldn't accept me before,' the young woman replied. 'Now you want my lotuses? I won't offer them to you.' But having said this, she asked the young brahmin Sumati, 'What do you want them for?'

" 'To offer to the Blessed One,' Sumati replied.

2.315 The young woman said, 'I don't need your gold coins. I want the result of offering you these blue lotuses to be that throughout all our lives I become your queen. I'll give them to you if you'll pray, 'By giving me this gift, in all our lives may she be my wife.'

" 'I'm a person who takes joy in giving,' Sumati said, 'one who would give away his wife and child. I would even give away my own flesh.'

2.316 " 'First, pray that it be so,' the young woman said. 'After that, you can give me to whomever you please.' With this, the young woman handed five lotuses to Sumati. She took the remaining two herself and recited the following verse:

2.317 " 'Whenever your prayers are fulfilled
And you become a guide, a buddha,
May I be your queen—a constant aide
To your Dharma practice.'

2.318 "Meanwhile, after having the entire city cleared of stones, pebbles, and gravel, the king ordered that banners and flags be hoisted, archways festooned, silk tassels hung, and fragrant water and incense powder scattered about. And when the stones, pebbles, and gravel had been cleared from the city gates up to the monastery, and banners, flags, and pediments set in place, silk tassels hung, and fragrant water and incense powder scattered about, the king, carrying a hundred-ribbed parasol, went out to receive the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara.

2.319 "The ministers likewise went out to receive him,

as did King Vāsava and his ministers. The king touched his head to the feet of the Blessed One and implored him, 'Blessed One, may it please you to enter the city.' The Blessed One, accompanied by the saṅgha of monks, turned to face the city, and began to walk, as King Dīpa held the hundred-ribbed parasol steady over the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara.

2.320 "The ministers, along with King Vāsava and his ministers, also all held their parasols over him, and the Blessed One emanated himself in such a way that each of them thought, 'I'm the one holding a parasol over the Blessed One!' The Blessed One, in all his splendor, came to the city gate, assumed authority, and placed his foot upon the threshold. The moment that the Blessed One placed his foot upon the threshold the earth quaked six different ways: it quivered, shuddered, and jolted; it trembled, shook, and swayed.

2.321 "Whenever the blessed ones assume authority and set foot upon the threshold of a city gate all manner of marvels naturally take place. Persons with psychosis find their minds regain their function. Persons with blindness find their eyes can see. Persons with deafness find their ears can hear. Persons with speech disabilities find themselves able to speak. Persons with impediments to their mobility find that they can walk. Persons unable to have children find themselves happily bringing forth. Sentient beings who are pilloried, or whose feet are bound or locked in stocks, find themselves liberated from bondage. Persons of lifelong enmity achieve, in an instant, minds of love. Calves break their ropes and go to their mothers. Elephants trumpet. Horses bray. The head of every herd sounds a signal cry. Parrots, mountain birds, cuckoos, and jīvaṃjīva birds each call out their songs.

2.322 "Musical instruments resound without being played. Ornaments jingle inside their containers. The highlands sink down and the lowlands rise up.

Stones, pebbles, and gravel all disappear. The gods in the sky let fall divine blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers, and scatter agaru powder, fragrant tagara powder, sandalwood powder, tamala powder, and divine mandārava flowers as well. The east sinks down and the west rises up. The west sinks down and the east rises up. The south sinks down and the north rises up. The north sinks down and the south rises up. The middle sinks down and the edges rise up. The edges sink down and the middle rises up.

2.323 “At the royal palace of Dīpavatī, a crowd of hundreds of thousands of beings worshiped the Blessed One with flowers and burning incense sticks and cones. Sumati, Mati, and the young woman approached the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara carrying their lotuses, but the place was crowded with worshipers, and they could not join the Blessed One’s audience.

2.324 “Thereupon the Blessed One thought, ‘The young brahmin Sumati’s merit will increase more than that of all those in this great crowd,’ and he emanated a strong, gusty rain. After the great crowd of people had their chance, the young brahmin Sumati’s turn finally came.

2.325 “As he beheld the captivating Blessed One he was elated. In his joy he scattered all five of his lotuses over the Blessed One, whereupon the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara performed a miracle of transforming them all into a canopy above him, the size of a chariot wheel, that moved when the Blessed One moved and remained still when he was still.

2.326 “When the young woman saw what had taken place, she was also filled with joy. After she scattered her two blue lotuses over the Blessed One, they were also blessed so that they transformed into two canopies the size of chariot wheels over the Blessed One’s ears.

2.327 “The strong, gusty rain had turned the whole

area to mud, and as the Blessed One started to walk across the muddy area, the young brahmin Sumati spread his hair on the muddy ground before the Blessed One, and said in verse,

2.328 “ ‘O brilliant Awakened One—
That I might awake, I request
You with your ageless, unborn feet
Upon my hair to quickly tread.’

2.329 “Then the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara placed his feet upon the young brahmin Sumati’s hair.

“Then Mati, who had accompanied the young brahmin Sumati and sat with him, said in anger, ‘See how the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara tramples the hair of this young brahmin as if it were an animal hide!’ Then the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara issued the following prophecy of the young brahmin Sumati’s awakening:

2.330 “ ‘For the good of all the world, at this very place you will
Become the teacher, the sovereign, liberated from
the triple world,
The Śākya prince who shall be known as Śākyamuni,
Beating heart of the triple world and a lamp for
beings.’

2.331 “The very moment that the totally and completely awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara prophesied of the young brahmin Sumati’s awakening, Sumati rose into the sky to the height of seven palm trees. His old hair fell away, and in its place a halo of new hair appeared. The great crowd saw him hovering in the sky, and they began to pray, ‘When he achieves unexcelled wisdom, may we become his disciples.’ The young woman also recited the following prayer:

- 2.332 “Whenever your prayers are fulfilled
And you become a guide, a buddha,
May I be your queen—a constant aide
To your practice of Dharma.
- 2.333 ‘When the day dawns that you wholly
Awaken and become the chief
Who guides the world,
May I become your disciple too.
- 2.334 “‘Now hundreds and thousands watch as
A young brahmin sits in the sky.
Below, all of them make wishes
One day to be your disciple.
- 2.335 “‘When the day dawns that you wholly
Awaken and become the chief
Who guides the world—when that time comes,
May we all become your disciples.’
- 2.336 “King Dīpa picked up the hair that had fallen away
after the totally and completely awakened Buddha
Dīpaṃkara had prophesied about the young
brahmin Sumati’s awakening, and King Vāsava
said, ‘Give me that hair.’ King Dīpa gave the hair to
him, and King Vāsava took it and counted it. There
were eighty thousand strands of hair, so the king’s
ministers beseeched him, ‘Deva, we would like to
request that you give each of us one strand of hair,
for we wish to make stūpas of them.’
- 2.337 “The king gave a strand of hair to each of his
ministers, who returned to their provinces and
built stūpas. When the young brahmin Sumati’s
unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment
was prophesied, King Dīpa, King Vāsava, and
the inhabitants of the cities and the countryside,
seeing the great good that would come of building
the stūpas, provided all that was necessary for the
ministers to do so.
- 2.338 “Then Sumati asked the young brahmin

Mati, ‘What was going through your mind as he
prophesied my unexcelled, total, and complete
enlightenment?’

“‘What I thought wasn’t right,’ he replied.

- 2.339 “‘What was so wrong about it?’ asked the young
brahmin Sumati.

“‘I got angry when the totally and completely
awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara stepped on your
hair, and I said, ‘See how the totally and completely
awakened Buddha Dīpaṃkara tramples the young
brahmin Sumati’s hair with his foot as if it were an
animal hide!’

“Sumati replied, ‘Come! Let us go forth in the
presence of the Blessed Buddha.’

- 2.340 Sumati and Mati both went forth in the teaching
of the totally and completely awakened Buddha
Dīpaṃkara. Having gone forth, Sumati studied
the Tripiṭaka and gathered disciples in accord with
the Dharma. Then the young brahmin Sumati
died, transmigrated, and took rebirth in the Tuṣita
Heaven. As for the young brahmin Mati, after he
died, he transmigrated and took rebirth as a hell
being.

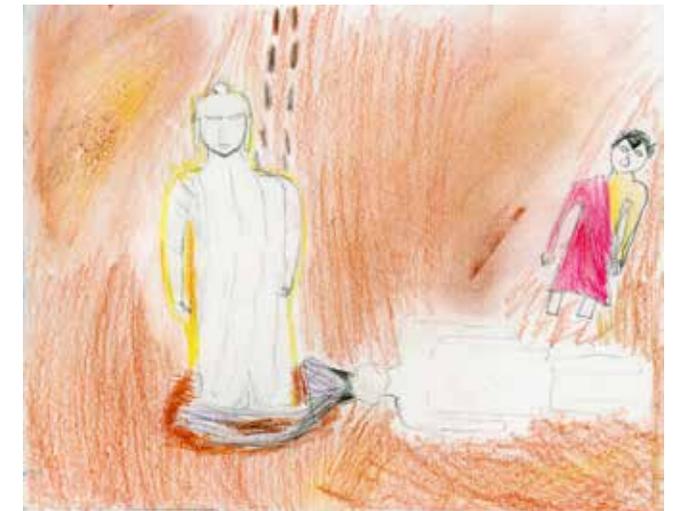
- 2.341 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who
was the young brahmin Sumati then, and who was
established in the bodhisattva practice. The act of
my offering blue lotuses to Buddha Dīpaṃkara
ripened and caused me to experience great
happiness in saṃsāra. That root of virtue became
the sole cause, condition, and accumulation of my
unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment,
and up to this day the ripening of that action is the
reason that the band of five hundred friends have
made offerings to me in the same way.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Abhaya*



A Band of Friends



Lucas Wang & Sunny Wang / 12 & 5 years old

Part Two (10)

The Story of
Abhaya

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 The Story of Abhaya

2.342 As the Blessed One was traveling from Śrāvastī to Rājagṛha, he came to a certain place in the wilderness where, under the shade of the trees, he paused to rest a moment before continuing.

2.343 Up ahead, Venerable Ānanda saw a fork in the path. There was great danger of lions on the path, so he asked the Blessed One, “Lord, the road forks here. One way is direct but dangerous; the other is meandering but safe. Lord, by which path should we proceed?”

2.344 The Blessed One replied, “Ānanda, wherever the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas dwell there is nothing to fear, and no need to be scared or anxious, so lead us down the direct path.”

2.345 Two children from the village were playing not far from where the Blessed One stood. One of them was holding a tiny drum. The other clasped a bow and arrow. The two of them saw the Blessed One from a distance, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two excellent marks of a great person. They looked at the Blessed Buddha, and the sight of him filled them with happiness. Happily they approached the Blessed One, and when they arrived they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and requested of him, “Lord, though there is great danger of lions on this path, please allow us to escort the Blessed One.”

2.346 The Blessed One asked, “Children, what will you do if the threat of lions becomes imminent?”

The first one replied, “Lord, I’ll scare them with the sound of my drum!”

And the other replied, “I’ll scare them with the sound of my bow and arrow!”

2.347 The children walked on ahead of the Blessed One, and the Blessed One thought, “These two have already produced roots of virtue.” With this thought, the Blessed One told them, “Children, by your mere happiness the two of you have already escorted me to safety. You may be on your way now,” and the two children departed. At that moment, the Blessed One smiled.

2.348 Now it is the nature of the blessed buddhas’ smiles that when they smile, colorful beams of blue, yellow, red, and white light radiate from their mouths, with some traveling up and others traveling down.

2.349 Those that travel down go to the beings in the Reviving Hell, the Black Thread Hell, the Crushing Hell, the Shrieking Hell, the Screaming Hell, the Hot Hell, the Hell of Extreme Heat, the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, the Blistering Hell, the Bursting Blister Hell, the Hell of Chattering Teeth, the Hell of Lamentation, the Cold Whimpering Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Blue Lotus Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Lotus Hell, and the Splitting Open Like a Great Lotus Hell, and as they descend they cool the beings in the hot hells, and warm the beings in the cold hells.

2.350 In this way they soothe the particular injuries of those beings, who wonder, “Have we died and been reborn somewhere other than this place?” Then, to engender faith in them, the blessed ones radiate an emanation, and when the beings see it, they think, “Alas, it is neither that we have died and left this place, nor that we have been born elsewhere. Rather it is because of the unprecedented appearance of this emanation that our particular

injuries have been soothed.” They feel real joy toward the emanation, exhausting the deeds that brought them to experience the hells. Now, as fit vessels of the truths, they take rebirth among the gods and humans.

2.351 The rays of light that travel up go to the following gods: those of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations, and the Heaven of Brahmā’s Assembly; those of the realms called Brahmin Priests, Great Brahmā, Limited Splendor, Immeasurable Splendor, Radiant Heaven, Lesser Virtue, Immeasurable Virtue, Extensive Virtue, and the Cloudless Heaven; and those of the realms called Increasing Merit, Great Result, None Greater, Sorrowless, Sublime Vision, Great Vision, and Supreme. There they sound a cry of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness, and they echo the following two verses:

2.352 Cultivate renunciation,
Practice the Buddha’s teaching—
Trample the lord of death’s army
Like an elephant in a house of reeds!

2.353 Those who mind their way along the path
Of this Dharma and Vinaya
Will abandon the round of rebirth
And put an end to suffering.

2.354 Then the rays of light circle through the trichiliocosm and come back to the blessed ones. Should the blessed one wish to make a revelation about past deeds, they will disappear into the Blessed One’s back. Should he wish to foretell the future, they will disappear into the chest. Should he wish to prophesy about a hell birth, they will disappear into the soles of the feet. Should he

wish to prophesy about an animal birth, they will disappear into the heels. Should he wish to prophesy about birth as an anguished spirit, they will disappear into the big toe. Should he wish to prophesy about a human birth, they will disappear into the knees. Should he wish to prophesy about someone’s becoming a great universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the left hand. Should he wish to prophesy about someone’s becoming a universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the right hand. Should he wish to prophesy about a god birth, they will disappear into the navel. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the listeners, they will disappear into the mouth. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, they will disappear into the hair between the eyebrows. Should he wish to prophesy about an unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, they will disappear into the crown of the head.

2.355 After these particular rays of light had circled the Blessed One three times, they disappeared into the hair between the Blessed One’s eyebrows. Then Venerable Ānanda joined his palms in reverence and praised the Blessed One with the following verse:

2.356 “From your mouth’s great gate spill forth
Scores of thousand-colored spectra.
Like the shining of the sun,
They illumine everything.”

2.357 He then supplicated him with the following verses:

“The lords of beings, the buddhas who cast off
disconsolation,
Are rid of savagery and pride, and are themselves
the cause of all that’s good.
These victors over every rival, in the absence of
cause and condition

Do not display their smiles, which are the color of conch and lotus root.

2.358 “So if you know it’s time, for your mind never falters,
Then come—ascetic, victor—quell your disciples’ hesitation.
O sage, greatest of the herd, with speech unrivaled,
sure, and good,
Reassure those prone to doubt.

2.359 “Mountain still, and vast as oceans,
Buddha, fully awakened lord,
Your smile is no mundane event.
Hero, make it manifest so that many might pay heed.

2.360 “With speech like a clap of thunder,
Graceful like a royal bull,
Oh tell the fruits awaiting those,
The peerless ones, who praise you!

2.361 “Lord, if in the absence of the right causes and conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas do not smile, what are the causes and conditions that make them smile?”

2.362 “Ānanda, so it is,” replied the Blessed One. “It is just as you say, Ānanda. Without the right causes and conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas do not smile. Ānanda, did you see those two children who offered to serve me?”

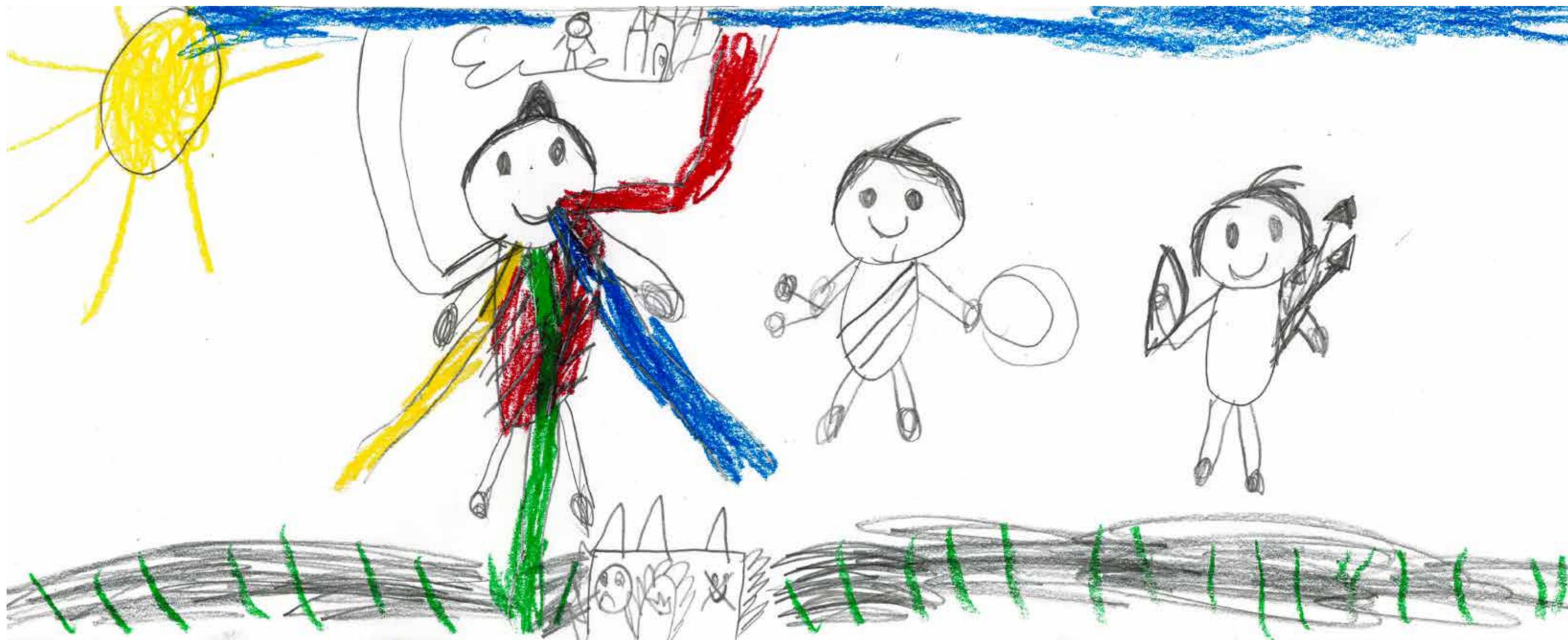
“Yes, Lord, I saw them,” said Ānanda.

2.363 “Ānanda, by the roots of the virtue of these children’s actions, the happiness they felt toward me, and the wholeheartedness of their generosity, they will not fall to the lower realms for thirteen eons. For thirteen eons they will take rebirth among gods and humans. After circling in saṃsāra,

in their final rebirth, their final dwelling place, they will take birth as a human being. Then they will go forth and manifest the thirty-seven wings of enlightenment without a teacher or any instruction. One will manifest the enlightenment of a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddha known as Dundubhisvara, and the other will be known as Abhaya. That is what shall come of their act of generosity.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Lake of Jewels*



Part Two (11)

The Story of
Lake of Jewels

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

11 The Story of Lake of Jewels

2.364 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. When the time came for him to marry, he took a wife and they enjoyed themselves and coupled.

2.365 One day his wife conceived, and when she did she found herself suddenly adorned by all manner of adornments. Parasols, banners, and flags fluttered from the top of the palatial house; different kinds of flowers had been strewn and sundry fragrances sprinkled about; and as she sat upon her bed she found she was surrounded by a retinue of women.

2.366 “Oh my! Has my wife been possessed by a ghost?” the householder wondered, and he brought her to the soothsayers.

“No,” the soothsayers told him, “she has not been possessed by a ghost. All this has taken place on account of the being in her womb.”

2.367 Then after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and decorated with adornments, who bore no trace of the womb, or of the placenta, or of blood.

2.368 Every time the women wanted to bathe him and would remove one of his adornments, another would appear. When they so much as loosened one

and moved it aside, another would appear in its place.

“These adornments have arisen as a result of his merit,” his mother told them. “Don't remove them. Just wash him with the adornments on.”

2.369 So the nurses bathed him with the adornments on. When they placed him on his bed it disappeared and a celestial bed appeared in its place. Also, in place of their palatial home, there appeared a multistoried celestial palace, with fluttering parasols, banners, and flags, and different kinds of flowers and fragrances strewn and sprinkled all about. In that multistoried palace, on the pillows of his celestial bed, a divine pillar appeared as well, made of gold inlaid with precious stones. In front of the pillar four great treasures appeared, brimming with jewels that never seemed to increase or decrease, even if hundreds or thousands of them were removed.

2.370 When his parents saw all this they were ecstatic. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since the house filled up like a lake of jewels when this child was born, his name will be Lake of Jewels.”

2.371 Young Lake of Jewels was brought up by eight nurses—two nurses to hold him in their laps, two wet nurses, two nurses to bathe him, and two nurses to play with him. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids. They raised him with a protection cord and the eye of a female peacock feather, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. Wherever he walked, nonhuman spirits unfurled great lengths of new, untouched cloth and strewed different kinds of flowers on the ground before him.

2.372 As he grew up, he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing,

skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

2.373 The houses and gardens that his father had prepared for them to live in during winter, spring, and summer all also became celestial gardens with parasols, banners, and flags, and different kinds of flowers and fragrances strewn and sprinkled about. When he was old enough for sensual pleasures, divine goddesses appeared. If he went to sit on the roof of the house, women came and played music for him, and all of the enjoyment and coupling in which he partook was the ripening of his own merit.

2.374 Then, after some time, he began to deeply admire the Buddha, deeply admire the Dharma, and deeply admire the Saṅgha. He thought, “I have experienced every pleasure, human and divine. I must go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort!”

2.375 He gave gifts and made merit, and after he had made many poor people wealthy, he went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One. After his going forth, wherever he traveled, there celestial beds would appear. Wherever he walked, nonhuman beings unfurled great lengths of new, untouched cloth and strewed different kinds of flowers on the ground before him. He found all this very embarrassing, so the Blessed One told him, “If you sincerely stop being concerned with them, they will go away.” As soon as he heard this, he stopped being so concerned with them, and they went away.

2.376 Then, casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance

like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

2.377 The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did Lake of Jewels take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he was of good form, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, adorned with every type of adornment, and born without any trace of the womb, or of the placenta, or of blood; that upon his birth a multistoried celestial mansion, a celestial bed, and a divine pillar appeared; that wherever he walked, nonhuman beings unfurled great lengths of new, untouched cloth and strewed different kinds of flowers on the ground before him; that when he grew up, there came to him glories both human and divine; and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

2.378 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in Śrāvastī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

2.379 “He began to deeply admire the Buddha, deeply

admire the Dharma, and deeply admire the Saṅgha, so he built a monastery complete in every respect and invited the Blessed Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to that very temple for food and to take their baths.

2.380 “That night he prepared everything that was needed for the baths and set forth foods of a hundred flavors, and after inviting the Blessed Kāśyapa and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to take their baths, he contented them with the foods of a hundred flavors. He then brought the hair and nails of the Blessed One into the monastery, and commissioned that a reliquary stūpa containing the hair and nails of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa be built there. Assembling the workers, he had the stūpa built without delay, complete in every respect.

2.381 “One day he looked and saw that the stūpa had been defiled by birds, so to cover it he built a tall, arched enclosure with open windows and screened windows. Then he covered it with a canopy and put up parasols, victory banners, and flags.

2.382 “On the grounds inside and on the floor of the stūpa itself he laid flowers, burning sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones; performed veneration with music; and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, and be born covered with adornments and without any trace of the womb, or of the placenta, or of blood. Upon my birth, may there appear a multistoried celestial mansion, a celestial bed, and a divine pillar made of gold inlaid with precious stones. In front of the pillar may great treasures appear, brimming with jewels that never seem to increase or decrease, even if hundreds or thousands of them are removed. When I am grown, may there come to me glories both human and divine. May I please and not displease Uttara,

the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship.’

2.383 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that householder then is none other than Lake of Jewels. The acts of venerating the Blessed Kāśyapa and the others in the saṅgha of his disciples, building a reliquary stūpa containing the Buddha’s hair and nails that was complete in every respect, and praying, ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, decorated with every ornament, and born without any trace of the womb, or of the placenta, or of blood. Upon his birth a multistoried celestial mansion, a celestial bed, and a divine pillar appeared, and when he grew up there came to him glories both human and divine.

2.384 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Wealth’s Delight*



The Story of Lake of Jewels

Felicia Chien / 7 years old

◆
Part Two (12)

The Story of
Wealth's Delight

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

12 The Story of Wealth's Delight

2.385 As the Blessed One was making his way through the countryside in Kāśi, he came to Vārāṇasī. At that time, the group of five monks were staying in Vārāṇasī, in the R̥ṣivadana.

2.386 Now the group of five monks saw the Blessed One from a distance. Seeing him, they gathered together and made an agreement among themselves, saying “My, how the ascetic Gautama has become so lazy and so indolent, no longer keeping his fast. How much food he eats now—cooked rice and milled grains! He anoints his body with ghee and sesame oil and bathes with warm water. He’s coming toward us! Let us say to him, ‘Hello, Gautama. There are seats here, so go ahead and sit if you want to,’ but let’s not address him respectfully, nor bow to him, nor rise from our seats to greet him.”

2.387 But as the Blessed One got closer to the group of five monks they were overwhelmed by his radiant glory until they found themselves incapable of treating him with disrespect. One of them rose from his seat and set out a cushion for him. Another readied cool water for him to wash his feet and positioned a footrest for him. A third stood up and held the edge of his robe. “This way, Gautama—if you please! Welcome, Gautama! O Gautama, please have a seat on this cushion we have prepared for you,” they said.

2.388 Then the Blessed One thought, “It seems these

foolish persons have forgotten the agreement they made among themselves,” and he sat on the seat they had prepared for him.

2.389 The group of five monks began to address the Blessed One merely by his given name, or by his surname, or as an ordinary monk. Thereupon the Blessed One told the group of five monks, “Monks, do not address the Tathāgata merely by his given name, nor by his surname, nor as an ordinary monk. If you do so, harm will befall you for a long time, and you will not benefit, but suffer. The reason for this, monks, is that harm comes to those who address the Tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha merely by his given name, or by his surname, or as an ordinary monk, and they do not benefit, but suffer.”

2.390 “Gautama,” they said, “your bearing, conduct, and previous mortifications were all superhuman, and indeed it is possible that you have achieved perfection, the wisdom particular to the noble ones, or that you live amid a feeling of bliss. But how can we know if this is true, for now you have become so lazy and so indolent, no longer keeping your fast. You eat so much—cooked rice and milled grains! And you anoint your body with ghee and sesame oil and bathe with warm water.”

2.391 The Blessed One asked the group of five monks, “Monks, do you see that now the Tathāgata’s complexion and faculties are not the same as they were before?”

“Yes, Gautama, we see,” they replied.

2.392 The Blessed One continued, “Monks, there are two extremes toward which renunciants should not tend. You should not draw near to nor even approach them. What are they? They are the tendency toward seductive luxuries, which for city dwellers have become customary and for ordinary people a habit, and the tendency toward self-inflicted hardships, which are a form of suffering, do not belong to the noble Dharma, and are in fact

harmful. For those who keep their distance from these two extremes, there is a middle way that fully enlightens, passes beyond all sorrow, gives rise to the eye of wisdom, and brings true peace. What is this middle way? It is the eightfold path: right view, right understanding, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditation.”

2.393 The Blessed One instructed the group of five monks as follows. In the morning, the Blessed One gave a teaching to two of the five monks while the other three went for alms in the village. The six of them then prepared a meal of whatever food those three brought back. In the evening, the Blessed One instructed the three monks while the other two went for alms in the village. Only the group of five monks prepared a meal of whatever food those two brought back, since the Blessed One had already taken his food in the morning.

2.394 That evening the Blessed One addressed the group of five monks:

“Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘This is suffering, the truth of noble beings.’

2.395 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘This is the origin of suffering, this is the cessation of suffering, and this is the path that leads to the cessation of suffering—the truths of noble beings.’

2.396 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I should comprehend suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.397 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose,

and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I should relinquish the origin of suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.398 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I should actualize the cessation of suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.399 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I should cultivate the path that leads to the cessation of suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.400 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I have comprehended suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.401 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I have relinquished the origin of suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.402 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I have actualized the cessation of suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.403 “Monks, regarding things not previously heard, when I had reflected thoroughly, vision arose, and insight, knowledge, and understanding arose, as I thought, ‘With higher knowledge I have cultivated the path that leads to the cessation of suffering, that truth of noble beings.’

2.404 “Monks, as long as I had not achieved the vision, insight, knowledge, and understanding of the four truths of noble beings in their three phases and twelve aspects, I had not been freed from the world of devas, māras, and brahmās, from its living beings including mendicants and brahmins, from its living beings including humans and gods. I had not escaped from it, severed ties with it, or been delivered from it. Nor did I dwell fully with a mind free from error. Monks, I did not have the understanding that I had fully awakened to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

2.405 “Monks, once I had achieved the vision, insight, knowledge, and understanding of the four truths of noble beings in their three phases and twelve aspects, I was freed from the world of devas, māras, and brahmās, from its living beings including mendicants and brahmins, from its living beings including humans and gods. I had escaped from it, severed ties with it, and been delivered from it. I dwelled fully with a mind free from error. Monks, then I had the understanding that I had fully awakened to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.”

2.406 When the Blessed One had given this Dharma teaching, Venerable Kauṇḍinya achieved the Dharma vision that is free from dust and stainless with regard to phenomena.

2.407 The Blessed One now asked Venerable Kauṇḍinya, “Kauṇḍinya, have you understood the Dharma?”

“Yes, Blessed One, I have.”

2.408 “Kauṇḍinya, have you understood the Dharma? Have you understood?”

“Yes, Sugata, I have understood it. I understand.”

“Because Venerable Kauṇḍinya has understood the Dharma, he shall be called Ājñātakauṇḍinya.”

2.409 When this Dharma teaching had been explained, the terrestrial yakṣas began to chatter and sing,

“Friends, in Vārāṇasī, in the woods of the deer park at Rṣivadana, for the great benefit of many, to the delight of many, out of compassion for this transient world, for the well-being and benefit of gods and human beings, in accord with the Dharma, the Blessed One has turned the wheel of the Dharma in its three phases and twelve aspects. In all the world, no one has turned such a wheel of Dharma in its three phases and twelve aspects—neither ascetics, brahmins, gods, māras, Brahmā himself, nor anyone else. Its turning will swell the ranks of those in the realm of the gods and diminish the number of those in the realm of the demigods.”

2.410 When they heard the terrestrial yakṣas, all the celestial yakṣas and the gods in the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, the Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, and the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations also began to chatter and sing, and what they said immediately thundered throughout Brahmāloka.

2.411 The gods of Brahmāloka also began to chatter and sing, saying, “Friends, in Vārāṇasī, in the woods of the deer park at Rṣivadana, for the great benefit of many, to the delight of many, out of compassion for this transient world, for the well-being and benefit of gods and human beings, in accord with the Dharma, the Blessed One has turned the wheel of the Dharma in its three phases and twelve aspects.

2.412 “In all the world, no one has turned such a wheel of Dharma in its three phases and twelve aspects—neither ascetics, brahmins, gods, māras, Brahmā himself, nor anyone else. Its turning will swell the ranks of those in the realm of the gods and diminish the number of those in the realm of the demigods.”

2.413 In Vārāṇasī, in the woods of the deer park at Rṣivadana, in accord with the Dharma, the Blessed One has turned the wheel of the Dharma in its three phases and twelve aspects. That is why this

Dharma discourse is known as *Turning the Wheel of the Dharma*.

2.414 The Blessed One addressed the group of five monks a second time:

“Monks, these are the four truths of noble beings: the truth of noble beings that is suffering, the truth of noble beings that is the origin of suffering, the truth of noble beings that is the cessation of suffering, and the truth of noble beings that is the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

2.415 “What is the truth of noble beings that is suffering? It is the suffering of birth, the suffering of aging, the suffering of sickness, and the suffering of death. It is the suffering of not having what you want, the suffering of getting what you do not want, and the suffering of seeking what you desire and not finding it. In short, it is the suffering of the five aggregates for appropriation. This is known as the truth of the noble ones that is suffering. In order to comprehend it one should cultivate the noble eightfold path: right view, right understanding, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and the eighth, right meditative concentration.

2.416 “What is the truth of the noble ones that is the origin of suffering? It is what causes you to take rebirth. It is the arising of delight that is bound up with attachment. It is craving that is captivated by this and that. This is what we call the truth of the noble ones that is the origin of suffering. In order to relinquish it, one should cultivate the noble eightfold path: right view, right understanding, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and the eighth, right meditative concentration.

2.417 “What is the truth of the noble ones that is the cessation of suffering? It is the complete casting away, tossing aside, clearing out, exhaustion, removal, cessation, alleviation, and disappearance

of any and every single thing that causes you to take rebirth; the disappearance of delight that is bound up with attachment; and the disappearance of craving that is captivated by this and that. This is what we call the truth of the noble ones that is the cessation of suffering. In order to actualize it, one should cultivate the noble eightfold path: right view, right understanding, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and the eighth, right meditative concentration.

2.418 “What is the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering? It is the noble eightfold path. One should thus cultivate right view, right understanding, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and the eighth, right meditative concentration.”

2.419 When this Dharma teaching had been explained, Venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya’s mind was freed from the defilements, without any further appropriation. The others among the five monks achieved the Dharma vision that is free from dust and stainless with regard to phenomena. At that moment the first arhat came into the world. Including the Blessed One, now there were two.

2.420 The Blessed One then addressed the other monks in the group of five:

“Monks, form is not the self. Monks, if form were the self, then it would not be logical that form is subject to injury and suffering, and it would be logical for one to be able to say, with respect to form, ‘May my form be like this,’ or ‘May it not be like this.’ However, monks, form is subject to injury and suffering, and one is not able to say, ‘May my form be like this,’ or ‘May it not be like this,’ because form is not the self.

2.421 “Monks, sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness are not the self. Monks, if consciousness were the self, then it would not be logical that it is subject to injury and suffering,

and it would be logical for one to have the ability with respect to consciousness to say, ‘May my consciousness be like this,’ or ‘May it not be like this.’ However, monks, consciousness is subject to injury and suffering, and one does not have the ability with respect to consciousness to say, ‘May my consciousness be like this,’ or ‘May it not be like this,’ because consciousness is not the self.

2.422 “O monks, what do you think—is form permanent, or is it impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Lord.”

“And is something that is impermanent suffering, or is it not suffering?”

“It is suffering, Lord.”

2.423 “Regarding those things that are impermanent and, therefore, suffering—do noble listeners who are educated in the teachings grasp at a self, thinking, ‘This is mine,’ ‘This is the self,’ or ‘This is the nature of the self?’”

“No, Lord, they do not.”

2.424 “O monks, what do you think—are sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“They are impermanent, Lord.”

“And is something that is impermanent suffering or not suffering?”

“It is suffering, Lord.”

2.425 “Regarding those things that are impermanent and, therefore, suffering—do noble listeners who are educated in the teachings grasp at a self, thinking, ‘This is mine,’ ‘This is the self,’ or ‘This is the nature of the self?’”

“No, Lord, they do not.”

2.426 “Monks, that is why whatever the form—whether it arose in the past, present, or future, or whether it is internal or external, gross or subtle, bad or good, near or far away—one should view all of these with perfect wisdom, thinking, ‘This is not mine,’ ‘This is not the self,’ and ‘This is not the nature of the self.’

2.427 “Monks, that is why whatever the sensation, perception, formation, and consciousness—whether it arose in the past, present, or future, or whether it is internal or external, gross or subtle, bad or good, near or far away—one should view all of these with perfect wisdom, thinking, ‘This is not mine,’ ‘This is not the self,’ and ‘This is not the nature of the self.’

2.428 “Monks, this is why noble listeners who are educated in the teachings see perfectly that these five aggregates for appropriation are not ‘mine,’ are not the self, and are not the nature of the self. Since they see this so perfectly, they do not grasp at any worldly thing. Since they do not grasp, they experience absolutely no discontentment. Because they have no discontentment, they bring an end to their own rebirth. With the thought, ‘I have lived the conduct leading to liberation. I have done what was before me. I shall know no other existence,’ they pass into parinirvāṇa.”

2.429 When he explained this Dharma teaching, the minds of the others among the group of five monks were freed from the defilements, without any further appropriation. As of that moment, five arhats had come into the world. Including the Blessed One, now there were six.

2.430 Thereupon the monks requested of the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why the Blessed One has delivered our group of five monks from the ocean of saṃsāra, given us the great fortune of power, strength, and the precious limbs of enlightenment, and established us in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

2.431 “Not only now, monks” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I risked my life to deliver your group of five monks from the ocean of defilements and granted you a magnificent fortune of precious jewels. Listen well!

2.432 “Monks, in times past there was a king named King Brahmadata who reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. His kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma. He ruled the kingdom gently and mercifully, as a parent cares for a beloved only child.

2.433 “At that time in Vārāṇasī there lived a certain sea captain by the name of Wealth. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met.

2.434 “At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, ‘What name should we give this child?’ And they named him, saying, ‘Since this is the child of Wealth, his name will be Wealth’s Delight.’ They reared young Wealth’s Delight on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

2.435 “As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

2.436 “The child had a loving nature, was compassionate, loved beings, and took delight

in being generous. He asked for his parents’ permission and began to make merit and give gifts to ascetics, brahmins, practitioners, mendicants, the poor, and the bereft.

2.437 “One day the captain, Wealth’s Delight’s father, fell ill, and although he was treated with medicinal roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits, he could not be cured, and died. He was laid on a palanquin festooned with blue, yellow, red, and white cloth, and after the ceremonial veneration of his bones, a brief funeral watch was held for him. Afterward, King Brahmadata appointed the son, Wealth’s Delight, to be captain, who with his father’s wealth carried on business with many merchants, and who after his father’s death also began to engage in extraordinary acts of generosity.

2.438 “One day the thought occurred to him, ‘Others might take issue with my giving gifts and making merit, using the wealth accumulated by my father. People will say, “What’s so great about making merit by giving away stuff somebody else piled up?”’

‘In that case,’ he decided, ‘I will make my own fortune! Make no mistake, once I’ve earned my own income, then I’ll really give gifts and make merit!’

2.439 “After that he made an announcement: ‘Any merchant who wishes to set sail on the great ocean with Captain Wealth’s Delight will trade duty-free, exempt from all taxes on earnings, ship fares, and convoy payments! Prepare your wares!’

2.440 “As soon as they heard this, five hundred merchants gathered, bringing camels, cows, and donkeys laden with goods. They made their way through the villages, towns, cities, forest settlements, and outlying districts until they arrived on the shores of the great ocean. After a ship had been hired with five hundred gold coins, they enlisted five types of personnel: cooks, solicitors, advisors, sweepers, and navigators. The cooks prepared whatever food and drink there

was on board. The solicitors settled any disputes that arose. The advisors advised them about their wealth. The sweepers swabbed the decks. And the navigators observed the movements of the stars.

2.441 “Now, when they saw the great ocean, the merchants became afraid and did not want to board the ship. So the captain said to the navigators, ‘Tell them just how wonderful the great ocean is!’

2.442 “The navigators made an announcement, saying, ‘Pay heed, merchants of Jambudvīpa! Upon this great ocean are jewels beyond price—gemstones, pearls, blue beryls, conches, precious stones, coral, silver, gold, emeralds, cat’s eyes, rubies, and conches with clockwise whorls! Let those among you who wish for such precious jewels set out upon this great ocean, so you might satiate yourself and your parents, children, spouses, servants both female and male, laborers, other paid help, friends, ministers, and relatives both young and old, and so you might be able to approach the ascetics and brahmins from time to time with offerings that bequeath good fortune, ripen into happiness, and cause you to be reborn in heaven in the next life!’ At that, the worldly people who wished for wealth—which was almost everyone—climbed aboard the ship, until the ship was not able to hold them all.

2.443 “Then the captain wondered, ‘What’s going to happen now if I send them away?’ With this in mind, he said to the navigators, ‘Tell them the ways in which the great ocean is not so wonderful.’

2.444 “And the navigators announced, ‘Pay heed, merchants of Jambudvīpa! Upon this great ocean lurk such terrors as these: fearsome fish, fearsome timingila fish that might swallow you, fearsome timingilagila fish that could swallow you whole, terrifying waves, terrifying expanses, terrifying kumbhīra sea monsters, terrifying śiśumāra sea monsters, as well as the threat of wrecking into mountains beneath the water, and black winds most treacherous! Then there are pirates garbed in

blue and black who come to plunder your wealth and butcher those who try to escape them! So let those among you set out upon this great ocean who are willing to give up their parents, children, and spouses; their servants both male and female; and their laborers, other paid help, friends, ministers, and relatives both young and old!’ Since there were few brave people and many cowards most of them fled, so the boats were able to hold those who remained.

2.445 “The navigators cried out three times and the first anchor was loosed, then the second, and then the third. Then, the ship was carried forth by powerful winds caught by the head navigator and set sail like a great cloud. It proceeded with excellent wind conditions and arrived at Ratnadvīpa.

2.446 “The navigators instructed them, ‘Merchants of Jambudvīpa! On Ratnadvīpa, the isle of precious stones, there are all manner of semi-precious stones that look like precious jewels. You must examine well before taking them, or you will regret it when you return to Jambudvīpa. On this isle of precious stones also dwell sirens who lure men by any means they can, causing them ruin and suffering. On this isle of precious stones are intoxicating fruits, and anyone who eats them falls unconscious for seven days. You should not partake of these while you are there. On this isle of precious stones dwell nonhuman spirits as well. They will tolerate your presence for seven days, but if your aims, whatever they may be, have not been accomplished after seven days have passed, then a gale will come with such force as to carry the boat away.’

2.447 “Having heard this, the merchants remained focused and attentive. Carefully they searched for precious jewels, filling the boat with them as if filling it with sesame, rice paddy, badara fruit, beans, and the like. Then they set sail, running directly downwind to Jambudvīpa. In this way they completed six such ocean voyages, and upon

their return to Vārāṇasī they began to give gifts and make merit.

2.448 “Now at that time there were five other cities in which lived five other captains. Though they set out, their boats were destroyed, and they thought, ‘Just one being, famed for great deeds, has the power to bring happiness to so many. Now the great Captain Wealth’s Delight is famed for his great deeds. He has completed six ocean voyages. If we can get him to agree, with his support we’ll be able to make a fortune.’ They banded together and traveled to Vārāṇasī, where they met with Captain Wealth’s Delight.

2.449 “ ‘Captain,’ they said, ‘though we set out, our treasure-boats were destroyed. You are famed for your great deeds, so have compassion for us and set sail with us on the great ocean, so that with your support we can make our fortunes.’ Captain Wealth’s Delight replied,

2.450 “ ‘By the code of the mighty sea—
A seventh voyage there should not be.

2.451 “ ‘Never before has anyone completed a seventh ocean voyage. However, so you can fulfill your intention and solely out of compassion for you all, I shall set sail on the ocean a seventh time.’

2.452 “The great Captain Wealth’s Delight set out with the other five captains. They crossed the great ocean and arrived at the isle of precious stones where they gathered their jewels before sailing forth again, steering their ship in the direction of Jambudvīpa.

2.453 “As the great Captain Wealth’s Delight sailed upon the ocean, he thought, ‘It is not clear that those of us who have set out upon the great ocean can avert tragedy and safely reach the other shore, so I will fill these sacks with precious gems and tie them to my waist.’ So he filled up all the small bags with precious gems. When he had tied them to his

waist, he told the merchants, ‘Pay heed! If the ship is destroyed, grab hold of my body.’

2.454 “Later, when the ship crashed into a mountain beneath the water, the five captains grabbed hold of Captain Wealth’s Delight’s body. Then Captain Wealth’s Delight thought, ‘As long as I am alive, I won’t be able to cross this great ocean to deliver them. But it is not possible for a dead body to stay sunk in the great ocean for long, so that won’t happen. Since that is not going to happen, I will die but my corpse will be able to cross the great ocean with speed.’

2.455 “With this thought he said to the captains, ‘Be resolute, and take heart! We shall avert tragedy and cross the great ocean with ease. Don’t let go of my body, not even once you have crossed the great ocean, for I have filled these sacks with precious gems and tied them to my waist. Take them and divide them up among you. They are enough to sustain the lives of those on both sides of your families for seven generations.’

2.456 “After he said this, he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, ‘By this root of virtue, may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way—an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, a blessed one, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.’ Having set his aspiration for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, he took up a sharp knife and slit his own throat.

2.457 “It is not possible for a dead body to stay sunk in the great ocean for long, and that didn’t happen. When it didn’t, some very fastidious nāgas brought the body to the seashore and cast it onto dry land. The five captains removed the jewels from his dead body and divided them among themselves,

venerated his bones, and departed.

2.458

“O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was Wealth’s Delight then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The five who were those five captains then are none other than this group of five monks. There I gave my life to deliver them from the waters of the great ocean, bestowed upon them a fortune of precious jewels, and placed them unharmed in a state of happiness. Now as well I have delivered you from the ocean of saṃsāra, given you this great fortune of power, strength, and the precious limbs of enlightenment, and placed you in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

THE END

Next: *The Bear: Two Stories*



The Story of Wealth's Delight

Kezang Norbu / 12 years old

◆
Part Two (13)

The Bear:
Two Stories

13. i The First Story of the Bear
13. ii The Second Story of the Bear

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

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Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

13 The Bear: Two Stories

13. i The First Story of the Bear

2.459 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha and traveling in the Gayā region, he fell ill with a cold. An expert healer named Jīvaka advised him of the benefits of a medicinal butter called iron arrow. He prepared the butter decoction himself and offered it to the Blessed One. Since there was some left to spare, Jīvaka asked the Blessed One, “Lord, please tell me to whom I should give the leftover decoction.”

2.460 The Blessed One replied to Jīvaka, “Jīvaka, ask the saṅgha to distribute it to whomever they wish.”

Jīvaka replied, “I shall do as the Blessed One has instructed,” and went to distribute the remaining decoction to the saṅgha, but none of the monks took any.

2.461 When Devadatta noticed this he asked, “What’s that, Jīvaka?”

“This is what’s left of a medicinal butter called iron arrow that the Blessed One took. He offered it to the saṅgha, but no one took any.”

“I’ll take it,” Devadatta said. “Give me the same amount that the ascetic Gautama took.”

2.462 “Devadatta, not only is the Blessed One’s body very big, but his strength is greater than yours,” Jīvaka replied. “You won’t be able to digest that

much.”

“If the ascetic Gautama can digest it, why can’t I?” Devadatta retorted. Paying no heed to Jīvaka’s advice, he drank just as much as the Blessed One had.

2.463 The next day the Blessed One had prepared a simple rice soup and was eating it. When Devadatta heard that the Blessed One had prepared a simple rice soup and was eating it, he said to Jīvaka, “Jīvaka, I too shall prepare a simple rice soup.”

2.464 Seeing his pallor, Jīvaka said, “Devadatta, if you can’t even digest butter, how will you be able to digest rice soup?”

“If the ascetic Gautama can tolerate it, why can’t I?” he said. With these words he prepared a simple rice soup of his own, but no sooner had he eaten it than stomach pain overtook him. He rolled around on the ground, unable to bear the pain in his stomach.

2.465 Everyone in the world has those who are their friends, those who are enemies, and those in between. So someone went and summoned Venerable Ānanda and told him, “Lord Ānanda, a stomach illness has nearly killed Devadatta.” When he heard this Venerable Ānanda was concerned about his brother Devadatta and became worried. He approached the Blessed One and informed him, “Lord, Devadatta is near death from a stomach illness. Blessed One, please protect him!” As soon as the Blessed One heard this, he was seized by great compassion and hurried to where Devadatta was.

2.466 When he got there he placed his hands on Devadatta’s head and said, “Devadatta, if it is by any measure true or a true statement that you, a murderer, and Rāhula are alike in my mind as two palms pressed together, then may you be healed.” No sooner had he said this than Devadatta was well.

Then the monks said, “Devadatta, the Blessed

One took on the difficult task for you of saving your precious life.”

2.467 “What’s so miraculous about that?” he retorted. “If he did not understand the study of medicine, how could he have established such an assembly as this?” Then he began devising some scheme to kill the Blessed One.

When the monks heard about this, they implored the Blessed One, “Lord, when the Blessed One protects Devadatta, all Devadatta does is try to kill the Blessed One. Even now he is devising some scheme. Lord, tell us why Devadatta has not repaid your kindness, has no sense of gratitude, and makes a waste of what you have done.”

2.468 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, he did not repay my kindness, had no sense of gratitude, and made a waste of what I did. Listen well!

2.469 “Monks, in times past there lived in a certain mountain village a poor man who made his living by selling grass and wood. One day he ventured out on the mountain to cut down a tree and snow began to fall. Assailed by an icy wind and suffering from exposure in the bad weather, he took shelter inside a large rock cave.

2.470 “At that time the Bodhisattva had taken birth as a bear. Now even when bodhisattvas take a lower birth with their bodies, their minds do not descend to lower realms. They are great beings, compassionate, with a loving nature, who care deeply for beings and are committed to their welfare. Thus the bear did not wish anyone harm but subsisted only on roots and fruit.

2.471 “So it was that in that cave the bear had already amassed a stock of roots and fruit by the time that the man, driven by the wind, stumbled inside. Upon entering, the man saw him, was overcome with terror, and thought, ‘He has me now. I’m as good as dead! There’s no way for me to get out of his reach.’

2.472 “When the Bodhisattva saw the man, he thought to himself, ‘This man has been driven here by the wind, and is terrified.’ Recognizing this, out of compassion for him he spoke to him in his own tongue, saying, ‘Fear not, my friend. You need not be afraid of me.’ Then the Bodhisattva sheltered the man with his own body, and provided him with roots and fruit. He continued to shelter the man with his own body for seven days.

2.473 “After he had sustained him with roots and fruit like this for seven days and the bad weather had passed, the Bodhisattva instructed him, ‘Human, return to your home. Don’t tell anyone I am here, for I have many enemies, and someone is sure to come and kill me for meat.’ Having said this the Bodhisattva set the man outside, and the man returned to his mountain village carrying a load of wood.

2.474 “Now there in the mountain village, two hunters were out in pursuit of deer. When they saw the man carrying his load of wood, they said, ‘Here this man comes after spending seven days on the mountainside, away from the village—where has he been these seven days? What has he been eating?’

2.475 “So they put their questions to him. He told his story to the two hunters in great detail, and right away they said to him, ‘Show us where the bear is, and we’ll kill it. Then we’ll give you your fair share of the bear meat.’

2.476 “The man thought, ‘While it’s true that for seven days the bear protected me and did me no harm, there’s also not a thing to eat in my house, and if I lead these two men to the bear, everyone in my family will be able to eat for many days.’ So he said to the two men, ‘Very well, you two—I’ll show you where the bear is.’

2.477 “After he showed the animal in the cave to the two hunters, they both shot the bear with poisoned arrows, and the searing pain of death’s approach

overwhelmed the Bodhisattva. Knowing well that he was going to die, he spoke in verse:

- 2.478 “I kept to myself in a narrow crevasse—
Whom did I rob then, and of what?
I made my meals of grass, roots, and fruit.
I did no harm to anyone.
- 2.479 “‘But now it’s time and death draws near
And there is nothing I can do,
For be it bliss or be it pain,
All that is, is karma’s fruit.’
- 2.480 “After the two men killed the bear, they skinned him and divided the meat into three parts. They said to the man, ‘Here, you can take your share.’ The man heard them and held out his hands. But when he said, ‘Give it here,’ both his hands fell off onto the ground.
- 2.481 “At the sight of this the two hunters screamed, ‘Aiiieee! What is this?’
“ ‘For seven days,’ the man explained, ‘I faced wind and bad weather, and that bear sheltered me with his own body, sustaining me with roots and fruit. It is because of my ingratitude and refusal to repay his kindness that I have met with such results.’
- 2.482 “Upon hearing this, the two hunters were immediately overcome with despair, and thought, ‘This was no ordinary being. How could we eat this flesh that is steeped in such mercy? It is worthy of veneration.’
- 2.483 “In those days the world was adorned by the presence of a buddha, and the hunters took the meat to his monastery. When they arrived at the monastery, they offered the meat to the saṅgha. Laying eyes on it, one arhat thought, ‘This meat is steeped in the mercy of a bodhisattva of our fortunate eon.’ Recognizing this, he said to the monks, ‘Lords, this meat is steeped in the mercy

of a bodhisattva of our good eon. It is worthy of veneration. Let us offer our respect!’ Having said this, he spoke this verse:

- 2.484 “ ‘This great, fortunate beast
Bears the yoke of a bodhisattva.
Endowed with great compassion,
He is worthy of worship in the triple world.’
- 2.485 “After the arhat had spoken these words, he, the monks, and the two hunters cremated the flesh, then built a reliquary stūpa for the remains, made a large offering to it, and departed.
“O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that bear then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that man then is now Devadatta. And that time as well he did not repay my kindness, nor have a sense or gratitude, but made a waste of what I did.”



The First Story of the Bear

Salvatore Arnold De Grande / 4 years old

13. ii The Second Story of the Bear

2.486 *This story begins with a narrative similar to the previous story.*

2.487 The monks addressed the Blessed One: “Lord, Devadatta has not repaid your kindness, has no sense of gratitude, and makes a waste of what you have done.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, he did not repay my kindness, had no sense of gratitude, and made a waste of what I did. Listen well!

2.488 “Monks, in times past there was a certain mountain village where there lived a poor man who made his living by selling grass and wood. One day, he ventured into the forest to cut down a tree and a lion began to stalk him. In fear he scrambled up the tree, and he found a bear sitting there who had already climbed up because he too was afraid of the lion. When the man saw him he was doubly afraid and thought, ‘I’m safe from the threat of the lion, but now this one might cause me harm.’ That bear, however, was a bodhisattva of this fortunate eon.

2.489 “Now even when bodhisattvas take a lower birth with their bodies, their minds do not descend to lower realms. The Bodhisattva saw him and thought, ‘This man is terrified.’

“Recognizing this, in compassion for him he spoke to him in his own tongue, saying, ‘Fear not, my friend. You need not have any fear of me.’ The Bodhisattva stretched out his paw, drew him further up, and sheltered him with his own body.

2.490 “Then the Bodhisattva said to him, ‘You should know that this lion is hostile, and wishes to attack and kill us. So when I go to sleep, you protect me, and when you are sleeping, I will protect you. If we both protect one another, we’ll stay safe.’

“ ‘Ok,’ the man said, and he rested, making a

pillow of the Bodhisattva’s lap.

2.491 “As the man was sleeping, the lion, king of beasts, said to the Bodhisattva, ‘Humans have no sense of gratitude. Give the man to me! After I eat him, I shall be on my way. Once I’m gone, you’re free to go wherever you please.’

2.492 “The Bodhisattva replied, ‘I cannot forsake those who come to me for refuge. I can relinquish my own life, but I cannot forsake those who come to me for refuge.’ Just then the man awoke, and the Bodhisattva said, ‘Human, while you were sleeping I protected you. Now as I sleep, please do the same.’ Then the Bodhisattva made a pillow of the man’s lap and went to sleep.

2.493 “As the Bodhisattva was sleeping, the lion said to the man, ‘Human, give the bear to me! After I eat him, I shall be on my way. Once I’m gone, you’re free to go wherever you please. If you don’t, after I’ve gone the bear is going to kill you anyway.’

“The man thought, ‘What the lion is saying is true.’ Squandering his life to come, his heart devoid of compassion, he heaved the bear out of the tree. As the bear plummeted from the tree, he spoke these verses:

2.494 “ ‘Such misery! Of all worldly beings,
Those without Dharma one should fear most.
For among the wicked, they are the ones
Who would harm even their friends.’

2.495 “No sooner had he struck the ground than the lion, king of beasts, killed and ate him, then departed from the region.

“When the man heard the bear’s words he was filled with great regret. ‘Oh no! What have I done!’ he thought. ‘When I was sleeping, he served me so well. He protected my life, and I betrayed him!’ This drove him mad, and he ran all about, crying:

2.496 “ ‘Such misery! Of all worldly beings,

Those without Dharma one should fear most.
For among the wicked, they are the ones
Who would harm even their friends.’

2.497 “His brothers brought him to a doctor and asked,
‘What has happened to him?’

“It is not a ghost that has caused this disturbance,’
he replied, ‘I cannot heal him.’

“In a solitary place not far from their mountain
village there was a sage who was clairvoyant, a
person of great miracles and great power. The
brothers took the man, showed him to the sage, and
asked, ‘What has driven him mad?’ The sage then
told the brothers the story in detail.

2.498 “ ‘He betrayed someone, and that’s why he went
mad,’ he concluded. He taught the man the Dharma
in such a way that he could return his mind to its
ordinary state and then said, ‘You betrayed him—
alas! It’s not right to treat another being who did
such good for you the way you did.’ Having spoken
thus, the sage recited these verses:

2.499 “ ‘Seated, lying, standing, walking—
Whatever the occasion be—
No happiness is to be found
In the betrayal of a friend.

2.500 “ ‘He spoke verses of compassion
Even as he went tumbling down.
For this, ill-minded man, you’ll burn
In flames, like the Khāṇḍava Forest.

2.501 “ ‘Because of the frightful things you’ve done,
The sorrow and suffering you have wrought,
When you pass on to the next world
A life of malady alone awaits you.

2.502 “ ‘You’ll be terrified at the things you hear
As you sob in the horrid Shrieking Hell—
Episodes of tremendous torment,

Iterations of every ill.

2.503 “ ‘Unbearable, your wicked deed—
Whatever did he do to you?
Among every type of wicked folk,
Some go so far as to harm their friends.

2.504 “ ‘Remember the terrible sin that you,
Devoid of Dharma, chose to commit.
How could you have done this wicked deed?
Not the bear nor the lion should you forget.

2.505 “ ‘You’ve so little sense, you failed to comprehend
How one should act toward a friend.
Through killing, you will meet your murder.
By malice, you will meet your foe.

2.506 “ ‘When you encountered a terrifying lion,
The bear offered you his service for the duration.
He protected you from falling,
A favor you did not return.

2.507 “ ‘Those who teach the Dharma say,
“Betraying a friend is the vilest fetter.”
So when you die—you of rotten mind—
You’ll take rebirth in the hells.’

2.508 “Having heard the sage’s rebuke, the man regretted
his actions and went forth in the presence of the
very same sage.

“O monks, what do you think? I am the one who
was that bear then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva.
The one who was that man then is none other than
Devadatta. At that time too, neither did he repay my
kindness, nor did he have any sense of gratitude,
but rather made a waste of what I did.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Small Person with a Curving Spine*



The Second Story of the Bear

Bodhi Hildt & Pema-Gyana Hildt
/ 4.5 & 7 years old

◆
Part Two (14)

The Story of
Small Person with
a Curving Spine

◆
a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

14 The Story of Small Person with a Curving Spine

2.509 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain poor brahmin who was destitute of means and made his living begging for food. One day his wife became pregnant, and after she conceived the brahmin did not receive very much in the way of alms. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was gaunt and emaciated and had a poor complexion, an ugly face, and a crooked spine.

2.510 They celebrated his birth with whatever they could scrounge together and asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since this child is very small, and has a curved spine, his name will be Small Person with a Curving Spine.” They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids.

2.511 One day, this being’s past actions ripened such that his mother’s breast ran dry. After that his mother nourished him with cow and buffalo milk, but these too proved scarce. Now it is impossible and out of the question for a being in their final existence to die an untimely death. Thus, they could occasionally obtain cow and buffalo milk, and he did receive some modest nourishment.

2.512 When he had grown, his father said to him, “Child, our entire livelihood consists only of

begging. We have neither fields to plow, nor any business to conduct. So go now and make your living from whatever food you can beg.”

2.513 “As you wish,” the child replied, and he began to beg. But even when he would spend a long time walking all about, he never found more than was enough to barely keep himself alive.

2.514 Then at a certain point the young man found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, so he approached a monk and asked him, “Lord, if appropriate, I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

2.515 “Are your parents still alive?” asked the monk. “They are,” he replied. “Have you informed your parents about this?” “I have not, lord.”

2.516 “Young man, the buddhas and their disciples neither lead novices to go forth nor confer full ordination without the parents’ permission,” the monk told him. “Go and inform your parents, then come back here. This will make things easier for you later on.”

2.517 So Small Person with a Curving Spine heeded the monk’s advice, approached his parents, and said, “Mother, Father, I am asking for your kind permission to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

2.518 His parents thought, “Until now, his suffering knew no equal. The two of us have also suffered so. All it would take to bring him happiness is for him to go forth. Moreover, he’ll be able to achieve happiness not just in this life but in the next as well.” With these thoughts in mind, they said, “Of course, child. Should you achieve any special attainments, please demonstrate them to us.”

“As you wish,” he replied.

2.519 After receiving permission from his parents, Small Person with a Curving Spine went on to the

garden of Prince Jeta. There he approached the monk and told him, “Lord, I’ve informed both my parents. Now that my parents have given me their consent to go forth, Lord, if permitted, I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

2.520 Great persons do that which is of benefit to others, so the monk led him to go forth as a novice and conferred on him full ordination. The monk provided him with two or three days’ worth of food, and then instructed him, “My child, one deer cannot feed another. Go then for alms to your home region, the country frequented by your father.”

2.521 Heeding the words of his preceptor, he would occasionally go begging for alms. Sometimes, however, he would also try to eat food by seating himself in the rows of the saṅgha, but as the food was being distributed, his past actions would ripen such that the food and drink would run out just as it was to be distributed to him, or else some other intervening complication would arise. Even when they then returned, he would be passed over, and the food would be distributed to those behind him. Thus, even while seated there in the rows, sometimes he would get food and other times he would not.

2.522 When the monks heard about this, they asked the Blessed One about it. The Blessed One replied, “Monks, let there be a rule established for monks sitting behind. Those sitting behind should not take their food until those in front of them have taken theirs. If for some reason another person is passed over, they should not eat until that person has received a share. If, moreover, one person was not able to receive everything, the others should divide their food with that person. To do so is good. To do otherwise is an infraction. Those who commit such an infraction will take alms in service

of others when they go for all alms.”

2.523 Then one day Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine swept the Blessed One’s fragrant chamber, and that day he received good food and drink. He also received good food and drink as he continued sweeping the Blessed One’s fragrant chamber for the next two or three days. As a result, his body became strong, resilient, and capable.

2.524 He cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

2.525 When he achieved arhatship, his past actions ripened such that on that day a different monk swept the Blessed One’s fragrant chamber. He was walking along carrying a broom, thinking, “I’m off to sweep the Blessed One’s fragrant chamber,” and when he saw that another monk had already swept it, he thought, “I may now find myself going hungry.” So in the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went for alms in Śrāvastī. But even though he did, he did not receive anything, and that day he went hungry.

2.526 On the following day as well Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine was walking along carrying a broom, thinking, “I’m off to sweep the Blessed One’s fragrant chamber,” when he saw that another monk had already swept it. Thinking, “Today I may go hungry a second time,” he returned to his hut.

2.527 There he heard that a householder had invited the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to take their food at his house, and he thought, “What need is there for me to go for alms? Now I can go and take my food at the same house where the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks are going to eat.” So he sat down in a cross-legged position and began to meditate.

2.528 In the meantime, some important matters came up for the householder, so he invited the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to take the midday meal at his house a bit early, and with his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome foods. Afterward, the Blessed One gave a Dharma teaching for the people of the house and returned to the monastery.

2.529 Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine noticed that the day had become warm, so he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and set out carrying his alms bowl. The Blessed One, traveling on one side of the road, entered the garden of Prince Jeta, and Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, traveling on the other side of the road, went to the householder’s home. When he arrived, he realized that the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks had already taken their food and departed. So it was that he went hungry a second day.

2.530 The following day another monk swept the Blessed One’s fragrant chamber. Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine was walking along carrying a broom, thinking, “I’m off to sweep the Blessed One’s fragrant chamber,” when he saw that another monk had already swept it. At that the thought occurred to him, “Today I may go hungry a third time,” and he returned to his hut.

2.531 After he was home, word reached Venerable Ānanda that Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine had gone hungry for two days already. Hearing this, in concern for him he got

in touch with one of their patrons, then came to Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine and said, “Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, today you should go and eat at the home of such-and-such a householder.” Thereupon Venerable Ānanda donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī.

2.532 But, after having waited such a long time, when Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went to the home of that householder, his past actions ripened in such a way that some important matters came up for the householder, who in his distraction left for another village without mentioning anything to the people of his house. Having gone there and not received any food, Venerable Small One with a Curving Spine went hungry a third day.

2.533 Word reached Venerable Ānanda that Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine had now gone hungry for three days, and he thought, “I myself will bring alms for him.” He went to Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine and said, “Don’t worry, Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine! Tomorrow I shall have food for you,” and he returned to his hut.

2.534 The next day, carrying two alms bowls, he set out for Śrāvastī. After begging alms there, he ate some himself. Intending the rest for Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, he was carrying them to the garden of Prince Jeta when Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine’s past actions ripened such that dogs appeared along the way, and they stole the food and ate it. Venerable Ānanda thought, “By the time I make it back to Śrāvastī, it will be past noon.” So he returned to the monastery, and on that day Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine went hungry a fourth time.

2.535 Then word reached Venerable Maudgalyāyana

that Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine had now gone hungry for four days, and he thought, “Tomorrow I shall bring him food,” and he returned to his hut. The next day, carrying two alms bowls, he went for alms in Śrāvastī. After begging alms there, he ate some himself. Intending the rest for Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, he was carrying them to the garden of Prince Jeta when Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine’s past actions ripened such that crows appeared along the way, and they stole the food and ate it. Then Venerable Maudgalyāyana thought, “By the time I make it back to Śrāvastī, it will be past noon.” So he returned to the monastery, and on that day Venerable Small One with a Curving Spine went hungry a fifth time.

2.536 Then word reached Venerable Śāriputra that Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine had now gone without food for five days, and he thought, “Tomorrow I shall bring him food.” He went to Venerable Small One with a Curving Spine and said, “Don’t worry, Venerable Small One with a Curving Spine! Tomorrow I shall have food for you,” and returned to his hut.

2.537 The next day, carrying two alms bowls, he went for alms in Śrāvastī. After begging alms there, he ate some himself. Intending the rest for Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, he was carrying them to the garden of Prince Jeta when Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine’s past actions ripened such that nonhuman spirits appeared along the way, and they made the food disappear. Then Venerable Śāriputra thought, “By the time I make it back to Śrāvastī, it will be past noon.” So he said nothing, and on that day Venerable Small One with a Curving Spine went without food a sixth time.

2.538 Again Venerable Śāriputra thought, “Tomorrow I shall bring him food.” He went to Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine and said, “Don’t

worry, Venerable Small One with a Curving Spine! Tomorrow I shall have food for you,” and returned to his hut. The next day, carrying two alms bowls, he set out for Śrāvastī. After begging alms there, he ate some himself. Intending the rest for Venerable Small One with a Curving Spine, he was carrying them to Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine’s hut when Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine’s past actions ripened such that on the hut neither doors nor windows were to be found.

2.539 Then by means of a miracle Venerable Śāriputra manifested a door, went inside, and said, “Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, rise now and wash your face.”

“I have already washed my face,” he replied. Then Venerable Śāriputra immediately set the alms bowls and water sieve to one side and placed the container of water in Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine’s hands.

2.540 After setting out stands for the alms bowls, he took one up in his own hands and said, “Here now, take your alms bowl.”

2.541 At that very moment, the bowl plunged down into the earth, descending all the way to the base of the universe. Venerable Śāriputra extended his arm like an elephant’s trunk, drawing up the alms bowl and placing it in his left hand. Then he gave it a blessing with his right hand and said, “Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, please eat.”

2.542 He said, “I shall,” but as he lifted a single morsel of food from the bowl, the morsel actually disappeared. Every morsel of food that he took from the bowl disappeared in just the same way.

2.543 Then Venerable Śāriputra took up a morsel in his own right hand and tried to put it in Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine’s mouth and his mouth disappeared—he became like a mound of grass without an opening. Venerable Śāriputra’s miraculous powers could not make his mouth

reappear, and it grew to be past noon.

2.544 After noontime his mouth became as it was before. Then Venerable Śāriputra asked, “Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine, what is tormenting you so unbearably?”

“Lord Śāriputra,” he replied, “I am tormented by thirst. Please give me some water to drink!”

2.545 Venerable Śāriputra filled a alms bowl with water, and Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine picked it up, lifted it to his mouth and said, “Something to drink!” Then, due to his past actions, human beings appeared and began dumping ashes into the bowl.

2.546 When he saw this, he thought, “All that I am experiencing certainly comes from the actions I myself have committed and accumulated. There is no doubting their arrival, for I have put the conditions in place and accumulated the causes. Therefore they cannot ripen or be experienced in the aggregates, elements, or sense bases of another.”

2.547 With that he quaffed the ash-gruel, and on that basis he passed into parinirvāṇa amid a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning. Afterward, his fellow practitioners of the holy life venerated his remains. They built a reliquary stūpa and venerated it with flowers, burning sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones.

2.548 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did Venerable Small Person with a Curving Spine take that ripened into his being hungry and bereft, that he went hungry for seven days, and that upon eating ash-gruel he passed into parinirvāṇa?”

2.549 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “in his previous lives he himself collected the causes and put the conditions in place. The actions he committed and accumulated are now returning as certainly as the tides. Since it was he himself who committed and accumulated them, who else is there to experience them?”

2.550 “Monks, the actions he committed and accumulated did not ripen in the external element of earth. They did not ripen into the element of water, nor the element of fire, nor the element of wind. The actions he committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but his own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

2.551 “When the time arrives—and even if
A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act
That sentient beings amass.

2.552 “Monks, in times gone by, in a certain mountain village there lived a householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

2.553 “They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

2.554 “That householder delighted in giving. He made merit and gave gifts at his home to ascetics, brahmins, practitioners, mendicants, the poor, and the bereft. Then one day the householder died.

After his death, as his wife grieved her spouse, she continued to give gifts as had been their custom. Thereupon her son said to her, ‘Mother, don’t pare our house down to nothing! I won’t be able to run the household as father did.’

2.555 “Many times he tried to stop her like this, but it was no use. Finally the young man thought, ‘Whatever I do, it’s no use. I shall kill her!’ So he locked up his mother in the confines of the house and deprived her of food and drink.

“She pleaded with him, ‘My child, please let me go! I won’t share with anyone ever again! I can’t stay in this house forever!’

2.556 “ ‘While you yet live, I cannot release you,’ the young man replied. So he locked up his mother in the confines of the house, depriving her of food, and kept her barricaded there for seven days until the people of his house told their relatives, and the relatives came and let her go.

2.557 “After nearly losing her life in the confines of the house, she begged her son for water. The young man thought, ‘This is sure to kill her,’ and handed her ash-gruel. Her body was very weak, so when she drank the ash-gruel it caused her death.

2.558 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that young man then is none other than Small Person with a Curving Spine now. The acts of leaving his mother to go hungry and killing her with ash-gruel ripened into his being cooked by hell beings for hundreds upon hundreds of eons, and ripened such that after he was released from that fate, wherever he was born, he went hungry until he drank ash-gruel and died.

2.559 “Now that he had come into what would be his final birth, his final body, his final dwelling place, he continued to go hungry until he achieved arhatship. In the end, the same condition, eating ash-gruel, caused him to pass into parinirvāṇa.

“He committed another act as well, an act that ripened into starvation and great suffering for him.

2.560 Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in Vārāṇasī.

2.561 “One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to twins. At the elaborate feast celebrating their birth they named them according to their clan. They reared them on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when they grew up, they found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, asked for their parents’ permission, and went forth. Having gone forth, they studied the Tripiṭaka and became proponents of the Dharma with all the eloquence of their wisdom and freedom. They were inseparable, sticking together wherever they went.

2.562 “One of the two, having acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick, thought, ‘How wonderful! With all the profit and acclaim I’ve gained, I can see to the welfare of my fellow practitioners of the conduct leading to liberation. Let me render service to the twofold saṅgha in accord with the Dharma.’ He began to render service to the saṅgha in accord with the Dharma, providing provisions such as clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick for all their needs.

2.563 “His brother thought, ‘This is my sibling, my friend. If indeed our virtuous works depend on one another, then his desire to render service to the saṅgha will create obstacles for my own virtuous work.’

“Thinking this, he said to him, ‘Brother, I don’t want to throw away my own virtuous work to

provide for the saṅgha.’

2.564 “His brother replied, ‘Everything I’ve needed has come to me with almost no trouble at all. Yet my fellow practitioners of pure conduct are sorely lacking things they need. How could I not wish to help them?’ Thus, although he tried to stop his brother from helping many times, it was no use.

2.565 “Finally he thought, ‘So long as he yet lives, there will be no stopping this. Oh, but let me devise some means to take him to another country! That will stop him.’ With this in mind, he devised a way to lead his brother to another country, and there they stayed.

2.566 “Over time their absence became an obstacle to the livelihood of the other monks, and while they were away, his brother heard the monks were in dire straits and right away said to his sibling, ‘I shall go there and bring the monks the things they need!’

2.567 “To this his brother replied, ‘Brother, those monks are just like anguished spirits, dependent on others for absolutely everything. Will you throw away your own virtuous work, then, to travel there?’

“You must confess the mistake you’ve made by speaking harshly to me. Otherwise you’re sure to meet with the frightful results of what you’ve done.’

2.568 “He was flooded with regret, and after practicing the holy life all his life, at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I not meet with the results of the act of speaking harshly to fellow practitioners of the holy life, and of creating obstacles to their livelihood. While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have been of service to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha, and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.569 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was

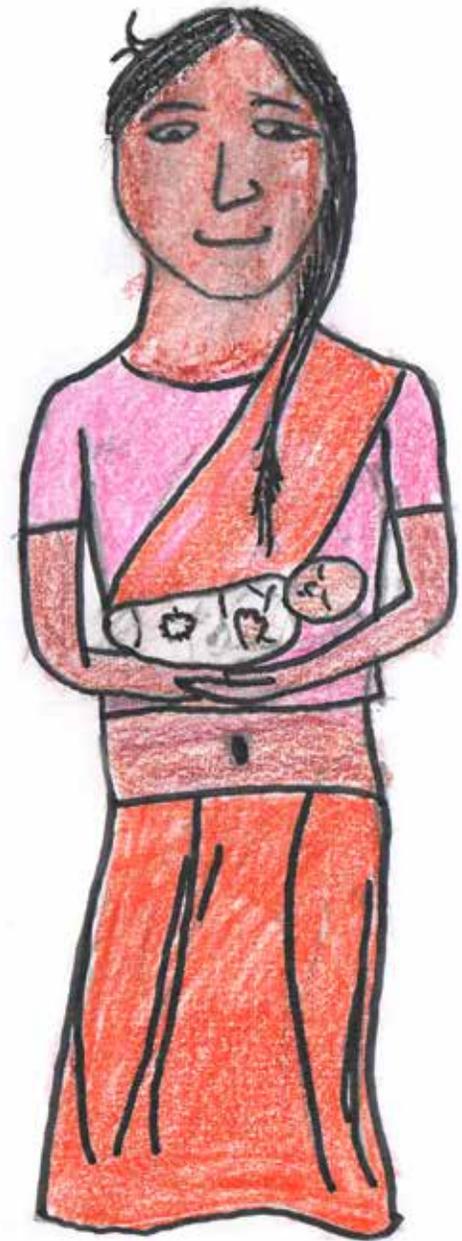
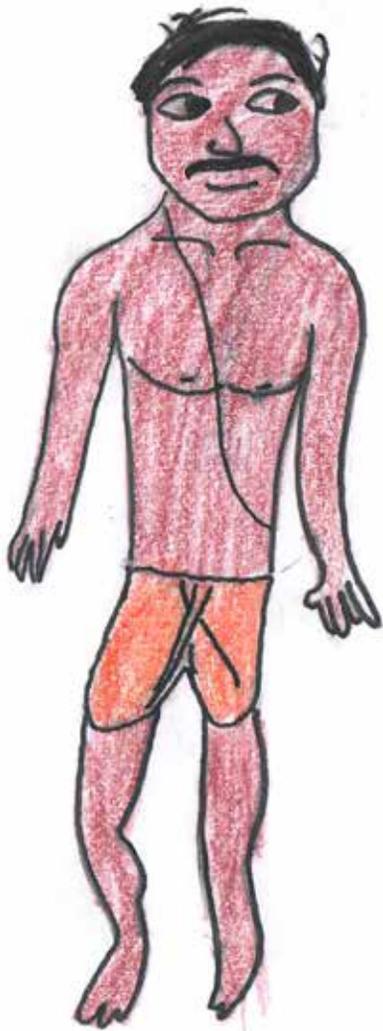
that monk then is none other than Small Person with a Curving Spine. The act of speaking harshly to fellow practitioners of the holy life ripened such that for five hundred lifetimes he took rebirth as an anguished spirit. Once he had died and moved on from that state, that same act also ripened such that, wherever he was born, he went hungry and died. Now, having come into what would be his final birth before achieving arhatship, the act of having gone hungry ripened into his passing into parinirvāṇa.

2.570 “At that time he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

2.571 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Rākṣasa*



The Story of Small Person with a Curving Spine

Dungsey Akasha Vajra Rinpoche / 10 years old

Part Two (15)

The
Rākṣasa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

15 The Rākṣasa

- 2.572 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived in the sewage bogs outside Śrāvastī a certain rākṣasa. His head was bald like that of a monk. Where any hair should have been, his entire body teemed instead with parasites as tiny as the tip of a needle, each of which fed on him, causing him unbearable pain. He dragged himself back and forth across the sewage bog, tormented by hunger and eating filth. In unbearable pain, he would reel from one side of the bog to the other, stirring up all the filthy sewage.
- 2.573 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.
- 2.574 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the

lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

- 2.575 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.
- 2.576 Then the Blessed One thought, “The time has come to issue a prophecy of this rākṣasa’s awakening. Through him I shall guide a great many disciples.” With this in mind, in order to guide them the Blessed One transformed Śrāvastī such that it was filled with the terrible stench of the sewage bog.
- 2.577 The people of Śrāvastī were mystified, and, impelled by their previous roots of virtue, they wondered, “Where is that terrible stench coming from?” Thousands upon thousands of them gathered, hoping for a spectacle. The people followed the terrible stench out toward the sewage bog, where they saw the filthy rākṣasa living there, dragging himself back and forth.
- 2.578 Looking at him, they thought, “A being like this!
And such suffering! What is all this?”
Thereupon the Blessed One thought, “Every one of my disciples from Śrāvastī has now gathered,” so in the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms

bowl, he set out for Śrāvastī accompanied by a group of monks.

2.579 When they came to the sewage bog, the people saw the Blessed Buddha in the distance, and, upon seeing him, those without faith said, “They say the mendicant Gautama takes no joy in spectacles, but even he has to stop and stare.”

2.580 Those who had faith in him said, “Through this being the Blessed One will give an extraordinary Dharma teaching, no doubt.” They prepared a seat for the Blessed One, saying, “This way, Blessed One—if you please! Welcome, Blessed One, very good! O Blessed One, please have a seat on this cushion we have prepared for you!”

2.581 Then the Blessed One took his place on the seat prepared for him, and thought, “The best thing would be for me to enter into a meditation such that this rākṣasa can recall his former lives and converse with me in a human tongue.” So the Blessed One entered into a meditation such that the rākṣasa recalled his former lives and could converse with him in a human tongue.

2.582 Then the Blessed One spoke to him, saying, “My friend, have you studied the Tripiṭaka, the ‘three baskets’ of scripture?”

“Yes, Blessed One, I have studied the Tripiṭaka.”

2.583 “My friend, are you then a Tripiṭaka master?”

“Yes, Blessed One, I am a Tripiṭaka master.”

“Oh friend, are you a Tripiṭaka master?”

“Yes, Sugata, I am a Tripiṭaka master.”

2.584 The Blessed One asked, “Are you now undergoing the repercussions of your misconduct of body, speech, and mind?”

“Blessed One, this hideous experience is indeed the result that has ripened from my misconduct of body, speech, and mind. Sugata, the experience is hideous.”

“Who guided you to such nonvirtue?”

“My own mind,” he replied.

2.585 Now, hearing this, the people wondered, “Who is

this being who recalls his former lives and converses with the Blessed One in a human tongue?” Since the ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult to reach, they were not able to put their question to the Blessed One, so they asked Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, who is this being that recalls his former lives and converses with the Blessed One in a human tongue?”

2.586 “Put your question to the Blessed One,” Venerable Ānanda replied.

“The ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult to reach. We cannot ask the Blessed Buddha ourselves,” they said.

Venerable Ānanda replied, “Though the ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult to reach for me as well, out of compassion for you I shall ask.”

2.587 Then Venerable Ānanda drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms together, and asked him, “Lord, who is this being that recalls his former lives, converses with the Blessed One in a human tongue, and suffers in the throes of such agony?”

2.588 The Blessed One explained to Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, this being is one who committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again. The nonvirtuous actions he committed were manifold.

2.589 “Ānanda, in times gone by, when the one who transcended the levels of the listeners and solitary buddhas, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Greatest of All was in the world, there was a certain householder who found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Greatest of All, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts.

2.590 “Then he thought, ‘Let me give up living at home to go forth in the doctrine of the totally and

completely awakened Buddha Greatest of All.’ He gave up household affairs and went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Greatest of All.

2.591 “Having gone forth, he studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of his wisdom and freedom. Having acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick, he thought, ‘How wonderful! With all the profit and acclaim I’ve gained, I can see to the welfare of fellow practitioners of the holy life.’ Then he called together all the benefactors and patrons, and began to offer his respectful service to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.

2.592 “At that time, on Camel’s Hump Mountain, there was a certain saṅgha of seventy-seven thousand on the path of learning and on the path of no more to learn who made pledges to stay there during the rains. ‘We should have chosen a steward before we pledged to come stay here during the rains,’ they thought. ‘Who is there who could support our saṅgha?’ Then the idea came to them, ‘That Tripiṭaka master has great merit, and is widely known to have acquired provisions such as clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick. Let’s encourage him to support us in our pledge to remain here during the rains.’

2.593 “They went to him and said, ‘Lord, we seventy-seven thousand monks wish to keep our pledge to remain in retreat on Camel’s Hump Mountain during the rains. We would like to encourage you to provide for the saṅgha in accord with the Dharma. With your help we can keep our pledge to stay here during the rains.’

“ ‘Don’t worry,’ the Tripiṭaka master replied. ‘I shall provide for all your needs.’

2.594 “Upon hearing this, the monks went up onto the mountain, entrusting that Tripiṭaka master alone to help them keep their pledge to stay there during

the rains. Then the Tripiṭaka master thought, ‘I told the monks they needn’t worry. But there’s no reason for me to do anything when I can simply call upon all the benefactors and patrons, and they will provide for all the saṅgha’s needs.’ With this in mind, in the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out for local village.

2.595 “At that time five hundred merchants were arriving from upon the great ocean, having just completed their voyage. As the merchants were unpacking their wares not far from the mountain, they spotted the monks gathering on top of the mountain, and they were delighted to see them.

“The serving monk approached them, and when they saw him they asked, ‘Lord, where are you going?’

2.596 “ ‘We have seventy-seven thousand monks staying on the mountainside,’ the Tripiṭaka master replied. ‘They’re depending on me to help them keep their pledge to stay there during the rains. Thus for their sake I am going to call upon all the benefactors and patrons.’

2.597 “ ‘Don’t worry, lord,’ said the merchants. ‘We will provide for all their needs.’ With that they offered him a great deal of gold and silver, and said, ‘Lord, until now you’ve provided for all the monks’ needs. If all this gold and silver is enough, good. If it’s not sufficient, we will offer as much gold and silver as you need, and after the rains have ended, we will offer provisions then as well.’

2.598 “ ‘As you wish,’ the serving monk replied. He returned to the monastery bearing all the gold and silver, but as he looked at all the gold and silver, he began to feel very attached to it. So he hid all the gold and silver, and then supplied the monks with only very poor food and drink.

2.599 “One day the monks told the serving monk, ‘Lord, we cannot sustain ourselves on such poor food and drink.’

“‘This is all I can do for you,’ he replied. ‘I cannot do any more. If you cannot live from this, you should call upon your benefactors and patrons for your livelihood.’

2.600 “After he said this, the monks went to the merchants and asked, ‘Are you able to provide food and drink for seventy-seven thousand monks?’

“The merchants replied, ‘Lords, we have already offered a great deal of gold and silver to the noble one who is to provide for you. We told him, “If it’s enough, then very well. If it is not sufficient, then we shall offer as much gold and silver as you need.” Why then has he been supplying you with such poor food and drink?’

2.601 “The merchants went to the Tripiṭaka master and said, ‘Lord, didn’t we say that if this gold and silver was enough, good, and that if it was not enough, we would offer more gold and silver? Why then did you supply the monks with such poor food and drink?’ This embarrassed the serving monk, and he immediately became angry. Never again would he be allowed to act as steward for the monks.

2.602 “Then the monks said to him, ‘Lord, we were depending on you to help us keep our pledge to stay on the mountain during the rains. Why then didn’t you do anything? Don’t you want to help provide other monks with the things they need ever again?’

“In anger he replied, ‘It was only by means of my faith that you were provided for—and now you wish to insult me? You’re better off eating excrement in a sewage bog!’

2.603 “The monks thought, ‘Even if this emotionally afflicted person, who has become so abased, speaks not another harsh word to us seventy-seven thousand on the paths of learning and no more to learn, still he will only deteriorate and decline. This is not good. Let us therefore say nothing more to him.’ With this thought, they said nothing more to him. In time the Tripiṭaka master came to regret what he had done, and asked forgiveness of the

monks.

“ ‘We forgive you,’ they said. ‘But your own actions will not forgive you.’

2.604 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Greatest of All then and became a Tripiṭaka master is none other than this rākṣasa. The act of speaking harshly to the seventy-seven thousand on the paths of learning and no more to learn ripened into his taking birth as an animal. Monks, from the time of the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Greatest of All until my own, he has died, transmigrated, and taken rebirth only as an animal, and in every birth he has attained a body just like this one and eaten excrement in a sewage bog.”

2.605 “Lord, when will this being be liberated from his suffering?” inquired the monks.

“Monks,” replied the Buddha, “five hundred buddhas will appear in this good eon, and after them, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Vairocana will be in the world. It is through his teaching that this being will be liberated from rebirth as an animal and achieve a human birth.

2.606 “After he goes forth in his teaching, he will commit the five heinous misdeeds. Then, having died, he will transmigrate and take rebirth as a hell being. As a hell being he will undergo suffering for hundreds of thousands of years.

2.607 “Once he has exhausted those terrible acts, he will again achieve a human birth. At that time, too, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Vairocana will be in the world. He will go forth in his teaching, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Renowned by all and possessed of great merit, he will acquire provisions such as clothes, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick. There he will become supreme among the exponents of the teachings. After acting for the benefit of many, he will pass beyond all sorrow

into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. Then his sufferings will come to an end.”

2.608 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha. With this accomplished, the Blessed One returned to the monastery.

2.609 *This concludes Part Two of The Hundred Deeds.*

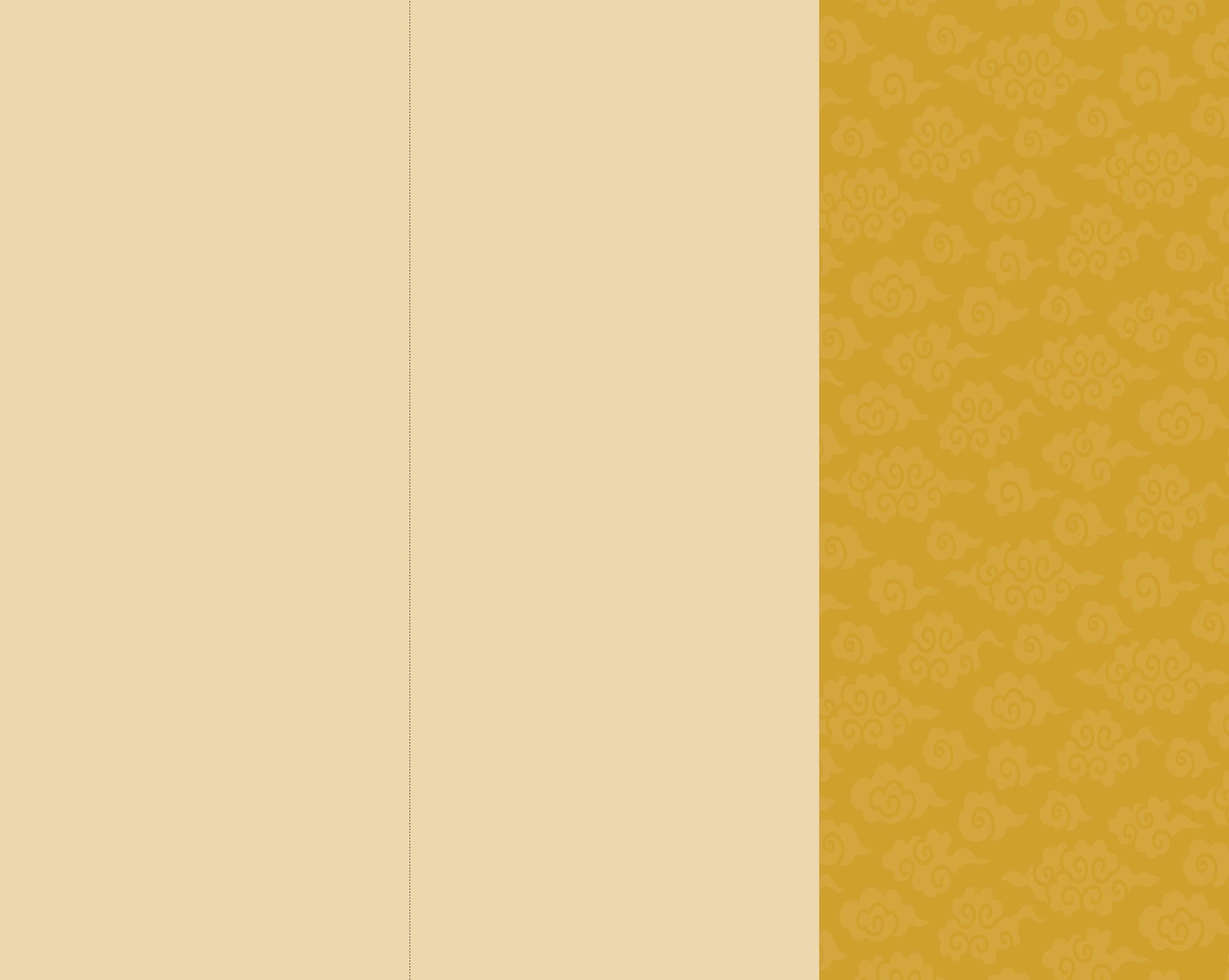
THE END

Next: *Part Three: The Story of Kacaṅkalā*



The Rākṣasa

Duke Wilkinson / 15 years old



The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་པ།
Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Part Three

1. The Story of Kacañkalā
 2. The Story of Kaineya
 3. The Betrothal of the
Bride: Two Stories
 3. i The First “Betrothal of the
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 8. The One Who Thought
He Saw His Son
 9. The Farmer
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 11. A Story about Kokālika
 12. The Tired Man
 13. Morsel
-

Part Three (1)

The Story of
Kacaṅkalā

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Story of Kacaṅkalā

3.2 When the Blessed One was staying in Otaḷā Forest in Otaḷā, one morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in the villages of Otaḷā. At that time there was a certain woman who had taken a pot and gone out for water. From a distance, she saw that the Blessed One was beautiful, pleasing, his senses were at peace, his heart at peace, and his mind absolutely serene. He was as shining and radiant as a golden pillar.

3.3 What is more, she perceived the Blessed One to be her own son. Laying her pot aside, she spread out her hands and approached the Blessed One, saying, “My son! My son!” But as she went to take the Blessed One in her arms, the monks hindered her from doing so. The Blessed One corrected the monks, saying, “Monks, do not hinder this woman. Monks, if you don’t let this woman take the Tathāgata in her arms, she will spew warm blood from her mouth and die.” The monks did not hinder her any further, and, after holding the Blessed One in her arms, she sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

3.4 The Blessed One directly apprehended her thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature, and taught her the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the woman destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of

stream entry right where she sat.

3.5 Having seen the truths, she rose from her seat, drew down the right shoulder of her upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms together, and implored him, “Blessed One, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

3.6 The Blessed One presented her to Mahāprajāpati Gautamī, who led her to go forth as a novice, conferred on her full ordination, and instructed her. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, she manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, her mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of her hands as like space itself. She became cool like wet sandalwood. Her insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. She achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. She had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. She became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

3.7 Then the Blessed One spoke of her greatness, saying, “Monks, this is the nun Kacaṅkalā—among my listener nuns, she is foremost of those who interpret the sūtras.”

The monks requested the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why thousands of women have seen the Blessed One, but never has anyone run to him from a distance like that.”

“Monks,” explained the Blessed One, “Kacaṅkalā was my mother for five hundred lifetimes. She saw me and ran to me because of these habitual tendencies.”

3.8 “Lord, if she was the Blessed One’s mother for five hundred lifetimes, why is she not your mother now?”

“Monks, there are two causes and two conditions for her not being my mother now,” the Blessed One replied. “First, Mahāmāyādevī prayed, ‘Oh, but let me become the mother of the Buddha!’ And I myself, in distress, also prayed, ‘May she who is my mother, in the future not be my mother.’”

3.9 “What distress did she cause the Blessed One?” they asked.

“Monks,” the Blessed One replied, “bodhisattvas delight in renunciation and love to give, and she continually created obstacles to my renunciation and charity. This is why she caused me distress.”

3.10 The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did the nun Kacaṅkalā take that ripened into her first being poor and then going forth only in her old age?”

“Bodhisattvas delight in renunciation and love to give,” the Blessed One explained, “and for a certain number of my lives she obstructed my renunciation and charity. That act ripened into her now being poor, and going forth only in her old age.”

3.11 “Lord, what action did the nun Kacaṅkalā take that ripened into the Blessed One declaring her the foremost among those who interpret the sūtras, and that she pleased and did not displease the Blessed One, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of her prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

3.12 “Lord, where did she make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, she went forth

in his teaching, and the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended her preceptor as foremost among those who interpret the sūtras.

3.13 “She practiced pure conduct all her life, and at the time of her death she prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. By this root of virtue, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as he commended my preceptor as foremost among those who interpret the sūtras, may the peerless Śākyamuni, King of the Śākyas, likewise commend me as foremost among those who interpret the sūtras.’”

3.14 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that nun then is none other than Kacaṅkalā now. At that time she practiced pure conduct all her life, and at the time of her death she prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as he commended my preceptor as foremost among those who interpret the sūtras, may the peerless Śākyamuni, King of the Śākyas, likewise commend me as foremost among those who interpret the sūtras.’”

3.15 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions,

and manifested arhatship, and that I commended her as foremost among those who interpret the sūtras.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Kaineya*



Part Three (2)

The Story of
Kaineya

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Story of Kaineya

3.16 When the Blessed One was staying at the Domicile of Ghosts in the Adumā region, one morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Adumā village. After receiving his alms in Adumā village, he ate his meal, and since he no longer took food in the later part of the day, he washed his feet outside the Domicile of Ghosts, and entered the grounds to meditate. In the meantime there was a thunderstorm, and lightning struck in Adumā. The people there were chattering anxiously about how it killed four bulls and two brothers: one a householder, the other a peasant farmer.

3.17 As evening fell, the Blessed One rose from his meditation and emerged from the Domicile of Ghosts and lingered there, walking among the shadows on the grounds of the Domicile of Ghosts. Thereupon one of the great many people there got up and walked toward the Blessed One. After approaching him, he touched his head to the Blessed One's feet and fell in behind him, that he might also walk where the Blessed One had walked.

3.18 The Blessed One asked the man, "My friend! What are the people of Adumā village chattering about so anxiously?"

"Lord," said the man, "there was a thunderstorm, and lightning struck in Adumā. Everyone is chattering anxiously about how it killed four bulls and two brothers: one a householder, the other a peasant farmer. Did the Blessed One not hear the

thunder roar and the lightning strike?"

3.19 "No, I didn't hear it," the Blessed One replied.

"How is that?" the man asked. "Was the Blessed One sleeping?"

The Blessed One said, "No, I was not asleep at all."

3.20 "If the Blessed One has faculties of perception and wasn't asleep," he said, "then how did he not hear the thunder roar and the lightning strike?"

"I have faculties of perception, and I was not sleeping," the Blessed One replied, "but I did not hear the thunder roar nor the lightning strike."

3.21 Now the man had to think this over. "Hmm," he thought, "although he has faculties of perception and was not sleeping, still he did not hear the thunder roar nor the lightning strike. How wonderful that the Blessed One can abide so peacefully in meditation." This made the man very happy, and in his happiness he made offerings to the Blessed One.

3.22 At that time in the forests of the Adumā region there lived a certain sage named Kaineya who was clairvoyant and had a retinue of five hundred. Not far away in another forest lived his sister's son, a sage by the name of Śaila, who also had a retinue of five hundred. Both sages also spent time on the banks of Lake Mandākinī, traveling there now and again to spend the day.

3.23 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their

buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

3.24 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

3.25 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

3.26 The Blessed One thought, “If I give a Dharma teaching to the four great kings there, I will tame the sages Kaineya and Śaila, so I will give a Dharma teaching to the four great kings there on the banks of Lake Mandākinī and tame the sages Kaineya and Śaila with little difficulty.” The Blessed One then had a thought about the world: “The four great kings can understand my intention, and when they understand it and think, ‘The Blessed One intends to give a Dharma teaching to us on the banks of Lake Mandākinī,’ they will agree to attend.”

3.27 And indeed, the four great kings directly

apprehended the Blessed One’s intention and dispatched their servants, instructing them, “Go now and prepare a seat on the banks of Lake Mandākinī. Scatter different kinds of flowers on the ground, and sprinkle it with fragrant water. Look after the sages Kaineya and Śaila, for it would not be right if harm came to them at the hands of humans, nonhuman spirits, or rākṣasas.”

3.28 “As you wish,” the servants of the four great kings replied, and they traveled to Lake Mandākinī, where they prepared a seat, scattered different kinds of flowers on the ground, and sprinkled it with fragrant water.

3.29 Kaineya, seeing that the servants of the four great kings had prepared a seat on the banks of Lake Mandākinī, scattered different kinds of flowers on the ground, and sprinkled it with fragrant water, asked them, “Why are you here making all these preparations?”

3.30 “We are preparing a seat for the Blessed One, for he wishes to teach the Dharma to the four great kings,” they replied.

“What! Can’t I teach them Dharma?” Kaineya asked, to which the servants of the four great kings replied, “The ascetic Gautama will teach them the Dharma, not you.”

3.31 “Then why are you following me all about?” he asked.

“A large number of servants and attendants are going to accompany them, so we are looking after you for fear you might be harmed.”

“What? Is it me alone you look after?” Kaineya demanded. “Or do you look after the ascetic Gautama as well?”

3.32 The servants of the four great kings replied, “We do not look after the ascetic Gautama. He himself protects the world, including the gods.”

Kaineya thought, “The ascetic Gautama must be a person of great miracles and great power, if even the gods strive to worship him in such a way.”

The Blessed One disappeared from the Adumā region and traveled to the banks of Lake Mandākinī, where he took his place on the seat prepared for him.

3.33 The great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the thousands upon thousands of gandharvas who serve him then filled the fronts of their long shirts with divine lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers and went to see the Blessed One. When they arrived, they touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet, scattered the divine lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers over him, and circumambulated the Blessed One seven times before taking their seats in the east, facing the Blessed One to the west.

3.34 Then the great king Virūḍhaka and the thousands upon thousands of kumbhāṇḍas who serve him all filled the fronts of their long shirts with jewels and went to see the Blessed One. When they arrived, they scattered jewels over the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and took their seats in the south, facing the Blessed One to the north.

3.35 Then the great king Virūpākṣa and the thousands upon thousands of nāgas who serve him all filled the fronts of their long shirts with pearls and went to see the Blessed One. When they arrived they scattered pearls over the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and took their seats in the west, facing the Blessed One to the east.

3.36 Then the great king Vaiśravaṇa and the thousands upon thousands of yakṣas who serve him all filled the fronts of their long shirts with gold and silver, and went to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival, they scattered gold and silver over the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and took their seats in the north, facing the Blessed One to the south.

3.37 Now since two of the great kings were from barbaric outlying regions, and two were from central lands, the Blessed One thought, "If I give a Dharma

teaching in the language of the central lands, two of them will understand what I am saying, and two of them will not, but if I give a Dharma teaching in the language of the barbaric outlying regions, still only two of them will understand what I am saying, and two of them will not. So, I will teach it to each of them individually."

3.38 With this thought he said to the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, "Great King, the separation from the body, the abating of sensations, the cessation of perceptions, the allaying of formations, and the disappearance of consciousness is itself the end of suffering." When he gave this Dharma teaching, the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the many thousands of gods who belong to the same class as him achieved the Dharma vision that is free from dust and stainless with regard to phenomena.

3.39 After that the Blessed One said to the great king Virūḍhaka, "Great King, when you see, you should have the wisdom to merely see. When you listen, you should have the wisdom to merely hear. When your intelligence begins to differentiate, you should have the wisdom to merely differentiate. And regarding consciousness, you should have the wisdom of mere consciousness. This itself is the end of suffering." When he gave this Dharma teaching, the great king Virūḍhaka and the many thousands of gods who belong to the same class as him achieved the Dharma vision that is free from dust and stainless with regard to phenomena.

3.40 Then the Blessed One said to the great king Virūpākṣa, "E ne me ne dab phu da dab phu," which means precisely, "This itself is the end of suffering." When he gave this Dharma teaching, the great king Virūpākṣa and the many thousands of gods who belong to the same class as him achieved the Dharma vision that is free from dust and stainless with regard to phenomena.

3.41 Then the Blessed One said to the great king Vaiśravaṇa, "Mā śā tu śā sang śāmā sarva datra

viratrī,” which means precisely, “This itself is the end of suffering.” When he gave this Dharma teaching the great king Vaiśravaṇa and the many thousands of gods who belong to the same class as him achieved the Dharma vision that is free from dust and stainless with regard to phenomena.

3.42 The four great kings perceived the truths, discovered the truths, realized the truths, and fathomed the truths to their very depths, overcoming whatever doubt or hesitation they had. Of their own accord, completely unprompted, and fearless on account of the truths their teacher had shown them, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and said, “Lord, we have been inducted into the Dharma, we have been inducted into the Dharma indeed. We seek refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. We wish to take refuge and the fundamental precepts.”

3.43 The Blessed One replied, “My friends, what you have said is very good.” At this the four great kings rejoiced, praised all that the Blessed One had said, touched their heads to his feet, and took leave of the Blessed One.

3.44 After they had left the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, what actions did these four great kings take that ripened into two of them being renowned as the lords of the central lands, and two of the barbaric outlying regions, and that they pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

3.45 “Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha

known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there were two nāga kings named Āśvāsa and Mahāśvāsa who lived on the slopes of Mount Sumeru. Two bird kings lived there as well, the garuḍas Sound and Great Sound.

3.46 “Afraid of the two garuḍas, the two nāgas fled, traveling down to the base of the universe, where they remained. The nāga kings Āśvāsa and Mahāśvāsa liked the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, so both went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts. Having taken refuge and the fundamental precepts, the nāga kings were no longer vulnerable to the garuḍas, so they emerged from the waters of the great ocean completely at ease.

3.47 “The garuḍas Sound and Great Sound saw the two nāga kings emerge from the waters of the great ocean completely at ease. They were overwhelmed at the sight of them and were unable to harm them by force, for striking at them was like smacking into Mount Sumeru. ‘Before you were afraid of us and fled, down to the base of the universe—so how is it that you are now so completely at ease, and that we are unable to harm you?’ they asked them.

3.48 “ ‘We’ve taken refuge and the fundamental precepts from the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa,’ the two nāgas replied. ‘That’s why we are no longer vulnerable to you.’

3.49 “ ‘Who is this one you call “Buddha”?’ the garuḍas asked. The nāgas described the Buddha to them in detail, and immediately after hearing about him they too were filled with the greatest admiration for the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Joyful, they too went to see the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

3.50 “They took refuge and the fundamental precepts and acted in accord with the nāgas by being friends with them, coexisting with them, and going for refuge and maintaining the fundamental precepts together with them.

3.51 “At the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘We have gone forth like this in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all our lives. By this root of virtue, wherever we are born, may we be renowned as lords of those regions. May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.52 “O monks, what do you think? The ones who were the nāga kings Āśvāsa and Mahāśvāsa then are none other than the great kings Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Virūḍhaka of the central lands. Those who were the garuḍa kings Sound and Great Sound then are none other than the great kings Virūpākṣa and Vaiśravaṇa of the barbaric outlying regions. At that time they went for refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts all their lives, and at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever we are born, may we be renowned as lords of those regions. May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’ Those acts ripened into their current renown as lords among the gods of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings.

3.53 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

3.54 Kaineaya was standing nearby as the Blessed One taught the Dharma to the four great kings and told of their past actions, and he could hear every word. As soon he heard it all, he experienced a surge of joy toward the Blessed One, approached him,

touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly.

3.55 When he heard it, Kaineaya destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. After seeing the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and implored him, “I would like to request that the Blessed One and the saṅgha of monks remain here in the region this morning. Please accept the beverages I shall prepare for you when it is no longer proper for you to eat.” The Blessed One assented by his silence.

3.56 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, Kaineaya prepared eight different beverages—apple juice, banana juice, juniper juice, fig juice, udumbara juice, wild date palm berry juice, buckwheat juice, and grape juice—and went to present them to the Blessed One. When he arrived he implored the Blessed One, “Lord, the great sages of the past have sung the praises of these eight different beverages, extolling their virtues and speaking highly of them. I implore the Blessed One to please accept them out of compassion for us.” Out of compassion the Blessed One accepted the eight different beverages from Kaineaya.

3.57 The Blessed One then addressed the monks, saying, “Monks, I permit the monks, nuns, and female and male novices to drink all eight of these different beverages—be they filtered or unfiltered, clear or unclear, turbid or settled, of good color or not of good color—at the proper times of day, but not at improper times. Of these eight different

beverages, those filtered with cloth, clear, good in color, settled, and free of residue may be imbibed at improper times as well.”

3.58 The sage Kaineya bowed to the Blessed One with his palms pressed together and beseeched him, “Lord, please allow me to request you and the saṅgha of monks to take your food at my house tomorrow,” and the Blessed One assented by his silence. Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, Kaineya then asked the Blessed One, “In that case, Lord, may I request that you all stay here in the forest tonight?”

3.59 The Blessed One replied, “If it pleases you, Kaineya, we shall.” The Blessed One then disappeared from the banks of Lake Mandākinī and appeared seated in the forest with the saṅgha of monks, not far from where Kaineya lived.

3.60 Early in the morning, before sunrise, Kaineya called to his young brahmins, “Noble ones, get up! Get up, gentle ones, get up! Attend to your reception room duties—split wood, make a fire, cook up the rice, prepare the vegetables, and make fried bread!” Kaineya was not the only one staying there that night. Śāila was there as well, and he heard Kaineya calling out to the young brahmins early in the morning before sunrise, “Noble ones, get up! Get up, gentle ones, get up! Attend to your reception room duties—split wood, make a fire, cook up the rice, prepare the vegetables, and make fried bread!”

3.61 When he heard this he thought, “What is this sage doing, sending off a bride to be married? Or is he about to receive a bride, perhaps? If not, he must be hosting foreign visitors, or craftsmen, or a group of men, or perhaps the king and his retinue.” Wondering about this, Śāila asked Kaineya, “What are you doing, sage, sending off a bride to be married? Or are you about to receive a bride, perhaps? If not, are you hosting foreign visitors, or craftsmen, or a group of men, or perhaps the king and his retinue?”

3.62 “I am neither sending off a bride to be married, nor receiving a bride, nor hosting foreign visitors, craftsmen, or a group of men, nor hosting the king and his retinue,” replied Kaineya. “Rather, today I have invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for a meal.”

3.63 When Śāila heard the name Buddha, a sound unlike any he had heard before, it gave him goosebumps, and filled him with joy. Śāila asked Kaineya, “Sage, who is this one you call ‘Buddha?’”

3.64 “Sage,” Kaineya replied, “near the Himalayas, on the banks of the Ganges, not far from the dwelling of the sage Kapila, a child was born to the Śākya. The brahmin soothsayers and augurs made this prediction about him: ‘If he remains here at home, he will become a universal monarch, but if he shaves his head and face and dons the colorful robes of the holy, and if with nothing short of perfect faith he goes forth from home to live as a mendicant, then he will be renowned throughout the world as a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha.’ He shaved his head and face and donned the colorful religious robes, and with nothing short of perfect faith went forth from home to live as a mendicant until he awakened unto unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. This, O sage, is the one we call Buddha.”

3.65 “Sage, who are those you call ‘saṅgha?’”

“O sage, among them are wise warriors, wise brahmins, wise householders, and wise mendicants as well. They are all those who have gone forth to follow the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the totally and completely awakened Buddha. These, sage, are the ones I call the saṅgha. Today I have invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for a meal.”

3.66 Śāila asked Kaineya, “Where is the Blessed One now, sage?”

“In the forests of the Adumā region, sage,” replied Kaineya. “If you wish to see him,

- 3.67 “Brahmin, head to the beautiful forest,
For that is where he is.
There you shall see the Buddha, our guide,
Holding court like a gandharva king.”
- 3.68 Śaila heeded Kaineya’s advice and went to the forest to see the Blessed One. There he saw the Blessed One from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like tongues of fire stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart.
- 3.69 He saw the Blessed Buddha, and the sight of him filled him with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.
- 3.70 After he saw the Blessed Buddha in this way, he approached him, touched his head to his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, the sage Śaila destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right where he sat.
- 3.71 After seeing the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and made this request of the Blessed One: “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”
- 3.72 “Sage, have you consulted your retinue?” asked

the Blessed One.

“No, Lord,” replied Śaila, “I have not.”

The Blessed One replied, “In that case, sage, first consult your retinue. It is only fitting that a person like yourself, renowned by all and possessed of great merit, should do so.”

- 3.73 So Śaila went to see his young brahmins, and when he arrived he informed them, “Young brahmins, I must let you know that I wish to practice the holy life in the presence of the Blessed One. What will you do now?”

“It is with your support, preceptor, that we have sought anything at all,” they replied. “Should the ascetic Gautama lead our preceptor to go forth, we will go forth as well.”

- 3.74 “Young brahmins,” Śaila said, “if you are certain the time is right, then may it be so.”

Then Śaila went to see the Blessed One along with his five hundred devotees. When he arrived he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and then petitioned the Blessed One: “Lord, I have consulted my devotees, and if permitted, Lord, we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

- 3.75 “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One replied. “Practice the holy life.”

As soon as the Blessed One had finished speaking there they stood, alms bowl and water pitcher in hand, with but a week’s worth of hair and beard, and with the deportment of a monk who had been ordained for one hundred years. As it is stated,

- 3.76 Garbed in robes, with shaven heads,
And senses stilled by Buddha’s will—
From the very moment the One Thus Gone
Spoke to them, saying, “Come, join me.”

- 3.77 After preparing many good, wholesome foods that

night, Kaineya rose in the morning, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then he sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was time for the midday meal: “Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested.”

3.78 That morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, set out surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks, until they arrived at Kaineya’s reception room. There, the Blessed One took his place on the seat prepared for him and Kaineya by his own hand contented the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished.

3.79 Kaineya saw that Śaila and his five hundred devotees had gone forth, and thus were also seated there. Recognizing this, he asked Śaila, “Sage, have you gone forth?”

“Yes, my friend, I have gone forth.”

“Good!” Sage Kaineya said, “Very good! I too shall go forth after the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks have finished eating.”

3.80 After contenting them by his own hand with many different kinds of good, wholesome food, proffering all that they wished, once he knew that the Blessed One had finished eating, his bowl had been taken away, and his hands washed, he drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

3.81 “Sage, have you consulted your retinue?” asked the Blessed One.

“No, Lord,” replied Kaineya, “I have not.”

“In that case, sage, first consult your retinue. It is only fitting that a person like yourself, renowned by

all and possessed of great merit, should do so.”

3.82 So Kaineya went to see his young brahmins, and when he arrived he informed them, “Young brahmins, I must let you know that I wish to practice the holy life in the presence of the Blessed One. What will you do now?”

3.83 “It is with your support, preceptor, that we have sought anything at all,” they replied. “Should the ascetic Gautama lead our preceptor to go forth, we will go forth as well.”

“Young brahmins,” Kaineya said, “if you are certain the time is right, then may it be so.”

3.84 So Kaineya went to see the Blessed One along with his five hundred devotees, and when he arrived he touched his head to the feet of the Blessed One, and told him, “Lord, I have consulted my devotees, and if permitted, Lord, we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

“Come, join me, monks!” replied the Blessed One. “Practice the holy life.”

3.85 As soon as the Blessed One had finished speaking there they stood, alms bowl and water pitcher in hand, with but a week’s worth of hair and beard, and with the deportment of a monk who had been ordained for one hundred years. As it is stated,

3.86 Garbed in robes, with shaven heads,
And senses stilled by Buddha’s will—
From the very moment the One Thus Gone
Spoke to them, saying, “Come, join me.”

3.87 The Blessed One taught Śaila and Kaineya, and they cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. He entrusted five hundred of their monks to Venerable Brāhmaṇa Mahākapina, two hundred and fifty to Venerable Śāriputra, and two hundred and fifty to

Venerable Maudgalyāyana, and told them, “Give them your spiritual advice, and then instruct them to keep it in mind.”

“Yes, Blessed One,” they agreed. “We will do just as you have instructed.”

3.88 Venerable Śāriputra, Venerable Maudgalyāyana, and Venerable Brāhmaṇa Mahākapina brought the monks to the banks of the Hiraṇyavatī River, where they pledged to stay in retreat during the rains. While observing their pledge to stay in retreat during the rains, they were given instructions to ponder. Venerable Brāhmaṇa Kapina established his five hundred monks in arhatship, Venerable Maudgalyāyana established his two hundred and fifty monks in the resultant state of non-return, and Venerable Śāriputra established his two hundred and fifty monks in the resultant state of stream entry.

3.89 Now there are two times of year when it is customary for the disciples of the Blessed Buddha to convene—in the middle of the summer months when the time comes for the summer retreat, and on the full moon of the last month of autumn. When the time comes in the middle of the summer months for the monks to enter the rains retreat, the monks receive instructions to ponder, and then they pledge to remain for the duration of the summer in mountain ravines, in mountain caves, in caves of reeds, on the plains, in charnel grounds, or in the forests. Then, when the full moon of the last month of autumn arrives, they give an account of all that they have realized, and they put questions to their superiors regarding all that they still do not understand.

3.90 The five hundred in each of Venerable Śāriputra and Venerable Maudgalyāyana’s two retinues and the five hundred of Venerable Brāhmaṇa Mahākapina’s retinue all entered summer retreat. When three months had passed and their summer retreat was finished, they donned their lower

garments and Dharma robes, and, carrying their alms bowls, they went to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, and took seats at one side. After they had taken their seats at one side, they gave the Blessed One an account of all that they had realized, and put questions to him regarding all that they still did not understand. The Blessed One gave them more advanced instructions to ponder, and they cast away all afflictive emotions with diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

3.91 The monks asked the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why Venerable Brāhmaṇa Mahākapina, Venerable Maudgalyāyana, and Venerable Śāriputra established five hundred monks in arhatship, in the resultant state of non-return, and in the resultant state of stream entry.”

3.92 “Not only now, monks” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, Venerable Brāhmaṇa Mahākapina, Venerable Maudgalyāyana, and Venerable Śāriputra, respectively, established their five hundred monks in the four meditative states and five superknowledges, in the formless realm, and in the form realm. Listen well!

3.93 “Monks, in times gone by, on a certain mountain there lived two sages, each with five hundred devotees. One sage lived on one side of the mountain with his five hundred devotees, and the other lived on the other side of the mountain with his five hundred devotees. One day, one of the sages passed away. After the young brahmins made offerings to his relics, they went to see the other sage, and the other sage brought them into his retinue. Then the thought occurred to the sage, ‘After I pass away, there will be no one to look after these young men. I must see to their needs while I’m still alive.’

3.94 “Now, this sage had three outstanding students, so he entrusted five hundred young brahmins to one of them and entrusted two hundred and fifty

to each of the other two. Then he told them, ‘Both while I am living and after my death, you must teach these disciples and see to it that they also ponder the instructions.’ One of the three established his five hundred young brahmins in the four meditative states and five superknowledges, one established his two hundred and fifty in the formless realm, and one established his two hundred and fifty in the form realm.

3.95 “O monks, what do you think? The one who placed those young brahmins in the four meditative states and five superknowledges then is none other than Brāhmaṇa Kapina. The one who placed them in the formless realm then is none other than Maudgalyāyana. And the one who placed them in the form realm then is none other than Śāriputra.

3.96 “At that time, one of them placed them in the four meditative states and five superknowledges, one of them placed them in the formless realm, and one of them placed them in the form realm, and so too now one has placed them in arhatship, one has placed them in the resultant state of non-return, and one has placed them in the resultant state of stream entry.

3.97 “Furthermore, monks, Brāhmaṇa Kapina’s students have keen intelligence, Maudgalyāyana’s students are of average intelligence, and Śāriputra’s students are less intelligent. Monks, if Śāriputra’s students could not so much as generate heat when handed to Brāhmaṇa Kapina, how then could they have realizations of a higher order?”

3.98 The monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, what actions did the sages Kaineya and Śaila and their devotees take that ripened such that they pleased and did not displease the Blessed One, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

3.99 “When did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived two householders in Vārāṇasī who were very close friends.

3.100 “One day they found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, gave up household affairs, and went forth. After they went forth, they studied the Tripiṭaka and became proponents of the Dharma with all the eloquence of their wisdom and freedom. They acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick. Each of them gathered five hundred students and became a master teacher with his own retinue.

3.101 “They both practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.102 “Their students asked them, ‘What kind of prayers are you making?’ They both answered in detail, and then the devotees also prayed, ‘May we too, entrusting ourselves to the two of you, please and not displease the Blessed Buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.103 “O monks, what do you think? Those who were the master teachers of their own retinues then are none other than the sages Kaineya and Śaila. Those who were their students then are none other than

these one thousand monks. At that time they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.104 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Betrothal of the Bride: Two Stories*



Part Three (3)

The Betrothal of the Bride: Two Stories

- 3. i The First “Betrothal of the Bride” Story
- 3. ii The Second “Betrothal of the Bride” Story

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Betrothal of the Bride: Two Stories

3. i The First “Betrothal of the Bride” Story

3.105 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived two householders who were very close friends. One day, one of them said to the other, “My friend, let’s make certain that come what may, the bond between us can never be broken.”

“How could we do that?” asked the other householder.

“We have to become kin,” said the first.

3.106 “Do you have a son or daughter?” wondered the other.

“No, I don’t,” said the first.

“Well, if you don’t have a son or daughter and I don’t either, how will we ever be kin?” asked the other.

3.107 “There are two ways to become related to someone,” replied the first, “through children you’ve already borne, or through children not yet born to you. Even though neither one of us has children, we could become kin through the children we’ve yet to have. Say, for instance, I have a son and you have a daughter—then we betroth your daughter to my son. Or say you have a son and I have a daughter—then we betroth my daughter to your son.” With that they became kin, despite the

fact that their children had not yet been born, and they went their separate ways.

3.108 Then one day the wife of the first conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan, and they raised him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids.

3.109 Sometime after that, as the other and his wife enjoyed themselves and coupled, his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they named her according to their clan, and they raised her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids. When she grew up she found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts.

3.110 One day she asked for her parents’ permission, saying, “Mother, Father, I cannot engage in sexual relations. Therefore I am asking for your kind permission to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

“My child, we cannot allow that,” her parents said, “for we betrothed you to a family before you were born.”

3.111 The young woman persisted in asking over and over until her parents thought, “Alas, it may be that our daughter will disobey us and go forth. We must warn our prospective in-laws.” So they said to the boy’s parents, “Our daughter wants to go forth, and it is possible she will do so in secret. Do not delay in making her a bride and bringing her into your home.”

3.112 Now no sooner had they heard this than the householders dressed up their son and sent the young man—adorned with every type of adornment, laden with riches—to the home of his in-laws, and the householders handed their

daughter to him to be married, as is the custom among householders.

3.113 After he had accepted her as his bride, the young woman fled. She went to the nunnery, where her preceptor led her to go forth as a novice and then conferred on her full ordination and instructed her. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, she manifested arhatship, and even began to perform miracles. She became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

3.114 When the young man heard that his wife had run away, he immediately set out to look for her, accompanied by many servants. Arriving at the nunnery, the young man found his wife, head shaved, garbed in the colorful religious robes, sitting cross-legged in meditation. As soon as he saw her he went to her and took her by the hand. Just then she rose up into the sky, making a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning. At the sight of this the young man and the others gathered there experienced a surge of joy, and in their joy they bowed down at her feet, and said, “O great fortunate one, please, please come down! We’re mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift us up!”

3.115 When she descended, the young man touched his head to her feet, asked for her forgiveness, provided for all her needs, and sat before her to listen to the Dharma. She realized the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature of the young man and the others gathered there, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. When they heard it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

3.116 Having seen the truths, the young man thought,

“Since even a woman who has gone forth in the Blessed One’s teaching can achieve such a collection of great qualities as these, I should also give up my life at home and go forth in the Blessed One’s teaching so that I can ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters through diligence, practice, and effort.”

3.117 With this thought he asked for his parents’ permission and went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

3.118 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what action did this nun take that after she became a bride she cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship, and that this monk, entrusting himself to her completely, likewise cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of her prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

3.119 “Lord, where did she make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened Buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there was a certain householder’s daughter in Vārāṇasī who had fled home life in just the same way, and whose betrothed, entrusting himself to her completely, likewise went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

3.120 “That nun practiced pure conduct all her life, and at the time of her death, she prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young

brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. After fleeing from marriage by this very same method, may I go forth in his doctrine alone, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.121 “When he saw her praying, the man to whom she had been betrothed asked, ‘Fine woman, what kind of prayers are you making?’ She explained them in detail, and after hearing her explanation, he prayed in the same way, and said, ‘Fine woman, having entrusted myself to you completely I found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. When I am again to become your husband, then having entrusted myself to you completely may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

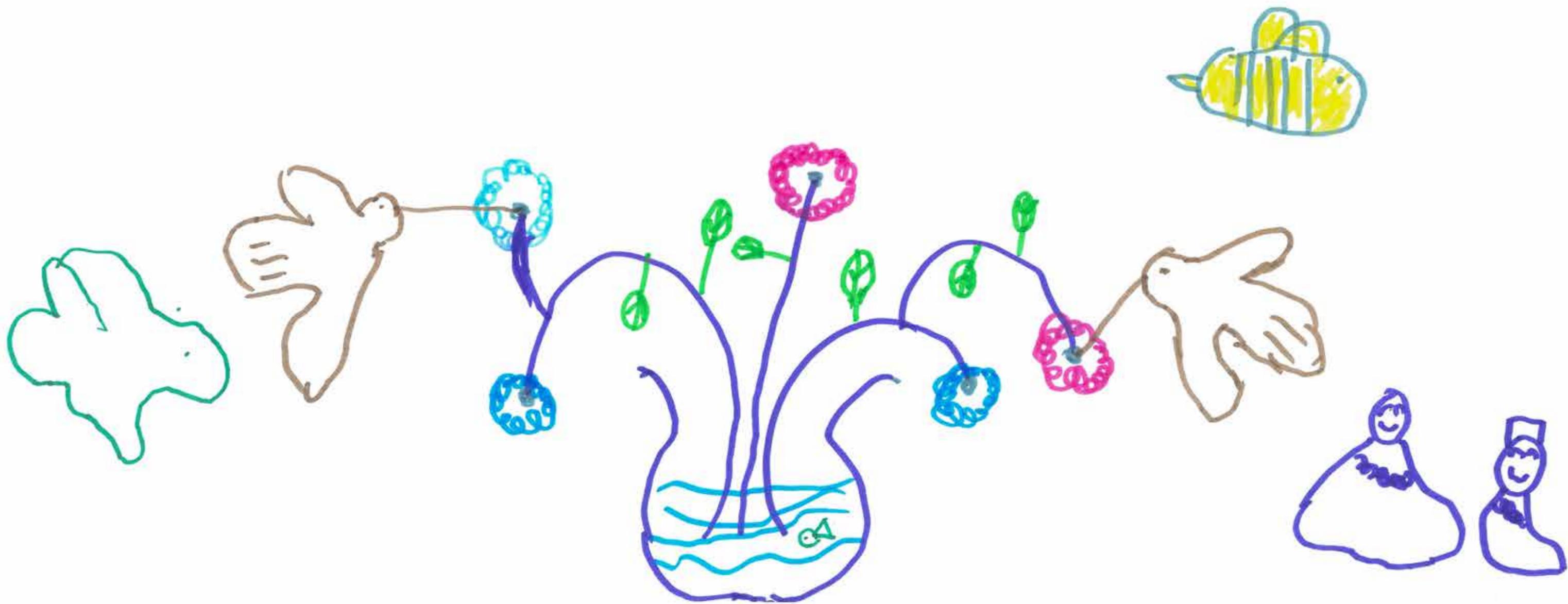
3.122 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that nun then is none other than this nun. At that time she practiced the holy life all her life, and at the time of her death she prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I fled from marriage, went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I once again flee from marriage, go forth in the doctrine of Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.123 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that by fleeing marriage and going forth she has pleased me, not displeased me, cast away all afflictive

emotions, and manifested arhatship.

3.124 “The one who was betrothed to her then is none other than this monk. At that time he prayed, ‘When I again become your husband, entrusting myself to you completely may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.125 “So it is that he has now trusted in her completely, pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine alone, and manifested arhatship.”



3. ii The Second “Betrothal of the Bride” Story

3.126 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, King Prasenajit had two chief ministers there named Mṛgāra and Dinna. The two ministers were very close friends. When the time came for them to marry each minister took a wife and enjoyed himself with her and coupled.

3.127 One day when the two saw each other again, Dinna said, “My friend, we should make it so that come what may, our friendship is not severed, nor even a little strained, for as long as we live.”

“How could we do that?” asked Mṛgāra.

“We have to become kin,” replied Dinna.

3.128 “Do you have a son or daughter?” wondered Mṛgāra.

“No, I don’t,” said Dinna.

“Well, if you don’t have a son or daughter, and neither do I, how will we ever be kin?” asked Mṛgāra.

3.129 “There are two ways to become related to someone,” said Dinna, “through children you’ve already borne, or through children not yet born to you. Even though neither one of us has children, we could become kin through the children we’ve yet to have. Say, for instance, I have a son and you have a daughter—then we betroth your daughter to my son. Or say you have a son and I have a daughter—then we betroth my daughter to your son.” They agreed to do just that and went their separate ways.

3.130 One day, Mṛgāra’s wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child, and they named him Viśākha.

Now desires are like salt water—the more you use to slake your thirst, the more you need. Altogether Mṛgāra and his wife had seven children, and at the elaborate feasts celebrating their births they named them according to their clan, and began to rear them.

3.131 Then one day Dinna’s wife also conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. But it was the child’s nature to weep constantly, and though her parents made every effort, they could not make her stop.

3.132 This went on until one day Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī came to their house and taught the Dharma to the householders. When the child heard the Dharma, she quieted down. But when Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī left, having completed her discourse on the Dharma, the child began to weep again. The householders realized that the child must have wanted to hear more Dharma. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named her, saying, “Since she is Dinna’s child and wishes for Dharma, her name will be Dharmadinnā.” They reared young Dharmadinnā on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when she grew up she found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One.

3.133 From time to time she asked for her parents’ permission to offer food to the monks and nuns and to sit in front of them to listen to the Dharma. After hearing the Dharma, she went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts, and while still living at home she manifested the resultant state of non-return and even began to perform miracles. Having seen the truths, she asked for her parents’ permission saying, “Mother, Father, I am asking for your kind permission to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

“My child, we cannot allow that,” her parents said, “for we betrothed you to a family before you were born.”

3.134 Their daughter said, “If I have no interest in objects of desire, what need do I have for a spouse?”

“We cannot give you permission ourselves, but it is up to you,” replied her parents. “We will invite

the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for a meal. You can ask Mṛgāra and your betrothed for permission then, and go forth.”

3.135 The householder Dinna extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks. He prepared many good, wholesome foods that night, and in the morning he rose, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then he sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was time for the midday meal: “Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested.”

3.136 In the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out, encircled by a group of monks and preceded by the saṅgha of the monks. He arrived at the householder Dinna’s reception room, where he took his place on the seat prepared for him. Once the householder knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. After contenting them by his own hand with many different kinds of good, wholesome food, proffering all that they wished, once he knew that the Blessed One had finished eating and his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, he sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

3.137 Since he was unable himself to prevent young Dharmadinnā from fulfilling her wish go forth, he sent word to the householder Mṛgāra, asking him to please come and prevent it. As soon as he heard this, Mṛgāra came with his servants and surrounded the home of the householder Dinna. After the Blessed One had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted the householder Dinna and the people of his house with a Dharma teaching, he rose from his seat and departed. After the Buddha and the saṅgha of monks had departed, the saṅgha of the nuns also departed, and young Dharmadinnā

went with them.

3.138 When young Viśākha and Mṛgāra and his retinue spotted young Dharmadinnā leaving the house, they cried out, “Young Viśākha, grab the girl, Dharmadinnā!” At that moment she rose up into the sky and performed a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning. As soon as young Viśākha saw this, he thought, “How could she possibly engage in sexual relations with me now that she has attained such great virtues?” Ordinary people are quickly brought to faith through miracles, so when Mṛgāra’s retinue saw all this, they threw themselves at Dharmadinnā’s feet, saying, “O great fortunate one, please, please come down! We’re mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift us up!”

3.139 She descended and young Viśākha touched his head to her feet and asked her forgiveness, saying, “Of course you have my consent to go forth. I shall provide for all your needs. Whatever your needs, I shall provide for them all.” With this he sat before her to listen to the Dharma. After Dharmadinnā had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted them with a Dharma teaching, she departed.

3.140 She proceeded to the nunnery, went forth, and the nuns conferred on her the precepts for female novices. Having been conferred vows for the precepts of the six factors, she practiced them for two years, at which time she wished to receive full ordination. The nuns thus conferred on her the vows of the holy life and prepared to lead her to the garden of Prince Jeta for full ordination.

3.141 Dharmadinnā was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with an incomparably splendid complexion and an unmatched figure—the best in the land. As soon as she was born men had started asking for her hand, but since the householder Dinna had already promised her to someone, he would not give her to anyone else.

3.142 When she had gone forth, those men thought,

“While she was living at home we could not have her. But now that she has left, we can do as we please. They then began to consider how they might trap her and take her by force. Someone went and alerted the nuns, and they thought, “We can no longer bring her to the garden of Prince Jeta for full ordination, nor can we keep her at the nunnery.” So they brought her back to her parents’ house, and there she stayed.

3.143 After that the nuns related her story in detail to the Blessed One, and asked, “Lord, how can we complete the nun Dharmadinnā’s ordination?”

The Blessed One responded, “In a case like this, it is permissible for the nun Dharmadinnā to be ordained by message. If one day other persons like her venture outside and similar troubles arise, they too should be ordained by message.”

3.144 As soon as the nuns heard this, they conferred full ordination on Dharmadinnā by message and had her recite in exactly the way given in the scriptures. Then the nuns who had sent the message came to see the nun Dharmadinnā and informed her, “Dharmadinnā, you have received full ordination. Be conscientious and diligent.”

3.145 As soon as she heard this, Dharmadinnā cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, her mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of her hands as like space itself. She became cool like wet sandalwood. Her insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. She achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. She had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. She became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

3.146 The monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “What action did Dharmadinnā take that ripened into her birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that she pleased and did

not displease the Blessed One; that, going forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, she cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship; and that she alone was instrumental in the Blessed One permitting the full ordination of nuns by message?”

“It came about by the power of her prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

3.147 “Lord, where did she make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in Vārāṇasī. One day a child was born to him who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with an unmatched figure—the best in the land.

3.148 “When she grew up she found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After she asked for her parents’ permission and went forth as a novice, she ventured outside and trouble arose, so the Blessed Kāśyapa permitted her to be fully ordained by message. The nuns who had conferred on her full ordination by message came to see her and informed her, ‘So-and-so, you have received full ordination. Be conscientious and diligent.’

3.149 “As soon as she heard this, she cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship, made a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning, and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. Her preceptor performed ritual veneration of her relics, built a reliquary stūpa, and there offered flowers, sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones.

3.150 “After practicing pure conduct all her life, at the time of her death she prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.

3.151 “ ‘Just as my disciple was instrumental in the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa permitting full ordination by message, when the peerless Śākyamuni, King of the Śākyas, permits ordination by message, may I go forth in his doctrine alone, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.152 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that preceptor nun then is none other than the nun Dharmadinnā. At that time she practiced pure conduct all her life, and at the time of her death, she prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as my pupil was instrumental in the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa permitting full ordination by message, may I likewise be instrumental in the peerless Śākyamuni, King of the Śākyas, permitting ordination by message.’

3.153 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship, and that because of her I have permitted full ordination by message.”

3.154 The monks then requested the Blessed Buddha,

“Lord, tell us how the nun Dharmadinnā, admired by many men, maintained her pure conduct despite great adversity.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, she was admired by many men and maintained her pure conduct despite great adversity. Listen well!

3.155 “Monks, in times gone by, during King Brahmadata’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī, there lived a certain householder in the city of Vārāṇasī. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

3.156 “They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

3.157 “When the time came for him to marry, his parents chose a wife for him. They enjoyed themselves and coupled, and the young man became so attached to her that he never wanted to be away from her. He would drop whatever he was doing just to be around her. Finally the householder thought, ‘If he remains this attached to her, everything we have will soon be gone! I’ve got to tear him away from that carcass of hers.’

3.158 “ ‘Son,’ he said, ‘what do you need that old carcass for? If you keep this up and don’t do any work, when you’re old, you’ll be penniless. Son, as long as there’s life yet in your body, you should be making money. You can endear yourself to your wife later.’

3.159 “So the householder arranged to have the young man sent to another country on business. The young man loaded up the camels, donkeys, and the rest of the animals, and ranged over vast, isolated distances through the villages, cities, and forest settlements of that enormous country. After arriving in some remote place, he sat facing the direction of his wife, like freshly cut green grass that is left to wither, and asked himself, ‘How might I visit with her quickly?’ And so he sat there, reflecting on how he might do this.

3.160 “Now at that time in a mountain village there lived a certain man who was very skilled in the art of woodworking and knew how to make a garuḍa carving that could fly through the sky. When the young man heard about him, right away he thought, ‘I’ve found a way to get to her!’ He went to the artisan and said, ‘Sir, give me this garuḍa carving and I shall give you five hundred gold coins.’

3.161 “ ‘I wouldn’t feel right giving it to you for good,’ said the man. ‘You can come here every day to get it. Then return and bring it back to me.’

“ ‘As you wish,’ the young man replied.

3.162 “The man carved the garuḍa, taught the young man how to travel with it and how to return, and then gave it to him. The young man mounted it and traveled back to his house, where he would visit his wife, they would enjoy themselves happily, and then he would return to the mountain village.

3.163 “This continued until one day his wife conceived, but after nine or ten months had passed and the time came for her to give birth, the artisan had left for another province, so the young man could not get home anymore. Moreover, the girl’s two in-laws began to accuse her of adultery, saying, ‘How could you commit such a crime?’

“ ‘This was my husband’s doing,’ she replied.

3.164 “ ‘It’s been many years now since our son went away,’ the householder responded. “How could he have done this?’

“She related the story to them in detail, and they said, ‘This did not happen the way you say it did.’ Out of resentment they thought, ‘She has committed a crime,’ and kicked her out of the house.

3.165 “So she left Vārāṇasī and set out for her father’s house, and in time she came to a mountain village. When she arrived she stopped there on the main road, and that evening she gave birth to the child. The birth pains were unbearable, and she lost consciousness.

3.166 “A certain householder lived nearby, and in his house there was a dog named Bhūta. The dog went out onto the road and saw the baby, and while the woman was still unconscious, he took up the baby in his teeth and returned with it to the house. The householder saw that the baby was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, and immediately thought, ‘It’s okay for someone who doesn’t have children to make someone else’s child his own. Since I have neither son nor daughter, I can take this baby and raise it, and it will be as if it were my own.’

3.167 “With this in mind he said to his wife, ‘Sweet one, you know it’s okay for someone who doesn’t have children to make someone else’s child his own. Since we have neither son nor daughter, we can take this baby and raise it, and it will be as if it were our own. Here, take him in your lap. I will prepare an elaborate feast to celebrate his birth.’ So the woman put the baby on her lap and there it stayed. The householder beat his drum and prepared a feast to celebrate the baby’s birth.

3.168 “Earlier that morning, when her pain had subsided, the mother had woken up and thought, ‘I will pick up my baby,’ but the baby was nowhere to be found. At dawn, she began asking everyone who lived nearby, ‘Has anyone seen a baby?’ Those who had seen it said to her, ‘The householder so-and-so has a dog named Bhūta that carried your

baby back to their house.’ The mother implored another woman, ‘Please! Go to that house and see if my baby is still alive!’

3.169 “The woman went to the house to see, and returned to inform the mother of what she saw—that the householders had taken the baby as if it were their own. The mother thought, ‘It’s not right if the baby and I both suffer. It’s better for the baby to stay where it is.’ With this thought, she left.

3.170 “She encountered some travelers along the way and traveled with them until bandits fell upon them. The leader of the bandits kidnapped the woman and brought her back to his dwelling to make her his mate. That night, the woman, not wanting to sleep with him, thought, ‘I have to find a way to prevent him from taking my hand, no matter what.’ She disheveled her hair, put on blue clothes, and smeared her face and teeth with red lac dye. Then she hefted a sword, entered the cave where he lived, and waited. The man entered the cave, thinking, ‘Now I’ll have a good time with that woman,’ but just then the woman charged at him, brandishing the sword, and cried out, ‘You’ll never escape from here!’

3.171 “Terrified, the man threw himself at her feet. ‘Kind woman,’ he pleaded, ‘I beg you, please spare my life!’

The woman replied, ‘There is only one way to stop me from killing you. If you never act on your desire for me—not now, not ever—nor tell anyone I am here, then I will spare your life.’

“‘As you wish,’ said the leader of the bandits.

3.172 “They swore an oath, and the woman remained there in his dwelling. Eventually the leader of the bandits began to wonder, ‘How long must I provide for her? I will find a clever way to sell her off.’ So he sold her off to a sex worker.

“The sex worker told her, ‘Sweet girl, from now on you’re staying right here and you will be a sex worker.’

“‘A sex worker!’ the woman retorted. ‘I couldn’t bear to touch any man!’

3.173 “‘I purchased you to be a sex worker, and at a very high price,’ the sex worker said. ‘Why would I have any other need for you?’

“The woman thought, ‘I must find a way to trick her.’ So she made her herself look like a demoness, just as before, and charged at the sex worker.

3.174 “‘The Demoness of the Dark Forest has entered your house!’ she cried. ‘How will you ever survive?’

“Terrified, the sex worker threw herself at her feet. ‘Please, spare my life!’ she pleaded.

3.175 “‘There is only one way to stop me from killing you.’ the woman replied, ‘If, while I am here, you don’t force me to engage in such work and never tell anyone about me, then I will spare your life.’

“‘As you wish,’ said the sex worker.

3.176 “They swore an oath, and soon enough everyone knew that there was a Demoness of the Dark Forest living at sex worker so-and-so’s house. They were all afraid of her, so no one would ever go there. The sex worker began to wonder, ‘Is there any way to get her out of my house?’

3.177 “In the meantime the woman’s baby had grown, and the householders had named him Bhūta too. As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

3.178 “One day, after the child’s adoptive father died, the child thought, ‘Now that Father has died, I will take over his business.’ So he loaded up his wares and traveled abroad with some merchants until they eventually came to the place where his mother was. When they arrived in the city, they laid down their wares and set up camp not far from the sex worker’s house.

3.179 “The woman asked the arriving merchants, ‘Do any of you know a merchant’s son from such-and-such a place?’

“They replied, ‘There is one merchant captain named Bhūta whose father recently passed away.’

3.180 “A little later she asked his companions and they pointed him out saying, ‘That’s the one they call Bhūta.’

“ ‘Why did his father name him Bhūta?’ the woman asked.

“ ‘The householder had a dog named Bhūta who carried the child in from the road and gave it to him,’ the young men said to her. ‘That’s why his name is Bhūta too.’

3.181 “Suddenly the woman thought, ‘That’s my child!’ She went to the young man, told him the whole story, and concluded, saying, ‘And that’s how it is that you’re my child, and I am your mother.’ When he heard all this the young man paid the sex worker to release his mother and brought her into his own home.

3.182 “Meanwhile, the young man’s birth father had also completed his sea voyage and returned to his parents’ house. He embraced his father and mother, put his things inside, and then went to his home, where his wife was nowhere to be found. He questioned his parents. Referring to his wife, whose father’s name was Vāṣpa, he said, ‘Father and Mother, Vāṣpa’s daughter isn’t here. Where has she gone?’

“ ‘That girl had no respect for you,’ they replied. ‘She committed a crime, so we threw her out of the house and drove her away.’

3.183 “The young man fumed, ‘That was my child in her womb! You were wrong to throw her out!’ He went away in anger, demanding, ‘Where has Vāṣpa’s daughter gone?’ He called out as he went, asking everyone he saw, ‘Have you seen Vāṣpa’s daughter?’ No matter what his parents did, they could not calm him down. By the time his wife

and son returned he was destitute, naked, and wandering about.

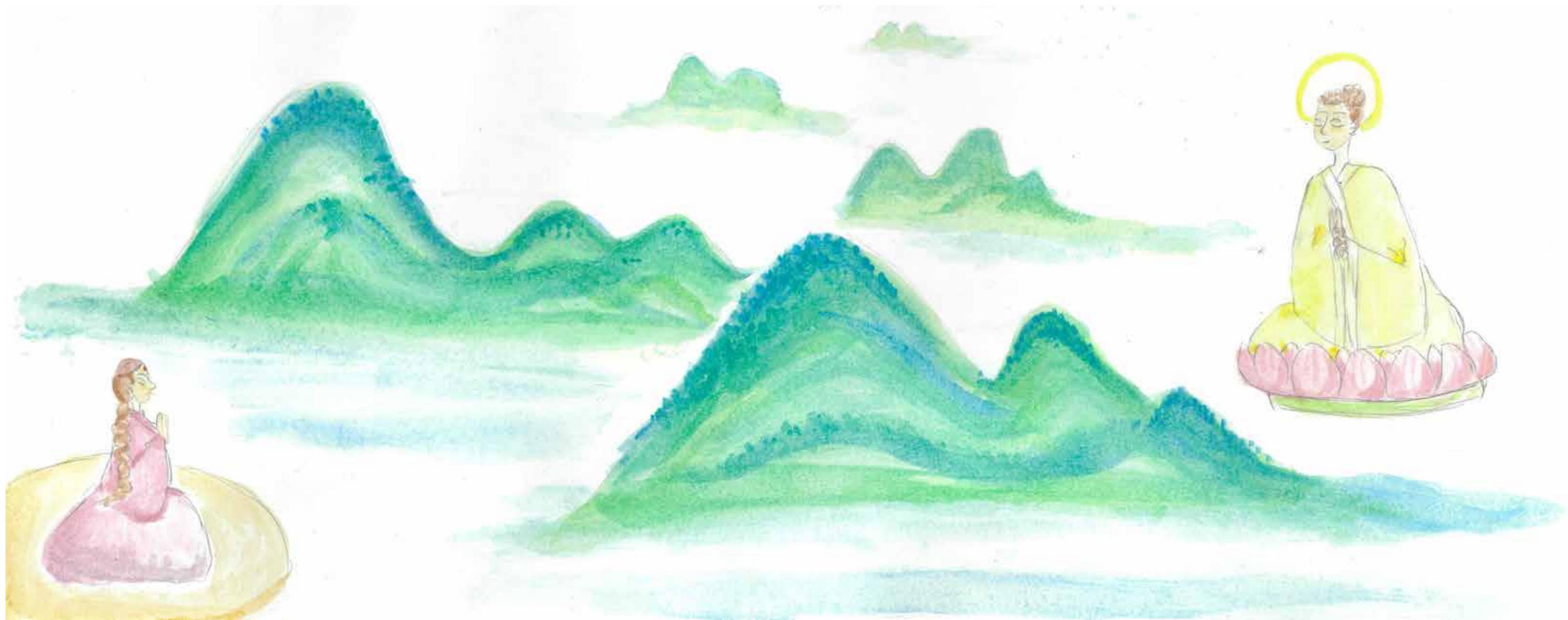
3.184 “The son came to the door of his house, and seeing a man destitute and naked wandering about, said to his mother, ‘Mother, there is a madman wandering about asking, ‘Where has Vāṣpa’s daughter gone?’ When she heard this, at first she was doubtful. ‘No, it cannot be my lord,’ she said. But when she went to see for herself, she recognized him right away. She brought him into her own home and said, ‘Lord, it’s me. I am Vāṣpa’s daughter.’

3.185 “When he heard her he immediately came to his senses. The woman said to him, ‘Lord, I am your wife. This is your son. Come inside—we’re home now.’ The woman bathed him, trimmed his mustache, and put clothes on him. At long last he was home.

3.186 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that woman then is none other than Dharmadinnā. At that time she was admired by many men, but she maintained her celibacy despite great adversity. Now as well she is admired by many men and has maintained her celibacy despite great adversity.”

THE END

Next: *Cuts: Two Stories*



Part Three (4)

Cuts:
Two Stories

- 4. i The First “Cut” Story
- 4. ii The Second “Cut” Story

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

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Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 Cuts: Two Stories

4. i The First “Cut” Story

3.187 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, it was Venerable Maudgalyāyana’s custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.188 When he returned, he would relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When he returned, he would also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Those who heard him were filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they went on to achieve great things.

3.189 One day Venerable Maudgalyāyana prepared himself to wander among the animals, disappeared from Śrāvastī, and stood on the seashore.

3.190 Now the great ocean has three strata. The first stratum of water is 28,000 yojanas deep, and in that stratum dwell the sea creatures known as timi, whose bodies are 700 yojanas in length. Whenever they get hungry they rise from this first stratum of water, surfacing with mouths agape. Any smaller living beings present there spill with the water

into their mouths. When they have filled their stomachs, they filter the water back out through their teeth and then eat the living beings that remain in their stomachs. The second stratum of water is 25,000 yojanas deep, and in that stratum dwell the sea creatures known as timiṅgila, whose bodies are 1,400 yojanas in length. Whenever they get hungry they rise up through the first and second strata of water to feed. The third stratum of water is 25,000 yojanas deep, and in that stratum dwell the sea creatures known as timiṅgilagila. Their bodies are enormous, measuring 2,100 yojanas. Whenever they get hungry they rise up through the first, second, and third strata of water to feed.

3.191 Now at that time in the great ocean a sea creature of the kind called timiṅgila was born, and the other sea creatures, great and small, gathered around him. Again and again they cut his body into pieces—some one league long, some two leagues, some three leagues, and some up to one hundred yojanas in length—and fed on him, causing him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony.

3.192 All this suffering exhausted him, so he emerged onto dry land hoping for some respite. But when he emerged onto dry land, due to his past actions, five hundred yakṣas appeared, and for five hundred days with five hundred axes they hacked off his ribs one by one. Once all his ribs had been cut away in this manner, unable to bear the pain, he let loose a great cry and rolled back into the great ocean. All of this bleeding and rolling about agitated the great ocean, roiling it up until it looked like an ocean of blood. And now that he had fallen back into it, the other creatures fed on him again. No matter whether he emerged onto dry land or stayed in the water, he suffered dreadfully.

3.193 Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “What action did this being take that ripened into such suffering?” Though he went deep into equipoise

and reached the far limits of concentration, he could not see an end to the lives in which this being had died from one animal rebirth and transmigrated, only to take birth as an animal again and meet with the very same suffering. He thought, “Who apart from the Blessed One could explain his deeds to me? For his wisdom and vision are unimpeded, and his wisdom and vision are infinite.”

3.194 He disappeared from the shore of the great ocean and traveled to Śrāvastī, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Then Venerable Maudgalyāyana thought, “It is time to put my question to the Blessed One, so that many might become disillusioned with saṃsāra.” He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took a seat at one side.

3.195 Once he had taken a seat at one side, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, it is my custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.196 “When I return I relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When I return I also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Because of this, the people who hear me are filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they go on to achieve great things.

3.197 “Lord, after preparing to wander among the animals, I disappeared from Śrāvastī and stood on the shore of the sea. Lord, while I was there, I saw a being whose body was 2,100 yojanas in length.

What is more, the other sea creatures, great and small, gathered around him. Again and again they cut his body into pieces—some one league long, some two leagues, some three leagues, and some up to one hundred yojanas in length—and fed on him. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony.

3.198 “All this suffering exhausted him, and he emerged onto dry land hoping for some respite. But when he emerged onto dry land, due to his past actions five hundred yakṣas appeared, and for five hundred days with five hundred axes they hacked off his ribs one by one. Once all his ribs had been cut away in this manner, unable to bear the pain he let loose a great cry and rolled back into the great ocean. All of this bleeding and rolling about agitated the great ocean, roiling it up until it looked like an ocean of blood. And now that he had fallen back into it, the creatures fed on him again. No matter whether he emerged onto dry land or stayed in the water, he suffered dreadfully.

3.199 “Lord, what action did this being take that ripened into his taking birth among the animals and meeting with such suffering?”

“Maudgalyāyana,” the Blessed One explained, “that being committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again. He committed many nonvirtuous actions.

3.200 “Maudgalyāyana, in times past, when the totally and completely awakened Buddha Parvata, who far surpassed the listeners and the solitary buddhas, was in the world, there was a householder who found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Parvata, heard the Dharma from him, and manifested the resultant state of non-return.

3.201 “His wife was very well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. Her husband told her, ‘Sweet one, I have received from the Blessed One the five precepts for practicing the holy life. If you wish to

remain here at home, I shall provide you with food and clothes. But if it is another man you desire, I shall relinquish you to him.'

"'Lord, I need no other man,' she said. 'I shall love and honor only my lord.'

3.202 "Many men were captivated by the woman because of her fine figure. There was a petty official living in the area who thought, 'How could I ever get together with that woman?' So one day, laden with gold and silver, he went to see her husband, the lay vow holder, bringing with him a host of witnesses.

3.203 "'Householder," he said, "I must leave on a matter of royal concern. I cannot forward these articles there. I entrust them to you until my return.' The householder, being an upright person, accepted all the articles in the presence of the witnesses. The petty official, putting everything in his hands, then returned to his house.

3.204 "Some time later, he returned to the lay vow holder, saying, 'Householder, give me the articles that I entrusted to you,' and the householder returned everything to him, with no witnesses present. The man stowed the articles at his own house again and then brought all the witnesses back to see the lay vow holder and said, 'Householder, please return to me the king's property that I entrusted to you.'

3.205 "'I've already given it to you,' replied the lay vow holder.

"'I have received nothing from you,' said the petty official. Turning to the witnesses, he exclaimed, 'See how this lay vow holder acts! Would he have given all those articles back to me when we were alone, after I handed them to him with you as our witnesses?'

3.206 "After he said this, he led the man to the royal palace and had him legally convicted. Then he brought him back to his own house, where he beat him with a strip of wet leather, bound him tightly,

and broke all his ribs, which was enough to cause his death.

3.207 "The man's son was not home, so the petty official commandeered not only the possessions of the house but the man's wife as well. 'It's for your sake that I committed all these misdeeds, my dear,' he told her. 'So I am the man of the house now, and you are my wife.'

3.208 "To this the lay vow holder's wife replied, 'How can we be together when I haven't even performed the ritual veneration of my husband's remains? First let me venerate his remains for a time. After that, lord, I shall do as you please.'

3.209 "No sooner was this said than the petty official bore the lay vow holder's remains to the charnel ground and incinerated them. As he sat there with his back to her, the woman leapt into the burning fire and died on the spot. At this the petty official began to brood, thinking, 'Such wrongs I have committed, one after the other! Meeting that woman was of no benefit. Not only did I commit such senseless acts, but now she's gone.'

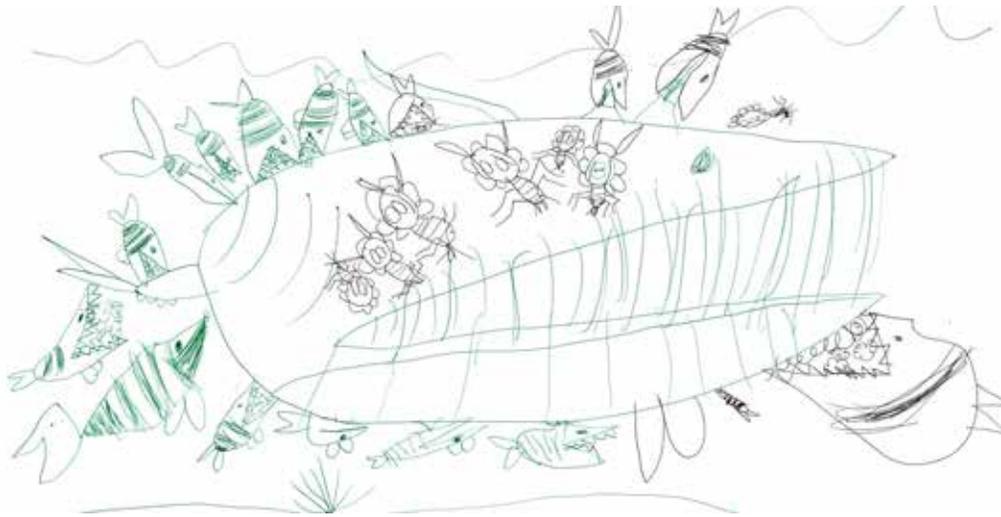
3.210 "O monks, what do you think? The one who was that petty official then is none other than this sea creature. The act of beating the lay vow holder with a wet strip of leather and causing his death ripened such that the petty official took rebirth as a hell being, where he underwent the sufferings of the hell beings for thousands upon thousands of years. When he died, he transmigrated and took rebirth among the animals, dying from among the animals only to transmigrate and take birth among the animals again. Such are his sufferings."

Then Venerable Maudgalyāyana inquired of the Blessed One, "Lord, when will this being be liberated from his suffering?"

3.211 "Maudgalyāyana," the Blessed One replied, "in the future a totally and completely awakened buddha named Sumati, who will far surpass the listeners and the solitary buddhas, will emerge in

the world. At that distant time the actions of this being will be exhausted. After attaining a human birth, he will go forth solely in the doctrine of Sumati, cast away the afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Then his suffering will come to an end.”

3.212 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.



The First "Cut" Story

Jojo / 6 years old

4. ii The Second “Cut” Story

3.213 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, it was Venerable Maudgalyāyana’s custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.214 When he returned, he would relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When he returned, he would also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Those who heard him were filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they went on to achieve great things.

3.215 One day Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana prepared himself to wander among the anguished spirits, disappeared from Śrāvastī, and stood on the seashore, where there lay an anguished spirit with an enormous body. The lower half looked very ordinary, but from the waist up it was like two separate bodies. He was on fire, burning all over, covered in flames, and he lurched all about until, due to his past actions, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and the like, all with fangs of iron, appeared and tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

3.216 Humans appeared there due to his past actions as well, and they took up sharp swords and hacked at his upper body. While they hacked away at one side of his upper body, the other side would regenerate, and when they hacked away at the other side, the first side would regenerate. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating,

unbearable agony, and he let loose great cries. As he tried to flee, the humans who appeared due to his past actions pursued him.

3.217 Seeing all this, Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “What action did this being take that ripened into such suffering?” When he examined that being’s past lives, he saw that after going forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, the spirit had acted as steward for the monks. But then he cut off the monks in rainy season retreat from all material support and clothing and offered it to the monks in winter retreat. Then he cut off the monks in winter retreat from all material support and clothing and offered it to the monks in rainy season retreat. Finally, he cut off both from all material support and clothing, used some of it for himself, and offered the rest to others.

3.218 Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “Though indeed I can see his past actions clearly, still I shall ask the Blessed One about this so that many might become disillusioned with saṃsāra.”

3.219 He disappeared from the shore of the great ocean and traveled to Śrāvastī, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Then Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, seeing that the Blessed One was teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds, thought, “Now is the time to request the Blessed One to explain about that anguished spirit.” He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took a seat at one side.

3.220 Once he had taken a seat at one side, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, it is my custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.221 “When I return I relate to people how the hell

beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When I return I also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Because of this, the people who hear me are filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they go on to achieve great things.

3.222 “Lord, as I was wandering among the anguished spirits, I saw an anguished spirit with an enormous body. The lower end looked very ordinary, but from the waist up it was like two separate bodies. He was on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames, and he lurched all about until, due to his past actions, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and the like, all with fangs of iron, appeared and tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him.

3.223 “Humans appeared there due to his past actions as well, and they took up sharp swords and hacked at his upper body. While they hacked away at one side of his upper body, the other side would regenerate, and when they hacked away at the other side, the first side would regenerate. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, and he let loose a great cry. As he tried to flee, the humans who appeared due to his past actions pursued him.

3.224 “Lord, what action did this anguished spirit take that ripened into his meeting with such suffering?”

“Maudgalyāyana,” the Blessed One explained, “that being committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again. He committed many nonvirtuous actions.

3.225 “Maudgalyāyana, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct,

the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, that being went forth in his doctrine. He acted as steward for the monks, but then he cut off the monks in rainy season retreat from all material support and clothing and offered it to the monks in winter retreat. Then he cut off the monks in winter retreat from all material support and clothing and offered it to the monks in rainy season retreat. Finally, he cut off both from all material support and clothing, used some of it for himself, and offered the rest to others.

3.226 “Maudgalyāyana, what do you think? The one who provided for those monks then is none other than this anguished spirit. At that time he cut off the monks in rainy season retreat from all material support and clothing and offered it to the monks in winter retreat. Then he cut off the monks in winter retreat from all material support and clothing and offered it to the monks in rainy season retreat. Those acts ripened such that this being was like two separate bodies from the waist up, and humans appeared due to his past actions who took up sharp swords and hacked at his upper body. While they hacked away at one side of his upper body, the other side would regenerate, and when they hacked away at the other side, the first side would regenerate.

3.227 “The act of finally cutting off both from all material support and clothing, using some of it for himself, and offering the rest to others ripened such that there fell upon him lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and the like, all with fangs of iron, that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him, causing him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony until he let loose a great cry, and that as he tried to flee, the humans who appeared due to his past actions pursued him.”

3.228 Then Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana inquired

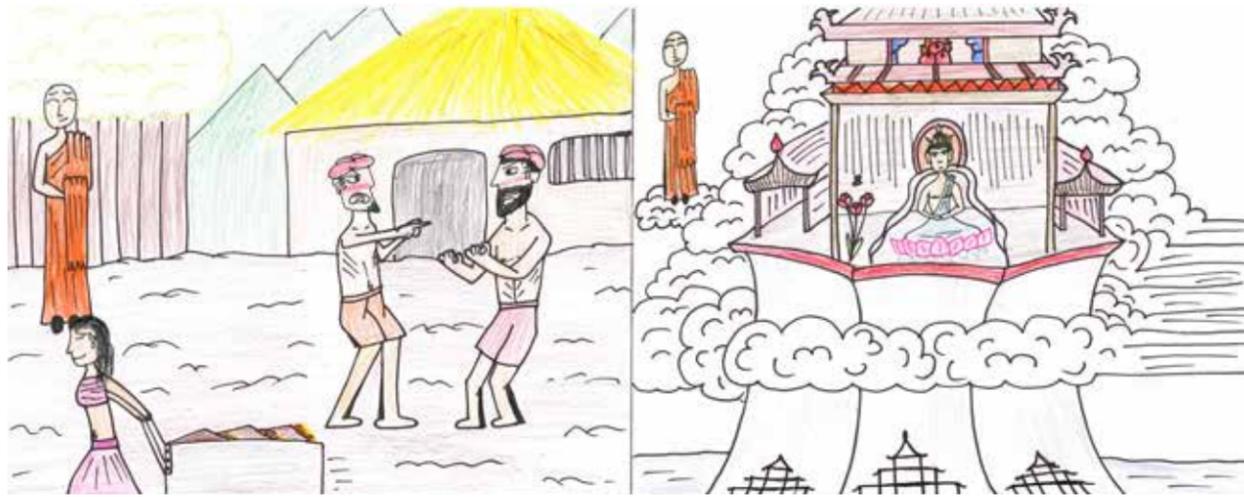
of the Blessed One, “Lord, when will this being be released from this suffering?”

“Maudgalyāyana,” the Blessed One replied, “in the future a totally and completely awakened buddha named Aparājita, who will far surpass the listeners and the solitary buddhas, will emerge in the world. At that distant time the actions of this being will be exhausted. After he attains a human birth, he will go forth in the doctrine of Aparājita alone, cast away the afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Then his suffering will come to an end.”

3.229 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

THE END

Next: *Being Devoured*



The Second "Cut" Story

Karma Dechen TOBGAY / 13 years old

Part Three (5)

Being
Devoured

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 Being Devoured

3.230 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, it was Venerable Maudgalyāyana’s custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.231 When he returned, he would relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When he returned, he would also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Those who heard him were filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they went on to achieve great things.

3.232 One day Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, prepared himself to wander among the anguished spirits, disappeared from Śrāvastī, and traveled to Vindhyaśāla, to a hollow in the forest where he saw an anguished spirit that was on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—he was nothing but a single, searing flame. When he fled to the plains, due to his past actions lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and the like, all with fangs of iron, appeared and tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him. This caused him extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, and he ran all about.

3.233 Seeing him, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “What action did this being take that ripened into such suffering?”

When he examined that being’s past lives, he saw that after going forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, the spirit had acted as steward for the monks, but then he used the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their means of regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions to indulge himself as he pleased and to make gifts of it to others.

3.234 Thereupon Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “Though indeed I can see his past actions clearly, still I shall ask the Blessed One about this, so that many might become disillusioned with saṃsāra.” He disappeared from the hollow in the forest at Vindhyaśāla and traveled to Śrāvastī, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Then Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, seeing that the Blessed One was teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds, thought, “Now is the time to request the Blessed One to explain about that anguished spirit.” He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took a seat at one side.

3.235 Once he had taken a seat at one side, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, it is my custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.236 “When I return I relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When I return I also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals

suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Because of this, the people who hear me are filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they go on to achieve great things.

3.237 “Lord, as I was wandering among the anguished spirits, I disappeared from Śrāvastī, and in Vindhyācala, in a hollow in the forest, Lord, I saw an anguished spirit with an enormous body that was on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—he was nothing but a single, searing flame. When he fled to the plains, from his past actions lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and the like, all with fangs of iron, appeared. When he submerged himself in the water, crocodiles with fangs of iron appeared. When he fled into the sky above, woodpeckers with beaks of iron appeared. All these creatures tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him. This caused him extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, and he ran all about.

3.238 “Lord, what action did this being take that ripened into his meeting with such suffering?”

“Maudgalyāyana,” the Blessed One explained, “that being committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again. He committed many nonvirtuous actions.

3.239 “Maudgalyāyana, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, that being went forth in his doctrine. After that, he acted as steward for the monks, calling upon many benefactors and patrons and accepting donations on behalf of the saṅgha and the stūpa. He took the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their means of

regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions, and used it to indulge himself as he pleased and to make gifts of it to others. This act of cutting off the saṅgha from these donations, indulging himself as he pleased, and giving them to others ripened such that he took birth among the anguished spirits, and there was devoured by the creatures that lurk in the sky, in water, and on the plains.”

3.240 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

THE END

Next: *The Story of Nandaka*



Being Devoured



喻玛呢巴美叫舍

Jada Liu / 13 years old

Part Three (6)

The Story of
Nandaka

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཏུང་།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Story of Nandaka

3.241 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, it was Venerable Nandaka’s custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.242 When he returned, he would relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When he returned, he would also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Those who heard him were filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they went on to achieve great things.

3.243 One day Venerable Nandaka prepared himself to wander among the anguished spirits, disappeared from Śrāvastī, and traveled to the seashore where he saw an anguished spirit that was completely naked and covered only by the hair of her head. She was covered in flames like a burning log, and completely blind. Worms poured forth from her nose and mouth, and she reeked with a stench that could be smelled for many yojanas. She ran all about, but mottled blue dogs bit her wherever

she went. This caused her dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, and she cried out loudly as she ran all about.

3.244 Seeing her, Venerable Nandaka asked himself, “What action did this being take?” When he examined that being’s past lives, he saw that after going forth as a nun in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, she was hot-tempered and quarrelsome, slandered many different nuns, and created obstacles to their material well-being.

3.245 Venerable Nandaka thought, “Though indeed I can see her past actions clearly, still I shall ask the Blessed One about this, so that many might become disillusioned with saṃsāra.” He disappeared from the seashore and traveled to Śrāvastī, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Then Venerable Nandaka, seeing that the Blessed One was teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds, thought, “Now is the time to ask the Blessed One to explain about that anguished spirit.” He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took a seat at one side.

3.246 Once he had taken a seat at one side, Venerable Nandaka inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, it has always been my custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.247 “When I return I relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When I return I also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling,

disintegrating, and decaying. Because of this, the people who hear me are filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they go on to achieve great things.

3.248 “Lord, after preparing to wander among the anguished spirits, I disappeared from Śrāvastī and stood on the seashore. There, Lord, I saw an anguished spirit that was completely naked and covered only by the hair of her head. She was covered in flames like a burning log, and completely blind. Worms poured forth from her nose and mouth, and she reeked with a stench that could be smelled for many yojanas. She ran all about, but mottled blue dogs bit her wherever she went. This caused her dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, and she cried out loudly as she ran all about.

3.249 “Lord, what action did this anguished spirit take that ripened into her meeting with such suffering?”

“Nandaka,” the Blessed One explained, “that anguished spirit committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again. She committed many nonvirtuous actions.

3.250 “Nandaka, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in Vārāṇasī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa —with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

3.251 “When the time came for him to marry he took a wife. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they

named her according to their clan. They reared her on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake.

3.252 “When she grew up she found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, asked for her parents’ permission, and went forth. After going forth, she studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of her wisdom and freedom. Having acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick, she called upon all the benefactors and patrons to build a stūpa and a monastery associated with it that was complete in every respect. She made offerings to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of nuns.

3.253 “As she went about providing for the needs of all the nuns, she became arrogant about her well-proportioned shape, youthfulness, and high caste, and was unable to maintain her moral discipline. Then she took all the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions, and indulged herself as she pleased. When the nuns heard of this, they banished her from the nunnery.

3.254 “Consumed with fury and compelled by her anger, she assailed with harsh and hurtful language many nuns on the path of learning and the path of no more to learn. From house to house she slandered them by exclaiming, ‘These nuns violate moral discipline and are sinful!’ She thus created obstacles to their material well-being, disrespected them, and looked upon them with hate.

3.255 “Nandaka, what do you think? The one who was that nun then is none other than this anguished spirit. The act of disrespecting and creating obstacles to the material well-being of those nuns on the paths of learning and no more to learn ripened into her birth as an anguished spirit. The act of assailing them with harsh and hurtful

language ripened into worms pouring forth from her mouth and nose. The act of slandering them from house to house by exclaiming, ‘These nuns violate moral discipline and are sinful!’ ripened into her reeking with a stench that could be smelled for many yojanas. The act of looking upon the nuns with hate ripened into her becoming completely blind. The act of taking all the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions and indulging herself as she pleased ripened into her being snapped at by mottled blue dogs. Such were the acts she committed.”

3.256 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

THE END

Next: *Chunks of Meat*



Part Three (7)

Chunks of Meat

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་ལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 Chunks of Meat

3.257 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, it was Venerable Maudgalyāyana’s custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.258 When he returned, he would relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When he returned, he would also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Those who heard him were filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they went on to achieve great things.

3.259 One day Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana prepared himself to wander among the anguished spirits, disappeared from Śrāvastī, and traveled to the seashore. There he saw one whose flesh was nothing but chunks of meat piled as high as a shrine hall. When he sat on the ground, needle-beaked creatures stood and jabbed him from all sides, intent on eating him, but when he rose up toward the sky, his entire body burst into flames. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony.

3.260 Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “What

action did this being take that ripened into such dreadful suffering?” When he examined that being’s past lives, he saw that after going forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, he had acted as steward for the monks. But then he took all the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions and used them himself, gave some to his relatives, and incinerated some out of anger. These were the actions that ripened into his meeting with such suffering.

3.261 Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “Though indeed I can see his past actions clearly, still I shall ask the Blessed One about this, so that many might become disillusioned with saṃsāra.” He disappeared from the seashore and traveled to Śrāvastī, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Then Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “Now is the time to request the Blessed One to explain about that anguished spirit.” He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took a seat at one side.

3.262 Once he had taken a seat at one side, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, it is my custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.263 “When I return I relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When I return I also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling,

disintegrating, and decaying. Because of this, the people who hear me are filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they go on to achieve great things.

3.264 “Lord, after preparing to wander among the anguished spirits, I disappeared from Śrāvastī and traveled to the seashore, Lord, where I saw one whose flesh was nothing but chunks of meat piled as high as a shrine hall. When he sat on the ground, needle-beaked creatures stood and jabbed him from all sides, intent on eating him. But when he rose up toward the sky, his entire body burst into flames. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony.

3.265 “Lord, what action did this anguished spirit take that ripened into his meeting with such suffering?”
“Maudgalyāyana,” the Blessed One explained, “that being committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again. He committed many nonvirtuous actions.

3.266 “Maudgalyāyana, in times gone by, after going forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, that being acted as steward for the monks. But then he took all the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions and instead enjoyed some for himself and hoarded the rest. One day, having fallen ill, he handed the riches over to his relatives. The monks saw this and put a stop to it, so he thought, ‘If they’re trying to stop me, then at the very least I shall make it so that none of us will benefit!’ Then in anger he set all the riches on fire.

3.267 “After that he died from there and transmigrated, taking rebirth as an anguished spirit. Then the act of taking all the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions ripened into his flesh being nothing but chunks of meat piled as high as a shrine hall and needle-

beaked creatures feeding on him. The act of burning the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions ripened such that when he rose up toward the sky, his entire body burst into flames. Such were the actions of that being that ripened into his experiences of such suffering.”

3.268 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

THE END

Next: *The One Who Thought He Saw His Son*



Chunks of Meat

Bodhitara Jarensri Doctor / 7 years old

Part Three (8)

The One Who Thought
He Saw His Son

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བུ་སྟེན་པ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The One Who Thought He Saw His Son

3.269 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain brahmin who was aged and decrepit. He went to the garden of Prince Jeta on an errand, and he saw the Blessed One there teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Seeing him, the brahmin perceived him to be his own son and he went and put his arms around him. But when the monks saw the brahmin had put his arms around the Blessed One, they sought to hinder him.

3.270 The Blessed One spoke to the monks, saying, “Monks, it is out of love for his son that he puts his arms around me. Therefore, do not hinder him. Monks, if you don’t let this brahmin put his arms around me, he will spew warm blood from his mouth and die.” So the brahmin embraced the Blessed One and then sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

3.271 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the brahmin destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

3.272 Having seen the truths, he rose from his seat,

drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and implored him, “Blessed One, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

3.273 The Blessed One said to him, “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life.”

As soon as the Blessed One had finished speaking there he stood, alms bowl and water pitcher in hand, with but a week’s worth of hair and beard, and with the deportment of a monk who had been ordained for one hundred years. As it is stated,

3.274 Garbed in robes, with shaven heads,
And senses stilled by Buddha’s will—
From the very moment the One Thus Gone
Spoke to them, saying, “Come, join me.”

3.275 The Blessed One conferred on him instruction and, casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

3.276 The monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, tell us why thousands of men have seen the Blessed One, but no one has ever said with love, ‘I have met my son!’ and then run to put his arms around the Blessed One like that.”

“For five hundred lives this brahmin was my

father,” the Blessed One explained. “It is because of these habitual tendencies alone that he said with love, ‘I have met my son!’ and put his arms around me.”

3.277 The monks further inquired, “Lord, if he was the Blessed One’s father for five hundred lifetimes, why is he not your father now?”

The Blessed One replied, “Because bodhisattvas want so deeply to renounce and to perform acts of charity, and in all my lives he obstructed my renunciation and charity, I prayed, ‘May he not become my father again.’ Furthermore, Śuddhodana also prayed, ‘Oh, may I become the father of the Buddha.’ ”

3.278 The monks then asked him, “Lord, where did Śuddhodana make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One replied, “in times past, in the ninety-first eon, when the totally and completely awakened Buddha Vipāsyin was in the world, a certain trader offered a meal and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May my child be one as precious as this. May I please him and not displease him.’ ”

3.279 The monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, what action did this brahmin take that ripened such that he grew impoverished and old before going forth?”

“Bodhisattvas want so deeply to renounce and to perform acts of charity,” the Blessed One explained, “and he continually created obstacles to my giving and obstacles to my renunciation. This act of continually creating obstacles to my giving and obstacles to my renunciation ripened into his growing impoverished and old before going forth.”

3.280 “Lord,” they asked further, “what action did this brahmin take that ripened such that he pleased the Blessed One, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

The Blessed One explained, “After going forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.281 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than this brahmin. At that time, he practiced the holy life all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.282 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Farmer*



The One Who Thought He Saw His Son

Sangha Mitra Sangpo Shrestha / 8 years old

Part Three (9)

The
Farmer

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟོ་བྱེད།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 The Farmer

3.283 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain poor brahmin who made his living by farming. The brahmin, being hardworking, took up his plow early one morning and went out into the field. His wife, a brahmanī, likewise went out into the field, carrying the brahmin’s food and drink. When they had both eaten their food, the brahmanī returned home, while the brahmin stayed at work in the field.

3.284 The brahmin’s field was not far from the garden of Prince Jeta, and on the way home that afternoon the brahmin and the brahmanī saw the Blessed One and his great disciples one after another emerging from Śrāvastī. They felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One and his disciples, and in their joy the two of them said to one another, “Whatever sufferings we have now are all on account of not making merit in times past. If we don’t act virtuously now either, when we die from here and transmigrate, still we will only ever be poor.”

3.285 “Sweet one,” the brahmin asked, “do we have anything of great value, like the rich use to give gifts and make merit?”

“Lord, you needn’t worry about such things,” his wife replied. “The ascetic Gautama is a field of merit for all humanity. Even doing him some small service will bring a very great result. Let us offer food to the ascetic Gautama. If we make an offering to him, our poverty will come to an end.”

3.286 “As you wish,” the brahmin said. “Go and make

many good, wholesome foods. Then early in the morning, when the ascetic Gautama heads for alms in Śrāvastī, we’ll go wait in the field to offer the food.”

3.287 “As you wish, lord,” said the brahmanī, who returned home and prepared many good, wholesome foods. They rose early the next morning and went out into the field, where they stood facing the garden of Prince Jeta and waited for the Blessed One.

3.288 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

3.289 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of

virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?"

3.290 "Those mired in misdeeds will be lifted up by the hand. Those lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones will command the seven jewels of the noble ones. Those who have not produced roots of virtue will produce them. In those who have already produced them, roots of virtue will ripen. The blade of wisdom will slice open the roots of virtue of those in whom they have already ripened. For them this world, adorned by the presence of a buddha, will be fruitful."

3.291 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

3.292 Then the Blessed One thought, "The time has come to tame both the brahmin and his wife, the brahmanī." In the morning he donned his lower garment and holy robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī. The two brahmins saw the Blessed One from a distance. Seeing him, they approached the Blessed One, and upon their arrival touched their heads to his feet and beseeched him, "Blessed One, here, in this field, please accept this offering of food from us." The Blessed One assented by his silence.

3.293 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the brahmin then prepared a seat for him. "Please sit upon the seat that I have prepared," he requested, and the Blessed One took his place on the seat prepared for him.

3.294 Once the two brahmins knew that the Blessed Buddha was comfortably seated, by their own hands they contented him with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that he wished.

Having by their own hands contented him with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that he wished, once they knew that he had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, they sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught them the Dharma particularly suited to their condition and departed.

3.295 As soon as the Blessed One left, the two brahmins began to pray, "By this root of virtue, may our poverty come to an end. May all the sprouts of barley growing in our field turn into sprouts of gold. May it be just so! May it not be otherwise!" No sooner had the two brahmins said these words than they saw that all the sprouts of barley growing in their field were gold.

3.296 When she saw this the brahmin's wife exclaimed, "Lord! Our prayers have been fulfilled! But we cannot make use of this gold without asking the king."

So her husband went immediately to see King Prasenajit. Upon his arrival he addressed the king: "Deva, sprouts of gold have come up in our barley field. It would only be proper for Deva to take his share."

3.297 "Alas, has this brahmin gone mad?" thought King Prasenajit. But when he looked at him, the king saw that he had a clear mind and a peaceful demeanor. Seeing this he thought, "Might this actually be true?" and so he dispatched his royal servants to investigate. But when they arrived, they saw no golden sprouts. They returned and said to the king, "If that brahmin hasn't lost his mind, then where are all the sprouts of gold?"

3.298 The brahmin returned and pleaded with King Prasenajit, "Deva, I am certain I see sprouts of gold, so I bid you, please take your share!"

The king thought, "Perhaps this brahmin made merit at some previous time —or perhaps he has only now sowed seeds in a good field." So the king

himself went out into the brahmin's field, but he didn't see sprouts of gold either. He said to the brahmin, "Brahmin, if you see gold sprouts, then whatever you're giving away, give to me."

3.299 Right away the brahmin culled a portion from the field. "These belong to you, Deva," he said.

No sooner did the king reply, "These are mine," than he too saw the sprouts of gold. He was astounded to see them, and in his astonishment he asked the brahmin, "Brahmin, what did you do to achieve something so magnificent?"

"Deva, I offered food to the ascetic Gautama," the brahmin replied.

"Brahmin, you did indeed sow seeds in a good field. Go now, don't be shy—enjoy them without fear, and give gifts and make merit." After saying this, the king departed.

3.300 The brahmin thought, "Whatever glory I have received, I have received it by entrusting myself to the Blessed One. It is his kindness alone I must repay." So he put the wealth of his household on extravagant display. After hosting the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months, providing for all their needs, he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks each a set of robes, and then sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

3.301 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the brahmin and the people of his house destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat. Having seen the truths, the brahmin thought, "I should give up living at home to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort." So he gave gifts

and generated merit.

3.302 He went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, and, casting away all afflictive emotions with diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

3.303 "Lord," the monks inquired of the Blessed One, "what action did this brahmin take that ripened into his seeing that the sprouts of barley growing in his field were sprouts of gold, and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?"

3.304 "Monks," the Blessed One replied, "it was partly his past actions, and it is partly his present actions as well. As for his past actions, monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, this brahmin went forth in his doctrine.

3.305 "He practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, 'While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. By this root of virtue, may I please and not

displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.306 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that monk then is none other than this brahmin. At that time he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.307 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. These were his past actions.

3.308 “As for his present actions, after offering me food, he prayed, ‘May my poverty immediately come to an end. May all my sprouts of barley turn into sprouts of gold! May it be just so! May it not be otherwise.’ These were his present actions.”

THE END

Next: *Death*



The Farmer

Manju Chandra Sun / 5 years old

Part Three (10)

Death

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟུང་།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 Death

3.309 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, there lived in Rājagṛha a certain brahmin. When the time came for him to marry, he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

3.310 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

3.311 That brahmin, having found faith in the Buddha, and in the Dharma and the Saṅgha, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts. One day he contented the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with many good, wholesome foods, and then sat before them to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him, and departed.

3.312 Then one day the brahmin fell ill. Though he

was treated with medicinal roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits, he could not be cured, and died. After his death, he transmigrated and took rebirth among the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. The brahmin's son laid down his father's remains not far from Vulture Peak Mountain, where they were cremated. In misery he remained there in the charnel ground, suffering, lamenting, and beating his chest, wailing, "My father, my only father!" and roaming all about.

3.313 Now when young gods and goddesses are born they possess three different types of innate knowledge. They know (1) whence they have died and transmigrated, (2) where they have been born, and (3) why they have taken birth there.

The brahmin saw that when he died as a human being, having offered his respectful service to the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, taken refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts, he had transmigrated and taken rebirth as a god in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three.

3.314 The young god who formerly was the brahmin thought, "It's been a whole day since I approached the Blessed One and offered him my respect. This isn't proper of me. Not a day should pass without my seeing the Blessed One and offering him my respect." So he decorated himself with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on a crown decorated with various types of precious jewels, and perfumed his body with saffron, tamala, *spṛka*, and other herbs.

3.315 That night he filled the front of his long shirt with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers. Disappearing from among the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, he approached the Blessed One, scattered the divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers over the Blessed One, touched his head to the feet of the Blessed One, and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

3.316 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the young god who formerly was the brahmin destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. Having seen the truths, he touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, circumambulated him three times, and disappeared from the Blessed One's presence.

3.317 Just then the young god looked out and saw his son in misery there in the charnel ground, suffering, lamenting, beating his chest, wailing, "My father, my only father!" and roaming all about. Seeing him so, he went to his son and said, "My son, you needn't mourn for me. Don't mourn for me so."

3.318 "Who are you?" asked the son.

The young god replied, "I am your father."

"Where did you take rebirth?" asked the son.

The young god said, "I took birth among the gods."

3.319 "What action did you take to be born there?" asked the son.

"I served the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks," the young god replied, "and I took refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts. You needn't mourn for me. Your concern should be for yourself. Take refuge in the Blessed One. From him all good things will come to you."

3.320 Then the young god disappeared from that place and traveled up to be among the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. The brahmin's son not only obeyed the words of his father and gave up mourning, but in his joy toward the Blessed One he approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

3.321 The Blessed One directly apprehended his

thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the brahmin's son destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

3.322 Having seen the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested of the Blessed One, "Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life."

3.323 With the words "Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life," the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice and conferred on him full ordination and instructed him. He cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

3.324 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, "Lord, tell us why this young brahmin who lacked faith was brought by his father to perfect faith, went forth, pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, cast all away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship."

"Not only now," the Blessed One explained, "but in times past as well, and in the same way, this young brahmin who lacked faith was brought by

his father to perfect faith, went forth, and practiced pure conduct all his life. Listen well!

3.325 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain brahmin in Vārāṇasī.

3.326 “One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child. As he grew up, he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *R̥g Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

3.327 “One day his father developed a deep admiration for the Buddha, and a deep admiration for the Dharma and the Saṅgha, and he took refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts. Then one day he died, transmigrated, and took rebirth among the gods. In misery the brahmin’s son suffered, lamenting, beating his chest, wailing, ‘My father, my only father!’ and roaming all about.

“Sensing this, his father went to him and said, ‘My son, you needn’t mourn for me. Don’t mourn for me so.’

3.328 “‘Who are you?’ asked the son.

“The young god replied, ‘I am your father.’

“‘Where were you reborn?’ asked the son.

“The young god said, ‘I took birth among the gods.’

3.329 “‘What action did you take to be born there?’ asked the son.

“‘I served the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks,’ the young god replied, ‘and I took refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts. You needn’t mourn for me. Your concern should be for yourself. Take refuge in the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. From him all good things will come to you.’

3.330 “The young god disappeared, and the young brahmin not only obeyed the words of his father, but went forth in the doctrine of Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all his life, at the time of his death he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

3.331 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the father of that young brahmin then is none other than this brahmin. The one who was his son then is none other than this young man. At that time, he entrusted himself to his father, found faith, and practiced the holy life all his life. Now as well, he has entrusted himself to his father, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: A Story about Kokālika



Death

Nangselma / 5 years old

Part Three (11)

A Story about
Kokālika

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

11 A Story about Kokālika

3.332 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, Venerable Kokālika was living in the deer park in The Terrifying Forest on Mount Sabkang. All the brahmin householders living on Mount Sabkang held him in high esteem, revered him, and honored and venerated him. Having acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick, he provided for all the needs of every monk who came there.

3.333 At that time Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana were traveling through the region and arrived at Mount Sabkang, where they stayed in the deer park in The Terrifying Forest. The monk Kokālika heard that Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana were traveling through the region and had arrived at Mount Sabkang, where they were staying in the deer park in The Terrifying Forest. When he heard this he went to see Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. Upon his arrival he touched his head to Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's feet and took a seat at one side.

3.334 Once he had taken a seat on the side, the monk Kokālika told Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, "Lords, I shall provide for all your needs. Don't be concerned."

"Venerable one," they said, "This area of Mount Sabkang is so eerie that we can't bear to stay here. We're going to stay at such-and-such a place, a very

remote and secluded part of the mountain."

"If you do go there," Kokālika said, "I would still like to come and provide for all your needs. Please permit me to do so."

3.335 Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana replied, "If you don't tell anyone that Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana are both staying on Mount Sabkang in the hermitage at such-and-such a place, then we will stay there. If you do tell anyone, then we will go elsewhere without a word to you."

"I won't tell anyone. Please, permit me," Kokālika said. They assented by their silence and went to stay in the hermitage as they had agreed. As they settled in, Kokālika provided for all their needs.

3.336 At that time a certain householder lived on Mount Sabkang who deeply admired the monk Kokālika and provided for all his needs. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. When he had grown, he entrusted himself to Venerable Kokālika, found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts. One day he thought, "I will give up living at home to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One."

3.337 He went to see Venerable Kokālika and said to him, "Lord Kokālika, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life."

"Young man, have your parents consented?" asked Kokālika.

"No, they have not," he replied.

3.338 "Young man, the buddhas and their disciples neither lead novices to go forth nor confer full ordination on young persons without their parents' permission," the monk told him. "Go and ask your parents, then come back here. This will make

things easier for you later on.”

He said, “As you wish, noble one.” Then he approached his parents and requested, “Mother, Father, I am asking for your kind permission to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

3.339 His parents replied, “Though death will separate us from you, for as long as we yet live we cannot permit this.”

One day, it so happened that Venerable Kokālika had to go down into the townships on an errand. He presented his students and disciples to Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, saying, “Lords, I have to travel through the townships for a little while. Lords, please confer upon these monks instruction, advice to ponder, and a topic for further inquiry.” Having thus presented the group to them, he began to travel through the townships.

3.340 When he had gone, Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana wondered, “Do these monks have some small measure of the virtues that are conducive to the four stages of penetrative insight?” They looked out and saw that they did, but that it depended solely on the two of them. So Venerable Maudgalyāyana inspired the monks with a miracle of magical abilities and Venerable Śāriputra inspired them with a miracle of admonition. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship.

3.341 After they achieved arhatship, the householder’s son again asked for his parents’ permission, returned to the monastery, approached the monks, and asked them, “Where is Lord Kokālika?”

“What do you need him for?” they asked.

“I would like him to lead me to go forth,” said the young man.

3.342 “Why do you need Kokālika?” the monks asked him. “Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana are a supreme and excellent pair. You should go forth with them.”

The young man was thrilled to hear this. He went

to see Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, and upon his arrival he touched his head to their feet and sat before Venerable Śāriputra to listen to the Dharma. Venerable Śāriputra directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, the young man destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

3.343 Having seen the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward Venerable Śāriputra with palms pressed together, and implored Venerable Śāriputra, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

3.344 “Young man, have your parents consented?” Śāriputra asked.

The young man replied, “Yes, Lord Śāriputra, they have.”

Thereupon Venerable Śāriputra led him to go forth as a novice and conferred on him full ordination and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. Having achieved arhatship, he established his parents in the truths, and he inspired them to give gifts and to share what they had.

3.345 Then one day on Mount Sabkang the gods announced, “Pay heed! The monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana are living near your village. If you do not go see them to offer your respectful service, what can you hope for? What good will come of you?” Hearing this, many of the people living on Mount Sabkang gathered—group after group, elder

after elder, one joyful group after another—and convened upon Mount Sabkang to see Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. As they arrived they began touching their heads to their feet and offering their respect.

3.346 Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana thought, “We have to put a stop to all this worldly profit and acclaim. We already made an agreement with Kokālika, saying, ‘If you don’t tell anyone that Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana are both staying in the hermitage at such-and-such a place, we will stay here in the hermitage. But if people come trying to help and offering their respect, we’ll both leave this place without a word to you.’ ” And so they departed.

3.347 Kokālika’s students and disciples said, “We will accompany our two preceptors.”

“You all must go to Rājagṛha,” Śāriputra replied. “We need to go elsewhere and act for the benefit of those to be tamed. If we all travel there together, there will not be enough food, and that would be improper.” As soon as the monks heard this, they set out for Rājagṛha via another path and settled in there, while Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana set out upon a different path, where slowly rain began to fall.

3.348 At the foot of those mountains there was a mountain cave, and in that cave there was a buffalo herder woman who had recently gone there and slept with two different men. The monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana arrived after those two had left and sat down at the mouth of the cave.

The monk Kokālika returned to his monastery after those two had left, and when he arrived he found his students and disciples had all disappeared. He asked the other monks, “Where did all my students and disciples go?”

“They left with the monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana,” they replied.

3.349 No sooner did the monk Kokālika hear this than

he was seething with anger. “Not only did those two leave without informing me, they also took my followers with them!” he said.

While he was standing there the householder came to where he was. Kokālika asked the householder, “Householder, where did your child go?”

“He has gone forth,” the householder replied.

3.350 “Who led him to go forth?”

“He went forth in the presence of Śāriputra,” the householder replied. No sooner did Kokālika hear this than he became even more furious at the two of them.

The heartbreaking admonition from the brahmins living on Mount Sabkang had likewise cut him to the quick. “Lord Kokālika,” the brahmins said, “the monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana both came here, but you didn’t inform us.”

3.351 At this he became very embarrassed and thought, “Those two may have gone and taken all my disciples, but I can’t let them get away so easily. I will go there, muster my disciples, and return.” So he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, set out on by the path that the monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana had traveled, until he eventually arrived at the mouth of that very same cave. When he saw the monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana sitting just inside the mouth of the cave, he went to them, touched his head to their feet, made pleasant conversation, and took a seat at one side. The buffalo herder woman heard their conversation, emerged from inside the cave, and departed.

3.352 Now Kokālika suspected there was semen on her, for those gone forth are discerning and can recognize signs. When he looked, he knew that the buffalo herder woman had slept with two men. So when he saw her, the sinful thought occurred to him, “These two revel in sin! They are sinful!” He cursed them with crude, abusive language and left for Rājagṛha. When he came to Bamboo Grove,

he left behind his alms bowl and Dharma robes. Unduly belittling them to every monk he saw, he exclaimed, “Those two revel in sin! They are sinful!”

3.353 When the monks heard about the situation, they informed the Blessed One, and the Blessed One warned the monk Kokālika, “Kokālika, Kokālika, may your mind be filled with joy toward these two gentle, considerate, celibate monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, or else for a long time harm will befall you, and you will not benefit, but suffer.”

“I have faith and trust in the Blessed One,” he replied, “but the monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana revel in sin. Their minds are full of sin.”

3.354 The Blessed One warned the monk Kokālika a second and then a third time in the same way, saying, “Kokālika, Kokālika, may your mind be filled with joy toward these two gentle, considerate, celibate monks, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, or else for a long time harm will befall you, and you will not benefit, but suffer.”

3.355 “I have faith and trust in the Blessed One,” he replied, “but the monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana revel in sin. They have fallen under the sway of sin.” The monk Kokālika paid no heed to the Blessed One’s words the second or the third time. Then he rose from his seat and departed.

3.356 No sooner had the monk Kokālika departed than, first, pimples the size of mustard seeds popped up all over his body. Soon after came pustules the size of beans—small beans, then large ones. After that they became even bigger—like mirabalam fruit, then like very big bilba fruit, then even the size of kapita fruit, until boils completely covered his body. Finally the monk Kokālika began to spew warm blood from his mouth and cried out, “I’m burning! I’m burning!” as pus and blood began to seep and then pour out of his body, until he died.

3.357 He plummeted to the lower realms and took rebirth as a being in the Great Lotus Hell. Taking birth there, he had a body so large it extended for

many yojanas. There, due to his past actions, human beings appeared and tore his tongue from his mouth. There were iron daggers on the molten iron that drenched the floor, which was on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames. These too were on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame.

3.358 On his tongue drove five hundred yokes of oxen, and they too were all on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. These yokes of oxen, which arose due to his past actions, had hooves like the edge of a razor, which were also on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. They caused him infernal torment, for no matter what direction they trod, they cut and hacked at him all over.

3.359 From all around there fell upon him iron-fanged dogs, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and hyenas, who tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him. Iron-beaked vultures, crows, and ospreys came from the sky above him and also tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, and he let loose a great cry.

3.360 Now as night fell, three gods of noble complexion came to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival they touched their heads to his feet and took seats to one side. After they had taken their seats to one side, one god informed the Blessed One, “Lord, the one who sided with Devadatta—the monk Kokālika—has passed away.” Another god added, “Lord, that monk felt such hatred toward Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana that he was born as a hell being in the Great Lotus Hell.” Then the other god said in verse,

3.361 “When certain people are born, a hatchet
Comes swinging from their mouths.
Those who lash out with words of blame

Cut only themselves down.

3.362 “A torrent pouring from the mouth
Carries off the joy of those
Who praise the virtues of the blameful
And vilify those not to blame.

3.363 “A wager lost, the gamblers bicker—
Fights over dice are fairly small.
But the trouble brought to a mind that hates
Those Gone to Bliss is enormous.

3.364 “Because with evil speech and mind
They cursed the Noble Ones,
For 1,350,000,000 years
They’ll circle through the hells.”

3.365 After the three gods had spoken thus, they disappeared. When night had passed, the Blessed One took his place on the seat prepared for him amid the saṅgha of monks. After taking his place, the Blessed One said, “Monks, yesterday, as night fell, three gods of noble complexion came to see the Blessed One, and upon their arrival they touched their heads to his feet and took seats to one side. After they had taken their seats to one side, one god told the Blessed One, ‘Lord, the one who has sided with Devadatta—the monk Kokālika—has passed away.’

3.366 “Another god said, ‘Lord, that monk felt such hatred toward Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana that he was born as a hell being in Great Lotus Hell.’

“Then the other god spoke in verse, and said,

3.367 “ ‘When certain people are born, a hatchet
Comes swinging from their mouths.
Those who lash out with words of blame
Cut only themselves down.

3.368 “ ‘A torrent pouring from the mouth

Carries off the joy of those
Who praise the virtues of the blameful
And vilify those not to blame.

3.369 “ ‘A wager lost, the gamblers bicker—
Fights over dice are fairly small.
But the trouble brought to minds that hate
Those Gone to Bliss is enormous.

3.370 “ ‘Because with evil speech and mind
They cursed the Noble Ones,
For 1,350,000,000 years
They’ll circle through the hells.’

3.371 “Monks, do you wish to hear the lifespan of beings born as hell beings in the Blistering Hell again?”

“Blessed One,” the monks replied, “it is time for the Blessed One to teach us the lifespan of beings born as hell beings in the Blistering Hell. Yes, Sugata, it is time.”

The monks listened as the Blessed One spoke, saying, “In that case, monks, listen well and bear it in mind, and I shall tell you.

3.372 “As an example, monks, if someone were to set aside one grain every ten thousand years from Kośala’s storehouse of sesame grain, which contains twenty ten-bushel vessels filled to the brim with sesame grains, one could exhaust Kośala’s twenty ten-bushel storehouse of sesame grain relatively quickly and complete the task. But I cannot say, monks, that in that time a single lifespan of a being who is born among the hell beings in the Blistering Hell would be exhausted.

3.373 “Twenty lifetimes of a hell being in the Blistering Hell are equal to a single lifetime in the Bursting Blister Hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Bursting Blister Hell are equal to a single lifetime in the Chattering Teeth Hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Chattering Teeth Hell are equal to a single lifetime in the Hell of Lamentation. Twenty lifetimes in the Hell of

Lamentation are equal to a single lifetime in the Cold Whimpering Hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Cold Whimpering Hell are equal to a single lifetime in the Blue Lotus Hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Blue Lotus Hell are equal to a single lifetime in the Lotus Hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Lotus Hell are equal to a single lifetime in the Great Lotus Hell. And now the one who has sided with Devadatta, the monk Kokālika, has taken rebirth there because he felt such hatred toward Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana.

3.374 “That is why, monks, you should train as follows: ‘One should not feel hostile toward so much as a burnt log, let alone a conscious being.’ Furthermore, monks, one should not draw conclusions about others. Monks, those who draw conclusions about others will be lost. Monks, it is only suitable for me and those like me to draw conclusions. Instead of drawing conclusions about others, monks, one should look for the eight different causes for their behavior. One should look at (1) their comportment, (2) the scope of their activities, (3) their spouses, (4) their friends, (5) their livelihood, (6) their learning, (7) what they do, and (8) what they say. Upon such analysis, all hostility will be eliminated. Therefore, monks, you should train yourselves in this: ‘One should not feel hostile toward so much as a burnt log, let alone a conscious being.’”

3.375 After he had said this, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana thought, “We should check on the monk Kokālika.” They disappeared from Bamboo Grove and traveled to the Great Lotus Hell. Upon their arrival they looked around and saw there was one who looked like the monk Kokālika. After they saw him, they approached with their compassionate minds completely focused on him.

3.376 Kokālika saw Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana from a distance, and when he saw them, he felt particular hostility toward them both. “Even when I am born here I am still not free of these two who revel in sin and are sinful.” No sooner did his mind begin

to rage than a hundred thousand yokes of oxen appeared on his tongue. The two of them thought, “Alas, there is no curing this deluded man.” They disappeared from the Great Lotus Hell and traveled back to Bamboo Grove, and when they arrived there, in order that their fellow practitioners of the holy life might become disillusioned with saṃsāra, they explained in detail the harms he had undergone.

3.377 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The two of them understood the grief they felt and taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

3.378 Then the monks then requested of the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why the monk Kokālika felt hatred toward the monks Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, and has now fallen among the hell beings.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well he intended malice toward these two and fell among the hell beings. Listen well!

3.379 “Monks, in times gone by, King Mahāsena reigned in the city of Ayodhyā. King Mahāsena’s magistrate was a certain brahmin who was capable,

clear-minded, and trustworthy, with perfect understanding of the scriptures. In every quarter he was held in high esteem, revered, honored, venerated, and admired. His profit was unrivaled, his acclaim without compare.

3.380 “At that time a certain sage who had a retinue of five hundred was living in the forest. There two young brahmins who were capable, clear-minded, and trustworthy, with perfect understanding of the scriptures, took up residence.

3.381 “One day the sage thought, ‘So long as I remain here in this forest devoted to austerities, I’m of help to almost no one. I will settle near the city!’ So, he fashioned a hut of branches nearby, and there he stayed, held in high esteem, revered, honored, and venerated. Yet in time, as the sage got older, he was unable to go to the city anymore. When that time came, the two young brahmins would go there in his stead, and they were held in high esteem, revered, honored, venerated, and admired by the local royalty, the high officials, the wealthy, the householders, those in the king’s retinue, the merchants, and the sea captains.

3.382 “This went on until one day Mahāsenā’s brahmin magistrate thought, ‘Before, I was held in high esteem throughout the land, revered, honored, venerated, and admired, and now all that profit and acclaim has been handed over to these two young brahmins instead. When they’re no longer here, all my profit and acclaim will be restored. I will spread malicious rumors about them both, and then, when those two suspect that they will no longer be served, they will take themselves elsewhere.’

3.383 “So the magistrate spread rumors, saying, ‘Those two are indulging their desires. They’re not celibate.’ When the sage heard the slanderous deprecations being made about these two, he challenged the magistrate, saying, ‘Brahmin, you should not be so hateful toward these two young brahmins, for harm will befall you for a long time,

and you will not benefit, but suffer.’ Though he tried again and again, the sage could neither stop nor sway him. Hateful toward them both, he fell among the hell beings.

3.384 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the young brahmins then are none other than these two, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. The one who was that magistrate then is none other than Kokālika. At that time, though I tried to stop him, he was hateful toward them both and fell among the hell beings. Now as well, though I tried to stop him, he has been hateful toward Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, and has fallen among the hell beings.”

3.385 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “what action did Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana take that ripened into such untrue, malicious, worthless, spurious, unfounded, and destructive aspersions being cast on them?”

3.386 “Monks,” the Blessed One replied, “the actions these two committed and accumulated did not ripen into the external element of earth. They did not ripen into the element of water, the element of fire, or the element of wind. The actions they committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but their own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

3.387 “When the time arrives—and even if
A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act
That sentient beings amass.

3.388 “Monks, in times past a certain two ascetics, each with a retinue of five hundred, took up residence in two different parts of the city of Pāṃśūla. All the people of the city held them in high esteem, accepted them as gurus, and honored, venerated, and respected them as arhats. Their profit was

unrivaled, their acclaim without compare.

3.389 “At that time in a certain mountain ravine there lived a sage who was clairvoyant, a person of great miracles and great power, who also had a retinue of five hundred. He was also a great being, of a loving nature, and compassionate. He cared deeply for beings and was committed to their welfare. He thought, ‘So long as I stay in this hermitage, I’m of no help to others, so I will gain support in the city of Pāṁśula and live there! By living there I shall certainly be able to help many.’ Having stayed in the hermitage for as long as he cared to, he set out with his retinue of five hundred. He walked to the city of Pāṁśula carrying clothes of deerskin and tree bark, a walking stick, a small water pitcher, and his ritual ladles. He fashioned a hut of branches deep in the forest, and there he stayed.

3.390 “The many inhabitants of the city of Pāṁśula saw the elegance of his body, the elegance of his mind, and the elegance of those who attended him, and were filled with the greatest admiration. Due to their great admiration, they held him in high esteem, revered him, honored him, venerated him, and provided for all his needs. The sage likewise went to them from time to time to teach the Dharma, and when they heard the Dharma from him, some of them went forth in the presence of the sage and generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Some continued to live at home and perfectly adopted the path of the ten virtuous actions. The sage would come to their homes so they could be in his company and see him from time to time, so they no longer went to meet with the ascetics.

3.391 “One day the ascetics thought, ‘Before, the many inhabitants of the city of Pāṁśula held us in high esteem, revered, honored, and venerated us. Our profit was unrivaled and our acclaim without compare. But since the sage’s arrival, all that profit and acclaim has been cut off. We must make it so

that the sage and his retinue no longer live here. When he’s gone, all our profit and acclaim will be restored.’

3.392 “They told the sage’s young brahmins, ‘Young brahmins, you should know that since this sage has arrived, all our profit and acclaim has been cut off, so we are going to spread malicious rumors all about town saying that the sage has been indulging his desires and is no longer celibate. Think well whether you should serve and revere him. He will flee in terror of the aspersions we cast, or he will kill us. With him gone our profit and acclaim will be restored.’

3.393 “The two ascetics and their retinue took their places on the avenues, in the streets, and at the crossroads and spread malicious rumors, saying, ‘The sage is an immoral lecher, a wanton wrongdoer! He indulges his desires and is no longer celibate. He is a charlatan deceiving you. You should not think to pay him homage.’

3.394 “As soon as they heard this, many were unhappy with the sage, and in their unhappiness they declared, ‘This indulger of his desires is no longer celibate! Never again will we hold him in high esteem, revere him, honor him, or venerate him, nor ever go to see him!’

3.395 “The sage began to wonder, ‘Why is it that before, a great crowd of people from the city of Pāṁśula held me in high esteem, revered, honored and venerated me, and now they no longer hold me in high esteem, revere, honor, and venerate me?’ He looked and saw that the two ascetics and their retinue had been spreading malicious rumors about him in the city of Pāṁśula. When he saw this he thought, ‘Whatever malicious rumors about me that have spread throughout Pāṁśula all arose due to my profit and acclaim, so I will leave this all behind and return to my former hermitage!’ So he led the five hundred young brahmins back to their former hermitage, and there they stayed. After the sage left, the ascetics’ profit and acclaim was

restored, and they were filled with glee.

3.396 “O monks, what do you think? The two ascetics with their retinue then are none other than Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. The actions of commandeering his profit and acclaim and casting aspersions on the sage ripened into their births as hell beings for hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of years. At that time, after they died and transmigrated, wherever they took rebirth, aspersions were cast on them. Now they have come to their final existence and rebirth, but until they attain arhatship, the monk Kokālika will cast untrue, malicious, worthless, spurious, and unfounded aspersions on them.”

3.397 “Lord,” the monks inquired, “what action did the monk Kokālika take that ripened into his taking birth as a hell being in the Great Lotus Hell; that after he was born there, there were five hundred yokes of oxen on his tongue; that on his right and his left were iron-fanged dogs, lions, tigers, leopards, hyenas, and so on, that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him; that from above came iron-beaked vultures, crows, and ospreys that tore into his flesh over and over again and fed on him; that from his right and his left, a forest of iron śālmali trees sprung up; and that when he couldn’t bear the heat anymore and turned the other way, from above iron daggers and great arrows and single-tipped vajras and spears rained down?”

3.398 The Blessed One replied, “It is because he was so hateful toward Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana.”

THE END

Next: *The Tired Man*



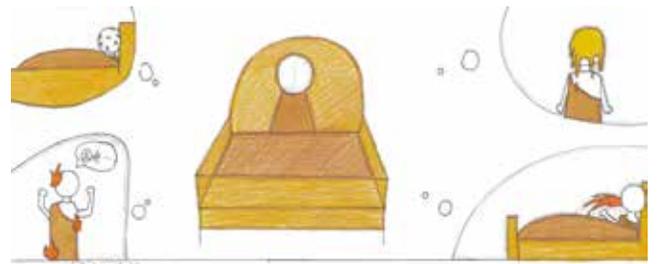
一位僧人在树下向两位僧人讲述佛法
 高真·王译



两位僧人来到世所成



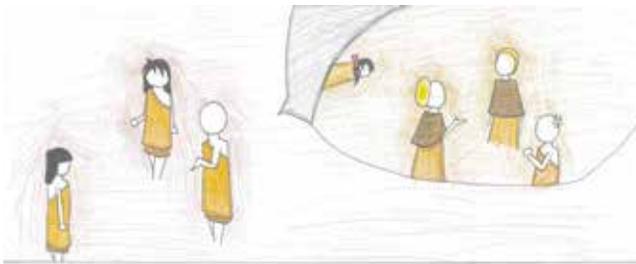
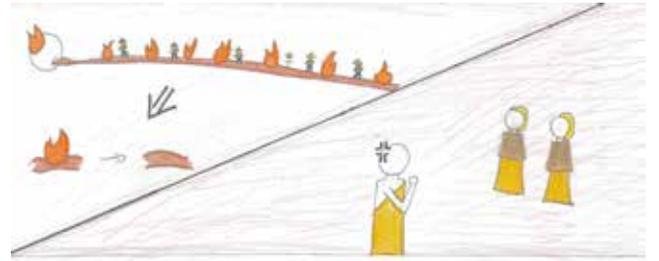
一位僧人向僧人们讲述佛法，
 他们都很认真地听。一位僧人



一位僧人讲述佛法



许多僧人修行。



一位僧人向两位僧人讲述佛法，
 他们都很认真地听。



一位僧人讲述佛法

Part Three (12)

The
Tired Man

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

12 The Tired Man

3.399 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, it was Venerable Maudgalyāyana’s custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.400 When he returned, he would relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When he returned, he would also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Those who heard him were filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they went on to achieve great things.

3.401 One day Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana prepared himself to wander among the hell beings, disappeared from Śrāvastī, and traveled to the Hell of Ceaseless Agony. There he saw a being with a body so large it filled many yojanas, and, due to that being’s past actions, human beings appeared and tore his tongue from his mouth. There were iron spikes on the molten iron that drenched the floor, which was on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames, and these too were on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. On his tongue drove five

hundred yokes of oxen, and they too were all on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. These yokes of oxen, which also arose due to his past actions, had hooves like the edge of a razor that were on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. They caused him infernal torment, for no matter what direction they trod, they cut and hacked at him all over. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony.

3.402 Seeing this, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana thought, “What action did this being take that ripened into his meeting with such suffering?” Though he went deep into equipoise and reached the far limits of concentration, he could not see an end to this being’s suffering. All he could see was that this being had been dying from hell states, only to be reborn in the hells once again. Recognizing this, he thought, “Who apart from the Blessed One could explain his deeds to me? For his wisdom and vision are unimpeded, and his wisdom and vision are infinite.”

3.403 He disappeared from the Hell of Ceaseless Agony and traveled to Śrāvastī, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana saw that the Blessed One was teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds and thought, “Now is the time to request the Blessed One to explain about that being.” He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took a seat at one side.

3.404 Once he had taken a seat at one side, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, it is my custom to wander from time to time among the hell beings, to wander among the anguished spirits, to wander among the animals, to wander among the humans, and to wander among the gods.

3.405 “When I return I relate to people how the hell beings suffer through being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on. When I return I also relate to people how the anguished spirits suffer through hunger, thirst, being burned, being incinerated, being cooked, and so on; how animals suffer as they eat one another; how human beings suffer through striving, anger, and exhaustion; and how the gods suffer through dying, falling, disintegrating, and decaying. Because of this, the people who hear me are filled with sorrow, and from this sorrow they go on to achieve great things.

3.406 “Lord, I wanted to wander among the hell beings, so I disappeared from Śrāvastī and traveled to the Hell of Ceaseless Agony. There, Lord, I saw a being with a body so large it filled many yojanas, and due to his past actions human beings appeared and tore his tongue from his mouth. There were iron spikes on the molten iron that drenched the floor, which was on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames, and these too were on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. On his tongue drove five hundred yokes of oxen, and they too were all on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. These yokes of oxen, which also arose due to his past actions, had hooves like the edge of a razor, on fire, burning all over, and covered in flames—they were nothing but a single, searing flame. They caused him infernal torment, for no matter what direction they trod, they cut and hacked at him all over. This caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony.

3.407 “Lord, what action did this anguished spirit take that ripened into his meeting with such suffering?”

“Maudgalyāyana,” the Blessed One explained, “that being committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again.

3.408 “Maudgalyāyana, in times past, when the one

who transcended the levels of the listeners and solitary buddhas, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Unwavering Gait was in the world, there was certain monk—a Tripiṭaka master and proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of wisdom and freedom—who was living on the patronage of a certain royal palace. There he was held in high esteem, revered, honored, and venerated. He had acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick.

3.409 “At that time there was also a certain arhat monk who was a Tripiṭaka master and proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of wisdom and freedom. He was making his way through the township with a retinue of five hundred when they came to the royal palace. There many people saw the elegance of his body, the elegance of his mind, and the elegance of those who attended him. As soon as they saw him, they were filled with the greatest admiration, and he acquired provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick. Those many people wished to serve and respect only him, so they no longer offered their service and respect to the former Tripiṭaka master.

3.410 “The first monk thought, ‘Before that monk’s arrival, my profit was unrivaled and my acclaim without compare. But since his arrival, all that profit and acclaim has been cut off. When he’s gone, all my profit and acclaim will be restored. I will make sure that, come what may, he and his disciples will not be able to remain in this village.’

3.411 “So the first Tripiṭaka master spread malicious rumors all over the city, saying, ‘These monks are immoral! They are sinful! You should not think to pay them homage. Why should he and his immoral retinue remain here?’

3.412 “As soon as they heard this, the people no longer went to see the arhat, and after that they did not think to make him offerings nor to pay him respect. The arhat began to wonder, ‘Why is it that all those people no longer come to see me?’ Then he looked and saw that the other Tripiṭaka master was spreading malicious rumors all about, and he thought, ‘It’s not right for all those people and the Tripiṭaka master to increase their demerit like this.’ So he and his retinue left the village.

3.413 “The first Tripiṭaka master was delighted and thought, ‘Now all my profit and acclaim will be restored.’ Then one day he fell ill, and though he was treated with medicinal roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits, he could not be cured, and died. After his death, he transmigrated and took rebirth in the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, where a thousand yokes of oxen appeared on his tongue.

3.414 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that Tripiṭaka master then is none other than this being. At that time he fell under the sway of profit and acclaim, and due to his strong attachment, he cast aspersions on the arhat. Those actions ripened into his birth in the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, where a thousand yokes of oxen appeared on his tongue. Monks, from the time of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Unwavering Gait until my own, that being has died as a hell being, transmigrated, and taken rebirth as nothing but a hell being, incurring nothing but suffering such as this.”

3.415 “Lord, when will this being be liberated from his suffering?” they inquired.

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “in the future a totally and completely awakened buddha named Guru, who will far surpass the listeners and the solitary buddhas, will emerge in the world. While his teachings are still flourishing, this being will die and pass on from being a hell being, obtain a human birth, go forth in his doctrine, cast away the afflictions, and manifest arhatship. He will also

be greatly criticized, and wherever he goes he will meet with much blame. After this alone fills him with deep sadness about saṃsāra, he will pass beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. Then his suffering will come to an end.”

3.416 As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief. The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and among the assembled some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

THE END

Next: *Morsel*



The Tired Man

Eva Huang / 12 years old

Part Three (13)

Morsel

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

13 Morsel

3.417 Once, when the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, he said to the monks, “Monks, if all beings came to understand the fruits of giving and the karmic ripening of the fruits of each portion given just as I understand the fruits of giving and know the karmic ripening of the fruits of each portion given, then those who received offerings would not eat even the tiniest remnant of a single morsel unless they had given of it or portioned it out.

3.418 “If beings’ minds do not change but rather remain ensnared by miserliness, they do not understand the fruits of giving or know the karmic ripening of the fruits of each portion given the way that I understand the fruits of giving and know the karmic ripening of the fruits of each portion given. That is why their minds clutch at everything, they fail to give, they eat without sharing any portion, and their minds are ensnared by miserliness.” Thus spoke the Blessed One.

After the Sugata had said such, he, our Founder, continued:

3.419 “If sentient beings only knew
What it is the sages teach—
The ripening of each portion given
And just how great it will become—

3.420 “Then their minds would not be filled with greed;
And not having shared, they would not eat;
And the grasping that pervades their minds

Would never appear again.

3.421 “Unaware, the naive are veiled
In darkness, and so they grasp at
Everything. They never think
To share, though they eat and eat.
Thus their greed, born of mind,
Keeps them bound.”

3.422 “Lord,” the monks requested of the Blessed One,
“tell us why the Blessed One has spoken in praise
of giving and of the portion given.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in
times past as well, and in the same way, I commended
giving and of the portion given. Listen well!

3.423 “Monks, in times past King Candraprabha
reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. His kingdom was
prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated.
The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments
had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and
there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine.
Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful.
His was a reign in accord with the Dharma. He
ruled the kingdom gently and mercifully, as a
parent cares for a beloved only child.

3.424 “This king’s nature was loving and compassionate,
with a love for beings and a delight in giving. He
gave gifts and made merit. To those who wished
for food he gave food. To those who wished for
something to drink he gave something to drink.
To those who wished for clothes he gave clothes.
To those who wished for incense, flower garlands,
and fragrant ointments he gave incense, flower
garlands, and fragrant ointments. To the sick and to
the homes for the sick he provided everything that
was needed. He served the lowly, the hungry, the
poor, and the orphaned. He prepared a great deal of
food and drink and made gifts of it to the creatures
who flew through the sky, dwelt in the water, or
made their homes in the fields.

3.425 “One day a drought befell Kāśi. The brahmin augurs read the portents and announced that for twelve years there would be no rain. Because no rain fell, a famine broke out, and people became uncertain what to do.

“King Candraprabha made a proclamation: ‘Let those among you remain here who have food enough for twelve years. Let those who are without travel to another land, and return when harvests are good. For to your country you may return, but to this life you cannot.’

3.426 “No sooner did they hear this than some among the assembled traveled to other lands and settled there. Others, attached to their homeland, simply remained. When those of them with food had consumed it all and were sick with hunger, they approached the king and said, ‘Deva, we are famished. Please, give us something to sustain us.’

3.427 “When he heard this, right away the king thought, ‘All of these people need provisioning that will last for a long time.’ With this thought, he said, ‘Wait here awhile, all of you, while I speak to the grain keepers. Then I shall take action.’

3.428 “‘Do we have enough food for me and all those who remain in the country to last for twelve years?’ he asked.

“‘Deva, let us take an account of the granaries and make allocations,’ the grain keepers replied.

3.429 “The grain keepers examined the granaries and made allocations, and then began to tally the people remaining in the country. Then they calculated the shares to be distributed over twelve years, reckoning that every day, each person could receive a single morsel, and the king, two.

“They said to the king, ‘Deva, for twelve years each of the country’s inhabitants can receive a single morsel per day, and your share, Deva, will be two.’

3.430 “As soon as the king heard this, he announced, ‘Every day one morsel will be distributed to each person living in the country.’ All the people upheld

the virtuous path, and thereafter, all who died there took birth among the gods. As they were born there, they began to fill all the gods’ residences.

3.431 “Then Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, ‘There are but two reasons that the gods’ residences fill up—the appearance of a tathāgata, or the appearance of a universal monarch. Has then a universal monarch now appeared in the world, or has a tathāgata appeared?’ But when he looked, he saw that it was not so. Again he wondered, ‘Well then, because of whom have the gods’ residences become full?’

3.432 “Then he looked, realized that it was because of King Candraprabha, and thought, ‘What—is he to become like Śakra, or perhaps Brahmā?’ When he looked, he saw that King Candraprabha was practicing to attain unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. So Śakra, King of the Gods, said, ‘I will go for a time and see for myself whether he is of firm resolve. If this being’s resolve is firm, I shall worship him. If his resolve is not firm, I shall steady him.’

With this in mind, he transformed his appearance into that of a brahmin and said, ‘Deva, I am famished. Please, give me something to sustain me.’

3.433 “‘If I cut off someone else and give to him,’ the king thought, ‘I’ll be taking one life to protect another, so I will eat just one morsel of food, and give the other to him!’ The king handed the morsel to the brahmin, but just as he thought, ‘Now I will eat the other,’ the brahmin said, ‘Deva, I can’t survive on just one morsel.’ Right away the king thought, ‘If I don’t give the second morsel to this brahmin, he will starve. He might even die. Since I am committed to the welfare of beings, I’m capable of protecting the life of another even at the cost of my own.’

3.434 So he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, ‘By this root of virtue, may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way—an arhat, a totally

and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods, a blessed buddha.’ Then he spoke this verse:

- 3.435** “By this vast gift, may I become
A self-arisen buddha in the triple world.
And when I do, may I liberate those not freed
By the mighty victors who came before me.’
- 3.436** “With that, he handed the morsel to Śakra, King of the Gods, who was in the guise of a brahmin. At this Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, ‘This bodhisattva has performed a magnificent austerity.’ His brahmin guise disappeared and he assumed his natural form and asked, ‘What will you accomplish by these efforts?’
“ ‘I shall attain unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment,’ was his reply.
- 3.437** “Śakra said, ‘With a mind and mental states like these, you are certain to fully awaken to unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. When you do, please remember me.’ With that, Śakra, King of the Gods, let fall a mighty downpour of rain. All the grains began to sprout into a great harvest, and Kāśi was restored.
- 3.438** “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was King Candraprabha then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. At that time I also commended giving and the portion given. Why then, having manifested the fruits of giving, would the Tathāgata now not commend giving and the portion given?”
- 3.439** *This concludes Part Three of The Hundred Deeds.*

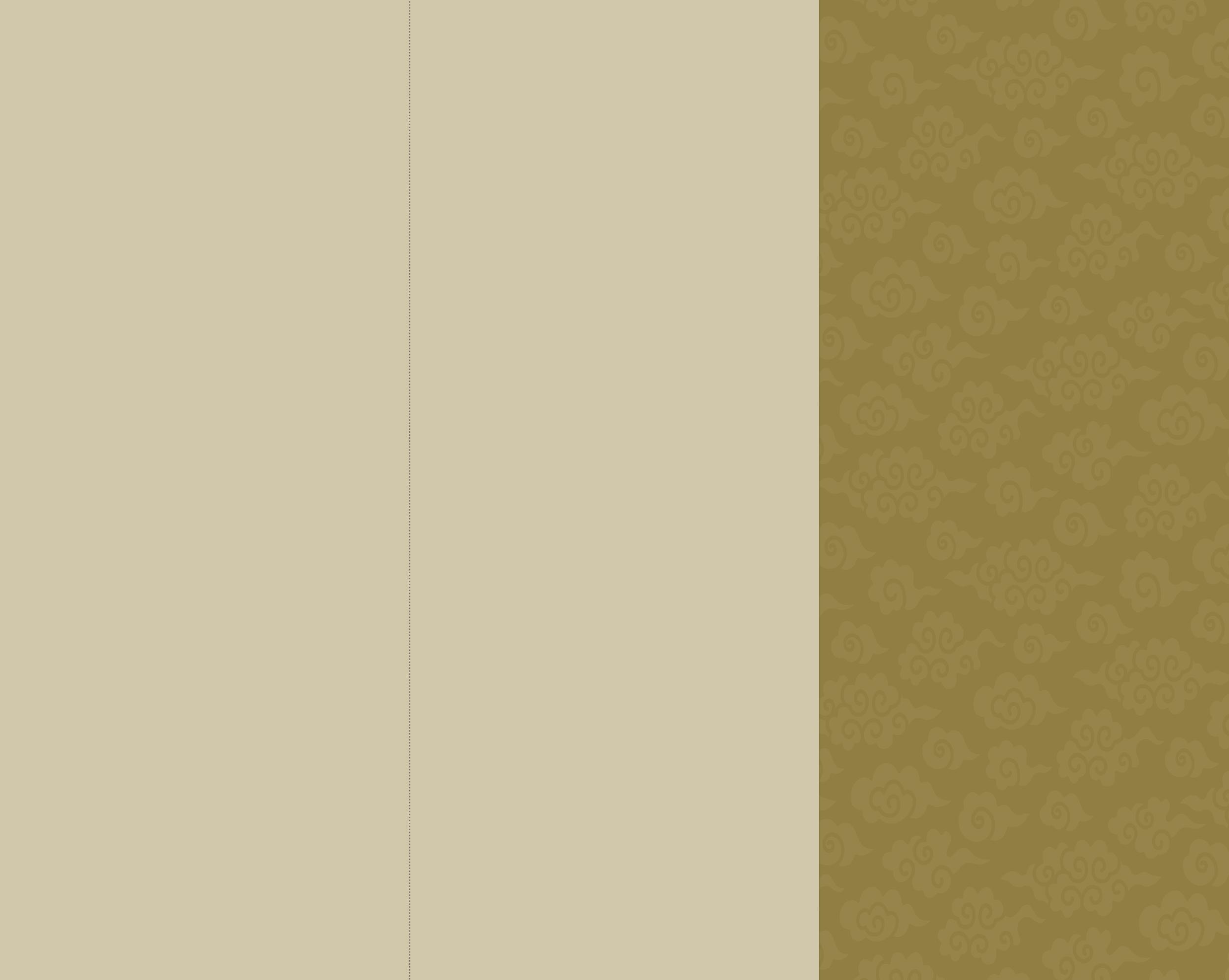
THE END

Next: *Part Four: The Story of Maitrībala*



Morsel

Aristotle Lee / 3 years old



The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་པ།
Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Part Four

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. The Story of Maitrībala | 6. The Elephant |
| 2. The Dark Storm | 7. The Nāga (1) |
| 3. Ants: Two Stories | 8. The Story of Siṃha |
| 3. i The First “Ant” Story | 9. The Schism in the Saṅgha |
| 3. ii The Second “Ant” Story | 10. The Dark Forest |
| 4. The Lay of the Land | 11. The One Who Heard |
| 5. The Story of Āraṇyaka | |
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Part Four (1)

The Story of
Maitrībala

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་ལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Story of Maitrībala

4.2 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, the following took place—providing a statement additional to the life story of Wealth’s Delight in explaining how the events of *The Sūtra of the Setting in Motion of the Wheel of Dharma* came about.

4.3 The monks requested him, “Lord, tell us why the Blessed One sated the group of five monks with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

4.4 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I sated them with my own flesh and blood, and set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions. Listen well!

4.5 “Monks, in times past a king named Maitrībala reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. During his reign, the kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma. He ruled the kingdom gently and mercifully, as a parent cares for a beloved only child.

4.6 “This king was the epitome of love, was extremely compassionate, loved beings, and delighted in giving. He gave gifts and made merit. He provided for the ascetics, the brahmins, the indigent, the

bereft, and the poor. He prepared a great deal of food and drink and made gifts of it to the creatures who flew through the sky, dwelt in the water, or made their homes in the fields. He cultivated love for the people of his country. The minds of all the people of his country were filled with love, and due to its power no one could do them any harm.

4.7 “One day, five life-draining yakṣas absconded from the prison of King Vaiśravaṇa. Draining the life out of many people, they made their way to Vārāṇasī, but as they introduced their pestilence there, they were unable to drain even the least bit of life from any being, not even the animals. They wondered, ‘Why is it that in this country we are unable to drain even the least bit of life from any being, even the animals? We should ask whose great power this is.’ They asked the shepherds and the other animal herders, ‘Why is it that we cannot harm anyone in this land in the least? Whose power is causing this?’

4.8 “ ‘Our king is the epitome of love,’ they replied. ‘The minds of all the people of his country are filled with so much love that no one can do them any harm. Because of him, in this land no one can do us even the least bit of harm.’

4.9 “ ‘This king is a person of merit,’ the yakṣas thought. ‘He’s well known as the epitome of love and for being quite compassionate, with a love for beings. He’ll surely be able to fill our stomachs!’ So they transformed their appearances into those of brahmins, approached King Maitribala, and said, ‘O great compassionate one, we are famished! Please feed us.’

4.10 “ ‘With what manner of food shall I feed you?’ asked the king.

“ ‘Please feed us with freshly drawn blood,’ they said.

4.11 “At that the king thought, ‘Oh my! Though they dress one way, their food is another thing entirely! They’re not like human beings. But even if they’re

not human, I shall do for them as I have promised. Still, I can't harm others for the sake of feeding them, yet without harming others I cannot get freshly drawn blood. If they can use my blood for food, then I will give them my own flesh and blood.' So he asked the yakṣas, 'My friends, could you perhaps use my blood for food?'

"Yes, Deva, we could!" they replied.

4.12 "When he heard this, without delay King Maitrībala arrayed the yakṣas before him and then summoned his healers and made his request, saying, 'Find five points on my body from which to drain me, and I shall feed these beings with my blood.'

"But Deva,' the healers pleaded, 'we could never pierce your body with a weapon!'

4.13 "They do not wish to be parted from me,' he thought. 'Very well, I will extract my own blood.' Bodhisattvas have mastery of all manner of arts and professions, so he took up a mirror himself, pierced five points on his body, and offered one to each of the yakṣas, thinking, 'I shall not stop letting my own blood until they are satisfied.'

4.14 "At this Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, 'Bodhisattvas keep their promises, and this bodhisattva has undertaken a magnificent austerity. It wouldn't be right for the bodhisattva to suffer too much hardship.' He decided, 'I will fortify the life in his body!'

4.15 "So Śakra, King of the Gods, fortified the bodhisattva's body with divine life force, and even miraculously accomplished much of the bloodletting. After the bodhisattva had sated all five of the life-draining yakṣas with no difficulty at all, he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, 'By this root of virtue, may I become a buddha to serve as a protector for the world's blind without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way, to rescue those who have not found their way across,

to deliver those who have not been delivered, to relieve the anxiety of those frozen with fear, and to place in nirvāṇa all those who have not transcended suffering.

4.16 "By this great gift may I become For wandering beings a self-arisen enlightened one. May I pull from the waters of this life those who were Not freed by the mighty victors who came before me.'

4.17 "After the yakṣas had had their fill and were sated, their senses contented, they asked the bodhisattva, 'Great compassionate one, what do you hope to accomplish by these efforts?'

"I will attain unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment,' the bodhisattva replied.

"If that's so,' they said, 'when you awaken and manifest the unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment of a buddha, satiating living beings with nectar, then may we become your very first disciples.'

4.18 "How can I make you into my very first disciples,' the bodhisattva asked, 'when you are cutting short others' lives, draining others' life force?'

"Great compassionate one, what advice can you give us?' they asked.

"Adopt and maintain the path of the ten virtuous actions,' said the bodhisattva.

4.19 "The yakṣas heeded him, immediately adopting the path of the ten virtuous actions and praying, 'By this root of virtue, when this one awakens into unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, may we become his very first disciples.'

4.20 "O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was King Maitrībala then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the five yakṣas draining the life of others are none other than the group of five monks. At that time, I fed them with my own flesh and blood and set them on the

path of the ten virtuous actions. Now as well I have sated them with a taste of the holy Dharma and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

THE END

Next: *The Dark Storm*

慈力国王



Part Four (2)

The
Dark Storm

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Dark Storm

4.21 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, five hundred merchants in Śrāvastī took up their goods and set out for another country. They traveled and traveled until eventually they came to a great, dark forest. In that forest lived a fierce, terrifying yakṣa who drained the life of others. He sent forth a great, dark storm that overtook the merchants. The merchants became desperate and had no idea what they should do. Terrified, they began making supplications to every possible deity.

4.22 One of the leaders among them was a lay vow holder, and when he saw that the merchants had no idea what to do, he said, “What is the use of seeking refuge in these deities who are not a refuge? Take refuge in the Blessed One. He will protect you from suffering, despair, and misfortune.”

4.23 No sooner had the merchants heard this than they took refuge in the Blessed One, saying, “We bow to the Blessed One, the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha. Lord, Blessed One, if there is nothing past, present, or future that you do not see, know, or directly perceive, then heed us now, Blessed One. Protect us from suffering, despair, and misfortune, and save our precious lives!”

4.24 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from

migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

4.25 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

4.26 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

4.27 When the Blessed One focused his mind, he directly apprehended that the time had come to tame the five hundred merchants. He stretched out his arm like an elephant’s trunk and lifted up all five hundred merchants and their packs out of the dark

forest and set them down not too far from Śrāvastī. The five hundred merchants recognized that they were near Śrāvastī and thought, “The Blessed One has rescued us!” They were elated, and because of this they thought, “Let us give up living at home to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape our fetters with diligence, practice, and effort.”

4.28 So they went to Śrāvastī, gave up household affairs, and gave gifts and made merit. They entered the garden of Prince Jeta, where they went to see the Blessed One, touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, pressed their lips to his feet, and said to him, “Blessed One, what a difficult task you have done for us! You saved our precious lives.” Then they sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

4.29 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, all five hundred merchants destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

4.30 Having seen the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested of the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

4.31 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested

arhatship.

4.32 As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

4.33 The monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, tell us why the Blessed One protected all five hundred merchants, rescued them from great danger, and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

4.34 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I rescued these five hundred merchants from great danger and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Listen well!

4.35 “Monks, in times gone by, some five hundred merchants took up their goods and set out for another country. They traveled and traveled until eventually they came to a great, dark forest. In that forest lived a fierce, terrifying yakṣa who drained the life of others. He sent forth a great, dark storm that overtook the merchants. The merchants became desperate and had no idea what they should do. Terrified, they began making supplications to every possible deity.

4.36 “At that time there lived a certain sage who had all the five superknowledges, a person of great miracles and great power, and he saw the suffering of the five hundred merchants. As soon as he did, he lifted all five hundred merchants and their packs up out of the dark forest and set them back down whence they came. The merchants thought, ‘Regardless of how it happened, it is all because of this sage that we are still alive. In his presence let

us give up living at home, and go forth to practice pure conduct.’ So in his presence they went forth, and all five hundred merchants generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

4.37 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then. Those who were the five hundred merchants then are none other than these five hundred merchants. At that time I rescued them from great danger and placed them in the four meditative states and five superknowledges, and now as well I have rescued them from great danger, and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

4.38 “At that time they also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and after they went forth, they practiced pure conduct all their lives. At the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

4.39 “O monks, what do you think? The five hundred monks who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Kāśyapa then are none other than these five hundred merchants. At that time they went forth, practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

4.40 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone

forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *Ants: Two Stories*



The Dark Storm

Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter / 13 years old

Part Four (3)

Ants:
Two Stories

- 3. i The First “Ant” Story
- 3. ii The Second “Ant” Story

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 Ants: Two Stories

3. i The First “Ant” Story

4.41 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, Venerable All-Knowing Kauṇḍinya saw the truths, and when that happened eighty thousand gods saw the truths as well. The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why the Blessed One sated Kauṇḍinya and eighty thousand gods with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

4.42 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I sated Kauṇḍinya and these eighty thousand gods with my own flesh and blood and saved their precious lives. Listen well!

4.43 “Monks, in times gone by, on the banks of a certain river there lived a turtle who was compassionate, had a loving nature, and loved beings. Sometimes he walked on dry land, and sometimes he swam in the water.

4.44 “One day he emerged from the water onto dry land, and fell asleep there. An ant emerged from an anthill and approached the turtle. He saw the turtle asleep there on dry land, and then returned to the nest to inform the other ants. The eighty thousand other ants in that anthill heard from the first ant that the turtle was there and came streaming out of the anthill to crawl into the turtle’s shell. As they all began to feed on him, he awoke and saw that his

body was covered in ants.

4.45 “Now even when bodhisattvas take a lower birth with their bodies, their minds do not descend to lower realms. So the bodhisattva thought, ‘I could go back into the water, but all these living beings’ lives would be lost. Since I strive to benefit beings, it wouldn’t be right for me to take so many lives. Better to sacrifice my own instead.’ With this in mind, he took the hardship upon himself and kept silent.

4.46 “As the eighty thousand ants consumed him, he prayed, ‘Oh, by this root of virtue, may I become a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha, endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha—to serve as a protector for the world’s blind without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way, to rescue those who have not found their way across, to deliver those who have not been delivered, to relieve the anxiety of those frozen with fear, and to place in nirvāṇa all those who have not transcended suffering.

4.47 “ ‘In the same way that I have now sated them with my own flesh and blood, saving their precious lives, when I perfectly and completely awaken into unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, may I sate them with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.’

4.48 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that turtle then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the eighty thousand ants then are none other than these eighty thousand gods. At that time I sated them with my own flesh and blood, saving their precious lives, and now as well I have sated them with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”



The First "Ant" Story

3. ii The Second “Ant” Story

4.49 *Herein is an additional episode as it appears in the life story of Wealth’s Delight.*

4.50 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, when Venerable All-Knowing Kauṇḍinya saw the truths, eighty thousand gods saw the truths as well. The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why the Blessed One sated Kauṇḍinya and eighty thousand gods with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

4.51 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I sated Kauṇḍinya and these eighty thousand gods with my own flesh and blood and saved their precious lives. Listen well!

4.52 “Monks, in times gone by, not far from a certain mountainside was a small hole. In that hole lived a lizard who was quite compassionate, the epitome of love, and who loved beings. The iguana subsisted only on roots and fruit and did not wish any being harm.

4.53 “One day, as the lizard went out looking for something to eat, a hunter spotted him and caught him alive. After he had skinned him, he let him go, picked up the skin, and continued on his way. The lizard, unable to withstand the pain, went to a riverbank and lay down in a cool place.

4.54 Not so far from there stood an anthill, and in that anthill lived eighty thousand ants. One ant emerged from the anthill and went up to the lizard to have a look. The ant, seeing that the lizard had no skin, returned to the nest to inform the others, and all eighty thousand ants came streaming out of the anthill to crawl onto the lizard’s body. As they all began to feed on the lizard he awoke and saw that his body was covered in ants.

4.55 “Now even when bodhisattvas take a lower birth with their bodies, their minds do not descend to lower realms. So the bodhisattva thought, ‘I could save myself, but all these living beings’ lives would be lost. Since I strive to benefit beings, it wouldn’t be right for me to take so many lives. Better to sacrifice my own instead. While it is certain that this harm alone is enough to kill me, if I ask myself, “What is my duty?” it is my duty to give up my body for the sake of beings. I have a responsibility to them.’ With this in mind, he took the hardship upon himself and kept silent.

4.56 “Then the lizard prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, ‘By this root of virtue, may I become a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened Buddha, endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha—to serve as a protector for the world’s blind without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way, to rescue those who have not found their way across, to deliver those who have not been delivered, to relieve the anxiety of those frozen with fear, and to place in nirvāṇa all those who have not transcended suffering.

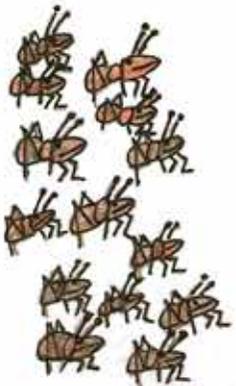
4.57 “ ‘In the same way that I have now sated them with my own flesh and blood, saving their precious lives, when I perfectly and completely awaken into unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, may I sate them with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.’

4.58 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that lizard then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the eighty thousand ants then are none other than these eighty thousand gods. At that time I sated them with my own flesh and blood, saving their precious lives, and now

as well I have sated them with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

THE END

Next: *The Lay of the Land*



Part Four (4)

The Lay of the
Land

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟོ་བྱེད།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 The Lay of the Land

4.59 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there were two times of year when it was customary for the disciples of the Blessed Buddha to convene: in the middle of the summer months when the time came for the summer retreat, and on the full moon of the last month of autumn. When the time came in the middle of the summer months for the monks to enter retreat, they would receive special instructions to ponder, and then retreat to mountain ravines, mountain caves, reed huts, plains, charnel grounds, and forests, and settle there for the duration of the rainy season. On the full moon of the last month of autumn they would all return, give an account of all that they had realized, and put questions to their superiors regarding all that they still did not understand.

4.60 There was a certain monk who, having spent that period in the countryside, made his way through the countryside, traveling and traveling until he arrived in Śrāvastī, where he put down his alms bowl and holy robes. In the morning he donned his lower garment and holy robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī. He was a newcomer, having never been there before, so he was unfamiliar with the area and had very little knowledge of the lay of the land.

4.61 He had come to Śrāvastī very late, and seeing that the other monks had already gone carrying their alms bowls filled, he thought, “I will ask where I should go to quickly get some alms.” So

he went to see Upananda and asked him, “Lord Upananda, I don’t know my way around Śrāvastī. Can you please show me where to go to quickly get some alms?”

4.62 Upananda, intending him harm, pointed at the home of a certain brahmin, a faithless man irritated by all things virtuous, auspicious, and well mannered, and said, “Go to that house there—that’s where you’ll get your alms.” With that, Upananda departed.

4.63 As the monk approached the house, the brahmin, who was just heading out to another village on an errand, decided that it was a bad omen for this shaven-headed, colored-cloth-wearing man to cross his path. The brahmin grabbed hold of him, pummeled him, and stomped on him. After the brahmin let him go, the monk emerged from the house with his head gashed open, shirt and robes torn, alms bowl smashed, and walking staff in pieces, and thought, “Better to go without food.” When he came to the garden of Prince Jeta during his fast, the monks saw him and asked, “Lord, what is this? You weren’t overcome by bandits, were you?”

“No, I wasn’t overcome by bandits. Rather, Upananda thought to do me harm,” he replied.

4.64 When the monks heard the story, they asked the Blessed One about it, and the Blessed One declared, “Let one monk not point another in the wrong direction. And should a monk see others who don’t understand where they are headed, let him stop them. It is good to stop someone in such a way. Not to stop them will be an infraction.”

4.65 Then the monks requested the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why Upananda pointed this monk in the wrong direction and the monk went there and met with great harm.”

4.66 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, Upananda pointed this monk in the wrong direction, and

when he went there, he met with great harm. Listen well!

“Monks, in times gone by, there lived a turtle in a certain lotus pond. A fox that was tormented by thirst had come to that pond thinking that he would drink some water. He entered the lotus pond and saw the turtle there. He took him in his teeth and was about to eat him, but the turtle said to him, ‘Friend, please don’t kill me. I am but a morsel to you. If you release me alive, I shall lead you to a great deal of food.’

4.67 “As soon as the fox heard this he let the turtle go and said, ‘Show me where I can get that food!’

“ ‘Oh friend,’ replied the turtle, ‘in such-and-such a region in a certain cave live a mother lizard and her offspring, eight of them in all. Go kill and eat them.’ In truth, there was a lioness living in that cave that had just given birth to two lion cubs. In order to protect them she would not leave the cave. But when the fox heard what the turtle had said, he hurried to an entrance at one side of the cave. Another fox saw him and said, ‘Where are you off to, friend?’

4.68 “ ‘In this cave live a mother lizard and her offspring, eight of them in all. I am going to kill and eat them.’

“ ‘Look here, my friend,’ warned the other, ‘if you go in there you’ll surely meet with suffering.’

“But the first fox said to him in verse,

4.69 “ ‘I’m graced with strength and force of will.
No one is my peer. This day I shall devour
A lizard and her young
Like a regal elephant basking in a pool.’

4.70 “That fox did not heed the other’s words, and just as he was entering the cave, one lion cub caught him by the ear and the other caught him by the tail. Their mother said, ‘My sons, don’t kill that scavenger. What’s the use?’

4.71 “Obeying their mother’s words, the first tore off his ear, the other tore off his tail, and then they tossed him aside. The other fox saw what happened from the mouth of the cave and spoke the following verse:

4.72 “ “Graced with strength and force of will?” you say,
And claim none is your equal?
Handsome hero, your winsome form is gone—
It seems your boasting was misplaced!’

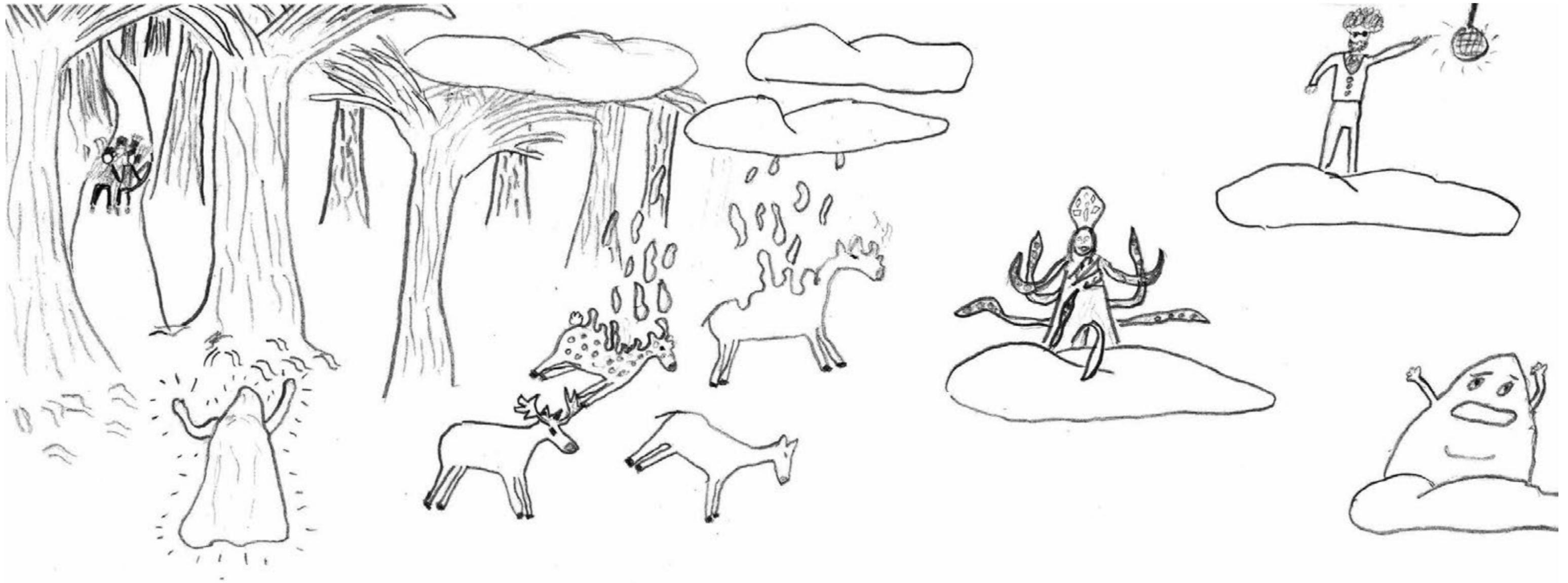
4.73 “Said the first fox to the other, ‘It’s not the turtle’s fault. That I heeded and believed its words is my own fault.’ And he said in verse,

4.74 “ ‘I believed the turtle when it said
“There’s a lizard family in a cave.”
A fool I was, with little foresight.
For the failure of my ignorance,
From the holy I warrant scorn.’

4.75 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that turtle then is none other than Upananda. The one who was the fox then is none other than this monk. At that time the former pointed the latter in the wrong direction, and when he went there, he met with great suffering. Now as well he has pointed him in the wrong direction, and when the monk went there, he met with great suffering.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Āraṇyaka*



Part Four (5)

The Story of
Āraṇyaka

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 The Story of Āraṇyaka

4.76 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. He took a wife of the same caste, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. Now, that being was in its final existence. The spiritual friend of the house was Venerable Aniruddha, and he looked and saw that a being in its final existence had taken rebirth in their house.

4.77 One day, to strengthen the parents’ resolve, Venerable Aniruddha went to their house alone, without companions or attendants. Upon seeing Venerable Aniruddha, the householder said, “Noble one, why have you come here alone, without companions or attendants?”

4.78 “Where shall we find attendants,” Venerable Aniruddha replied, “if one such as yourself does not grant them to us?”

“Noble one,” the householder said, “my wife has conceived, so if we have a son, noble one, I shall offer him to you as an attendant.”

Venerable Aniruddha said, “The virtuous keep their promises.” Having spoken thus, Venerable Aniruddha departed.

4.79 After the householder’s wife conceived, she went to a very isolated place and stayed there, for she was

perpetually unhappy in the company of others. The householder thought, “Has my wife been possessed by some sort of spirit?” and he brought her to the soothsayers.

“No,” the soothsayers assured him, “she has not been possessed by a spirit. All this has taken place on account of the being in her womb. That being is happy to be by himself.”

4.80 Then, after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, and a nose fine and prominent. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since it was predicted before he was born that he would be happy to be by himself, his name will be Āraṇyaka.”

4.81 They reared young Āraṇyaka on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and once he was able to walk, he naturally began to recall his former lives. When he looked, he saw that he had been circling in saṃsāra, where, caught up in socializing, he met with great suffering. Recognizing this, he was happy to stay by himself in isolated places and avoid such socializing distractions.

4.82 One day Venerable Aniruddha knew that the time had come for the child to go forth, so he reminded the householder, “Householder, before this child was born you granted him to me as an attendant. The virtuous keep their promises, do they not? Didn’t you yourself make such a promise?”

4.83 “Yes, noble one, I did make just such a promise,” the householder replied, and as he said this, he took the child by his two hands, offered him to Venerable Aniruddha, and told him, “Child, before you were born, I offered you to the noble one. Therefore go, and be an attendant of the noble one.”

“This will be of benefit to me,” the child said, and with those words he followed Venerable Aniruddha away.

4.84 Venerable Aniruddha explained the Dharma to the householder and then brought the child to the monastery. There he led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

4.85 As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

“By staying in seclusion—in hermitages, in forests, and in remote places—I shall not come into contact with anyone,” he thought.

4.86 The monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, what action did Āraṇyaka take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him; and that he went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship? What fault did he recognize that even as a child he rid himself of such socializing, and was happy to be by himself?”

4.87 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “he began to naturally recall his former lives and saw that he had been circling in saṃsāra, where caught up in socializing he met with great suffering. Recollecting this suffering, he was happy to be by himself.”

4.88 “Lord, where did he become caught up in socializing?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and

completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, he went forth in his doctrine.

4.89 “Serving as steward the monk became caught up in socializing. Because he became caught up in socializing, he forsook his morality, and when he forsook his morality he took all the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions, and, indulging himself as he pleased, also gave them to others.

4.90 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was serving as steward then is none other than this monk. At that time he went forth, but he took all the donations for the saṅgha, the donations to the stūpa, their regular support, and the donations for the saṅgha of the four directions, and, indulging himself as he pleased, also gave them to others. The act of tossing virtue aside ripened such that for five hundred lifetimes he took rebirth as an anguished spirit, and underwent great suffering.

4.91 “Once he recalled his previous sufferings, he was happy to be by himself. At that time he practiced pure conduct all his life, his faculties ripened, and now he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. What little service he did offer in accord with the Dharma ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.”

THE END

Next: *The Elephant*



Part Four (6)

The Elephant

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Elephant

4.92 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī he held his summer rains retreat there. After the three months of rain had passed, he prepared his Dharma robes, put them on, and, carrying his alms bowl, set out from Śrāvastī for Rājagṛha. He traveled and traveled until he eventually came to the foot of a mountain. At that time there was a certain forest elephant who was afraid of lions and had driven his herd up onto the mountain, where he looked after them. After he ascended the mountain, the elephant bull saw the Blessed One approaching in the distance.

4.93 No sooner had the elephant bull seen him than a feeling of joy toward the Blessed One surged within him and he descended the mountain. Bearing banyan branches, he went to the Blessed One, and, after bowing to the Blessed One and circumambulating him, he held the banyan branches aloft so that the bright sun would not torment his body, and followed him. He escorted him until they came to the next village, and on his way back a lion, the king of beasts, killed him. After he died he transmigrated and took rebirth among the gods.

4.94 Now when young gods and goddesses are born they possess three different types of innate knowledge. They know, (1) whence they have died and transmigrated, (2) where they have been born, and (3) why they have taken birth there.

4.95 The young god who formerly was the elephant saw that when he died from his life as an animal,

filled with joy at the thought of the Blessed One, he transmigrated and took rebirth in a higher state as a god in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. Then he thought, “It’s been a whole day since I approached the Blessed One and offered him my respect. This isn’t proper of me. Not a day should pass without my seeing the Blessed One.”

4.96 So the young god who formerly was the elephant decorated himself with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on a crown decorated with various types of precious jewels, and perfumed his body with saffron, tamala, *spṛka*, and other herbs. That night he filled the front of his long shirt with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and *mandāra* flowers. Then, appearing amid a great light in the garden of Prince Jeta, he approached the Blessed One, scattered the divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and *mandāra* flowers over the Blessed One, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

4.97 The Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature of the young god who formerly was the elephant, and taught him the Dharma in such a way that he realized the noble truths of noble beings. Hearing it, the young god who formerly was the elephant destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry.

4.98 Having seen the truths, he expressed his joy three times, saying, “Lord, Blessed One, when you dried up the ocean of my blood and tears, led me over the mountain pass of bones, slammed shut the doors to lower births, and swung wide the doors to heaven and liberation, you established me among gods and human beings, which no one has ever done for me—which neither my father and mother, nor a sovereign, nor deities, nor my relatives and all my friends, nor my ancestors before me could do, and

that neither the ascetics nor the brahmins could do.”

He continued:

- 4.99 “With force you cleaved the path I walked,
Fraught with evil, leading to lower births.
You unbarred the way to heavens of high merit,
That I might attain the sorrowless way.
- 4.100 “With your support, today I have gained
The clearest vision, pure of faults.
I shall bridge a sea of misery.
I shall gain the peaceful state that so delights the
noble ones.
- 4.101 “You whom humans and gods alike revere—
You’ve nary an ailment: birth, aging, or death;
It is hard to behold you in even a thousand lifetimes,
But today, O Sage, I see you and my life bears fruit.”
- 4.102 Then he removed his garland,
Bowed and prostrated at the Blessed One’s feet,
Walked around the Victor in a gesture of respect,
Turned his face to the world of gods, and flew
home.
- 4.103 When the young god who was formerly the
elephant returned to where he belongs, the rewards
of having met the Blessed One were like the profits
of a merchant, the success of a farmer in the field,
the victory of a national hero, and the liberation at
last of the sick from any illness.
- 4.104 At that time, the monks who were committed
to earnest practice, foregoing sleep from dusk to
dawn, noticed all the great rays of light spreading
forth from where the Blessed One was. They were
bewildered at the sight, and inquired of the Blessed
Buddha, “Lord, what was this? Last night, did
Sahāmpati Brahmā, or Śakra, King of the Gods—or
perhaps the four great kings—come to offer respect

to the Blessed One?”

- 4.105 “Monks,” the Blessed One replied, “it was neither
Sahāmpati Brahmā, nor Śakra, King of the Gods,
nor the four great kings who came to see me. Did
you see the elephant bull who held the banyan
branches as the Tathāgata was walking on the
road?”
- “Yes, Lord, we saw him.”
- 4.106 “Monks, on the way back he was killed by a lion.
Having felt such joy toward me, he took rebirth
among the gods and came here to see me. I taught
the Dharma to that young god, and, having seen
the truths, he returned to where he belongs.”
- 4.107 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed
Buddha, “what action did he take that ripened into
his birth among the gods, and that he pleased the
Blessed One, and did not displease him?”
- “Monks,” the Blessed One replied, “it was partly
due to his past actions, and it is partly due to his
present actions as well.
- 4.108 “As for his past actions, monks, in times past,
in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long
as twenty thousand years, and the totally and
completely awakened buddha possessed of insight
and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the
world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the
unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods,
the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the
world, he went forth in his teaching.
- 4.109 “As a monk, he had no respect for his training
and became caught up in distractions. He did
much that violated the fundamental precepts,
both lesser and greater. Still, he maintained some
of the fundamental precepts, and at the time of his
death he prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, may I please
and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin
prophesied by the totally and completely awakened
Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’
- 4.110 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was
that monk then is none other than this elephant.

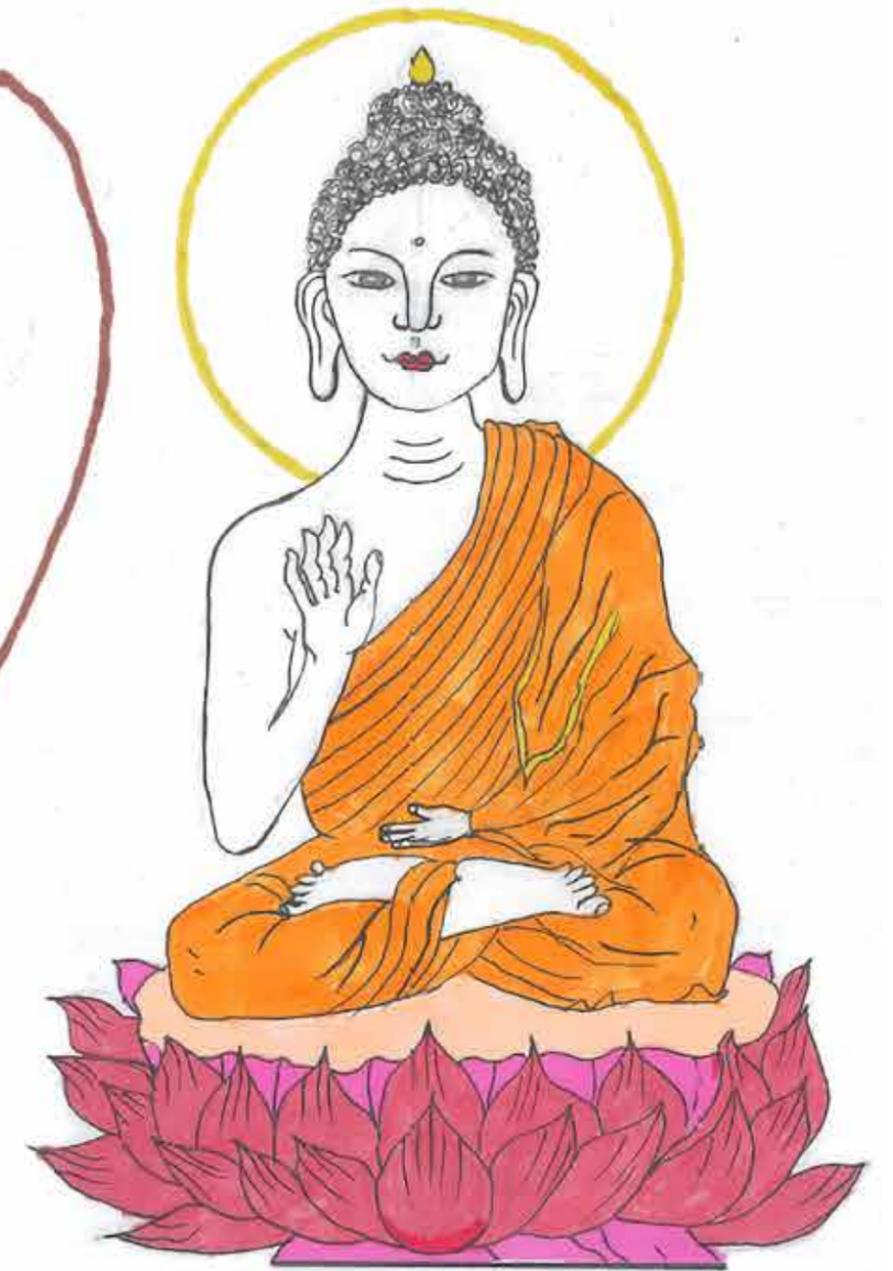
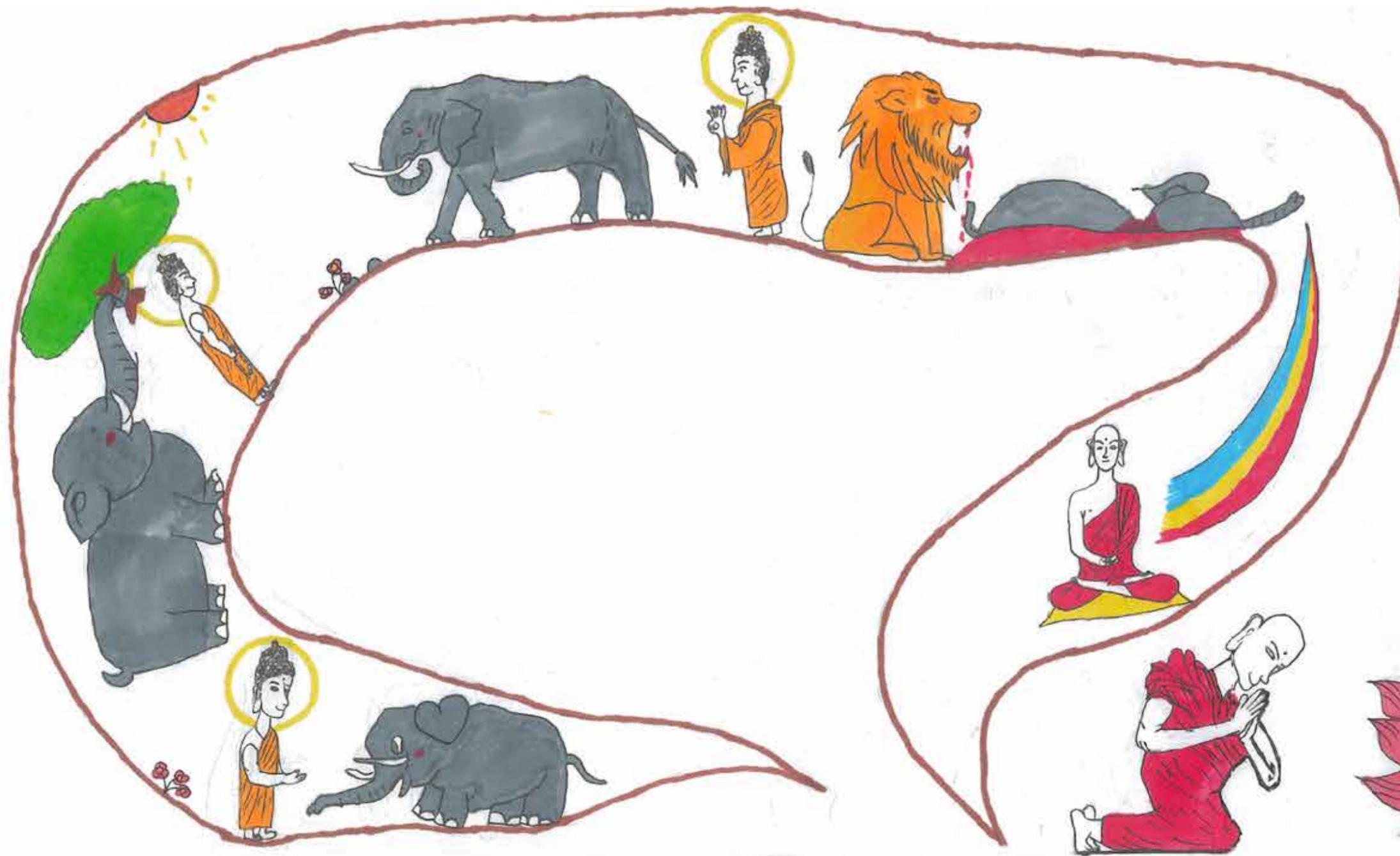
The act of failing to maintain both the lesser and greater fundamental precepts ripened into his birth among the animals. Since he protected some of the fundamental precepts, at the time of his death he prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

4.111 “So it is monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me and not displeased me. These were his past actions.

“As for his present actions, the monk became an elephant who offered me his respectful service with a mind full of joy, so he took birth among the gods. These were his present actions.”

THE END

Next: *The Nāga* (1)



Part Four (7)

The
Nāga (1)

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Nāga (1)

4.112 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, a nāga king called Vasu lived in the great ocean. When the time came for him to marry he took a nāga wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. One day she gave birth to a child, and at the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since this is Vasu’s child, his name will be Vasubhadra.” Young Vasubhadra was reared on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he grew up, and learned to get around.

4.113 Now it is characteristic of the nāgas that three times each day and three times each night the nāga sands rain down on their bodies. This causes them to undergo dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony. Until the day the child came into his own, the nāga sands never rained down on his body. But once he had grown and come into his own, the nāga sands rained down on him too and caused him dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, so he asked his parents, “Mother, Father, how long must I undergo such suffering?”

His parents replied, “For as long as it is destined to you, son, you will undergo these sufferings.”

4.114 The young nāga looked and saw that the nāga sands didn’t rain down on the bodies of other nāgas. Seeing this he asked his parents, “Mother, Father, I think we have fallen into a lower realm. For if the nāga sands don’t rain down on those high

nāgas there, why do they rain down on our bodies?”

“Those high nāgas are of great renown,” his parents replied. “It’s because of their great renown that they aren’t rained down upon.”

4.115 Then he looked and saw that in the great ocean there were some nāgas who were even more wretched than they were, but nāga sand wasn’t raining down on their bodies. Seeing this, he asked his parents, “Mother, Father, are you telling me that these are all nāgas of great renown, and that because of their great renown nāga sand isn’t raining down on their bodies? For there are some here who are even more wretched than we are. Why then, if nāga sand isn’t raining down on their bodies, is it still raining down on ours?”

“Though they are more wretched than we are,” explained his parents, “nonetheless they take refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts. That’s why nāga sand doesn’t rain down on their bodies.”

4.116 When he heard this, he surged with joy. “Mother, Father,” he asked, “how is that they came to take refuge and the fundamental precepts?”

“A buddha has arisen here, in this central land,” they said. “He has let fall a rain of nectar, and so they have come to take refuge and the fundamental precepts.”

“Mother, Father,” the young nāga requested, “please, permit me to go take refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts, by whose power nāga sand will no longer rain down on my body.”

4.117 “Do not take them, son,” cautioned his parents. “Though the sufferings of the sands are innate to us, they are minor. If you take refuge and the fundamental precepts but do not maintain them, it will be the basis of your taking rebirth as a hell being, an animal, or an anguished spirit, where you will undergo great suffering, compared to which your current sufferings are not even a fraction’s worth—not even a hundredth, not even

a thousandth, not even a hundred thousandth.”

4.118 “Mother, Father,” said the young nāga, “I shall maintain them to the best of my ability, if only to assuage the sufferings of the sands innate to us.” With those words the young nāga filled up the front of his long shirt with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers, disappeared from beneath the great ocean, and traveled to the garden of Prince Jeta, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. The young nāga saw the Blessed Buddha, resplendent and agreeable, in the distance. His senses were tamed, his heart was at peace, and his mind was tame and absolutely serene. He was graced with a supreme tranquility, shining and radiant like a golden pillar.

4.119 He saw the Blessed Buddha, and the sight of him filled him with supreme joy. Full of such joy he approached the Blessed One, and when he arrived he scattered the divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers over the Blessed One. Then he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, took refuge in the Blessed One, received the fundamental precepts, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

4.120 Now that the nāga sands affected him no more, he thought, “The Blessed One has dispelled many kinds of suffering and unhappiness, and brought me many kinds of happiness and bliss. How could I repay the Blessed One? If the Blessed One will permit it, for as long as I live, I will respectfully serve the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with all their needs.”

4.121 He rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and implored him, “Blessed One, for as long as I live please permit me to provide the Buddha and the entire saṅgha of monks with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick.

Blessed One, please permit me to do so.”

“Young man,” the Blessed One replied, “please let me go, for there are others who also need my help.”

4.122 After the Blessed One remained in retreat in Śrāvastī during the rains, he instructed Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Ānanda, go and give this message to the monks: tell them that the Tathāgata will travel through the countryside to Magadha. Inform them that those who wish to travel through the countryside with the Tathāgata should prepare their robes.” Then, after staying in Śrāvastī for as long as he liked, the Blessed One traveled to Rājagṛha.

4.123 The young nāga thought, “Even though the Blessed One would not permit me to respectfully serve them with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick for as long as I live, while they are on this road I can provide the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with all their needs.” He drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and implored the Blessed One again, “I would like to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick as we travel from Śrāvastī to Rājagṛha. Blessed One, please permit me to do so.” The Blessed One assented by his silence.

4.124 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, straightaway the young nāga cleared the road from Śrāvastī to Rājagṛha of stones, pebbles, and gravel, cleaned the roadside ditches, and swept away mud, filth, twigs, and dung until there was no more. Then he covered the ground with green grass and sprinkled it with fragrant water to settle the dust. All along either side he laid branches of fruits and flowers, as if it were a courtyard, and it resounded with singing parrots,

peacocks, mountain birds, and cakravāka birds. He filled the ponds, pools, and reservoirs with lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers, and he magically manifested honking swans and geese and quacking ducks.

4.125 He filled the length of the road with vases and lined the sides with banana trees and marvelous garlands. He set up parasols, banners, and flags, decorated them with various colored fabrics, and set out yak-tail whisks. On the right and on the left he arrayed blue, yellow, red, and white platforms, overlaid with sashed canopies, and decorated with moons, crescents, and mirrors.

4.126 He decorated himself with bangles around the neck and wrists, armllets, garlands of ornaments, and strings of precious stones. He magically manifested cascading bouquets of flowers in elaborate arrangements, and he magically manifested crowds of people as well. Some held hundred-ribbed parasols over the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks. Some held canopies aloft. Some waved fans with golden handles, others waved fans with bejeweled handles, and some scattered lotus, blue lotus, white water lily, and white lotus flowers.

4.127 The young nāga followed close behind the Blessed One, worshiping him with flowers, and burning sticks of incense, incense powder, and incense cones. Whenever and wherever the Blessed One paused in repose, then and there he magically manifested a seat. He contented the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with a blend of molasses, sugarcane juice, and refined sugar. Whenever and wherever the Blessed One made camp for the night, then and there he would magically manifest a monastery that was complete in every respect. He also offered scented water for the monks to wash their feet and fragrant sesame oil to anoint them. Then the following day, once he had contented the Buddha and the rest of the

saṅgha of monks with many good and wholesome foods, he would again accompany the Buddha, venerating him, treating him as his guru, and offering him honor and worship.

4.128 The Blessed One traveled and traveled until eventually he arrived in Rājagṛha, where he stayed in the Kalandakanivāsa, in Bamboo Grove. There the young nāga drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “I would like to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick here in Bamboo Grove. Blessed One, please permit me to do so.” The Blessed One assented to the young nāga by his silence.

4.129 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the young nāga then prepared everything they would need for three months there in Bamboo Grove. Once he had provided for all the needs of the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months, on the last day he contented them with foods of a hundred flavors and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe. To each of the other monks he also offered everything that was needed. Then he took a seat at the head of the row with thoughts of faith, and at that moment the Blessed One smiled.

Now it is the nature of the blessed buddhas’ smiles that when they smile, colorful beams of blue, yellow, red, and white light radiate from their mouths, with some traveling up and others traveling down.

4.130 Those that travel down go to the beings in the Reviving Hell, the Black Thread Hell, the Crushing Hell, the Shrieking Hell, the Screaming Hell, the Hot Hell, the Hell of Extreme Heat, the Hell of Ceaseless Agony, the Blistering Hell, the Bursting Blister Hell, the Hell of Chattering Teeth, the Hell

of Lamentation, the Cold Whimpering Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Blue Lotus Hell, the Splitting Open Like a Lotus Hell, and the Splitting Open Like a Great Lotus Hell, and as they descend they cool the beings in the hot hells, and warm the beings in the cold hells.

4.131 In this way they soothe the particular injuries of those beings, who wonder, “Have we died and been reborn somewhere other than this place?” Then, to engender faith in them, the blessed ones radiate an emanation, and when the beings see it, they think, “Alas, it is neither that we have died and left this place, nor that we have been born elsewhere. Rather it is because of the unprecedented appearance of this emanation that our particular injuries have been soothed.” They feel real joy toward the emanation, exhausting the deeds that brought them to experience the hells. Now, as fit vessels of the truths, they take rebirth among the gods and humans.

4.132 The rays of light that travel up go to the following gods: those of the Abodes of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Strifeless Heaven, Tuṣita Heaven, the Delighting in Creation Heaven, the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations, and the Heaven of Brahmā’s Assembly; those of the realms called Brahmin Priests, Great Brahmā, Limited Splendor, Immeasurable Splendor, Radiant Heaven, Lesser Virtue, Immeasurable Virtue, Extensive Virtue, and the Cloudless Heaven; and those of the realms called Increasing Merit, Great Result, None Greater, Sorrowless, Sublime Vision, Great Vision, and Supreme. There they sound a cry of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness, and they echo the following two verses:

4.133 Cultivate renunciation,
Practice the Buddha’s teaching—
Trample the lord of death’s army
Like an elephant in a house of reeds!

4.134 Those who mind their way along the path
Of this Dharma and Vinaya
Will abandon the round of rebirth
And put an end to suffering.

4.135 Then the rays of light circle through the trichiliocosm and come back to the blessed ones. Should the blessed one wish to make a revelation about past deeds, they will disappear into the blessed one’s back. Should he wish to foretell the future, they will disappear into the chest. Should he wish to prophesy about a hell birth, they will disappear into the soles of the feet. Should he wish to prophesy about an animal birth, they will disappear into the heels. Should he wish to prophesy about birth as an anguished spirit, they will disappear into the big toe. Should he wish to prophesy about a human birth, they will disappear into the knees.

4.136 Should he wish to prophesy about someone’s becoming a great universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the left hand. Should he wish to prophesy about someone’s becoming a universal monarch, they will disappear into the palm of the right hand. Should he wish to prophesy about a god birth, they will disappear into the navel. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the listeners, they will disappear into the mouth. Should he wish to prophesy about the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, they will disappear into the hair between the eyebrows. Should he wish to prophesy about an unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, they will disappear into the crown of the head.

4.137 After these particular rays of light had circled the Blessed One three times, they disappeared into the hair between the Blessed One’s eyebrows. Then Venerable Ānanda joined his palms in reverence and praised the Blessed One with the following verse:

4.138 “From your mouth’s great gate spill forth Scores of
thousand-colored spectra.
Like the shining of the sun,
They illumine everything.”

4.139 He then supplicated him with the following verses:

“The lords of beings, the buddhas who cast off
disconsolation,
Are rid of savagery and pride, and are themselves
the cause of all that’s good.
These victors over every rival, in the absence of
cause and condition
Do not display their smiles, which are the color of
conch and lotus root.

4.140 “So if you know it’s time, for your mind never
falters,
Then come—ascetic, victor—quell your disciples’
hesitation.
O sage, greatest of the herd, with speech unrivaled,
sure, and good,
Reassure those prone to doubt.

4.141 “Mountain still, and vast as oceans,
Buddha, fully awakened lord,
Your smile is no mundane event.
Hero, make it manifest so that many might pay
heed.

4.142 “With speech like a clap of thunder,
Graceful like a royal bull,
Oh tell the fruits awaiting those,
The peerless ones, who praise you!

4.143 “Lord, if in the absence of the right causes and
conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally
and completely awakened buddhas do not smile,
what are the causes and conditions that make them
smile?”

4.144 “Ānanda, so it is,” replied the Blessed One. “It is
just as you say, Ānanda. Without the right causes
and conditions the tathāgatas, the arhats, the
totally and completely awakened buddhas do not
smile. Ānanda, did you see the young nāga who
provided for the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha
of monks, both on the road and here in Rājagṛha?”

“Yes, Lord, I saw him.”

4.145 “Ānanda, by the root of virtue of this nāga’s
act, he will not fall to the lower realms for one
hundred eons. For one hundred eons he will take
rebirth among gods and humans. After circling
in saṃsāra, in his final rebirth, his final dwelling
place, he will take birth as a human being. Then
he will go forth and manifest the thirty-seven
wings of enlightenment without a teacher or any
instruction. He will manifest the enlightenment of
a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddha
known as Aspiration Well Sown.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Simha*



The Nāga (1)

Asha Sastre Naidu / 14 years old

Part Four (8)

The Story of
Simha

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཏུང་།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Story of Siṃha

4.146 When the Blessed One was in Vaiśālī, as a certain army chief named Siṃha and his wife enjoyed themselves and coupled, his wife conceived, and immediately her entire body began to smell of excrement. What's more, she also had the urge to eat excrement.

4.147 She explained all of this to her husband, Siṃha the army chief. "Alas!" army chief Siṃha thought, "one of those rotting spirits has assumed control of my wife," and he brought her to the soothsayers.

4.148 "No, she has not been possessed by a rotten spirit," the soothsayers assured him. "All this has taken place on account of the being in her womb. Once that being is born there will be no more trouble."

4.149 Then after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child that was ugly in eighteen different ways. No sooner was the child born than the house was suffused with the smell of excrement. The women laid him out on the bed and applied all different kinds of perfumes, but still could not remove the smell of filth from his body. The army chief Siṃha's wife did not wish to show the child to him, but one of the other women informed him, "Sir, though indeed you have a son, he is ugly in eighteen different ways, the smell of excrement pervades his body, and the whole house is filling up with the smell."

4.150 The army chief Siṃha was stricken to hear this and thought, "Though a son has finally been born

to me, since he's disfigured, what use is he to me? When night falls, I'll toss him out to the dogs."

4.151 Now in the meantime the army chief Siṃha's spiritual advisor had met the Blessed One and seen the truths. Having seen the truths, he thought, "This being was born due to his past actions. Since he was born in a body like this due to his nonvirtuous actions, they should raise this pitiable creature. When he is grown, they should introduce him to respectful service to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. Then at the very least he will not take birth in such a body in his next life."

4.152 So they reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when he had grown, his father said to him, "Son, you have a body like this on account of your nonvirtuous past actions. Right now the Blessed One is a rich field of merit for all humanity. Even doing him some small service will bring a great result and benefit you greatly. Offer him your service, make good prayers, and perhaps the burden of your past deeds will be lighter."

4.153 Heeding his father's words, he began to respectfully serve the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. One day, at the young man's behest, his parents extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, and he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Once he knew that their bowls had been taken away and their hands washed, he brought in a very low seat and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

4.154 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the young man destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

4.155 Having seen the truths, he thought, "If my body

weren't like this, I too would go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort." No sooner had he thought this than his ugly features and the unpleasant smell disappeared, and he was filled with exceptional joy toward the Blessed One.

4.156 Full of such joy, he pressed his palms together, bowed toward the Blessed One, and requested, "Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life."

4.157 With the words "Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life," the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

4.158 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, "Lord, what action did this monk take that ripened into his being ugly in eighteen different ways, and that the smell of excrement arose from all over his body? What action did he take that, as soon as he felt a sense of renunciation, his ugliness disappeared and he became good looking; that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him; and that he went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?"

4.159 "Monks," the Blessed One explained, "such are the actions that he committed and accumulated:

"Monks, in times gone by, in a mountain village there lived a brahmin who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. Arrogant about his good looks and youthfulness, he was contemptuous toward many ascetics and brahmins. One day he went to the roof of his house and sat there surrounded by young brahmins.

4.160 "In times when a blessed one has not arisen in the world, out of compassion for the destitute and suffering the solitary buddhas appear, taking up residence in remote places. Solitary as the rhinoceros, in all the world they alone are worthy of offerings.

4.161 "So it was that a solitary buddha was going for alms in that mountain town, where he received very good food and drink. He was carrying it when the brahmin spotted him striding away from the front door of the brahmin's house and proceeding to the main road. There was a pot full of excrement on the rooftop in front of the brahmin. Intending the solitary buddha harm, he kicked the pot down on top of him and it soiled the sage's clothes, body, and alms bowl. The solitary buddha looked up as the brahmin's face turned from gleeful to hideous, degraded by the actions of his own body.

4.162 "Then the solitary buddha thought, 'This emotionally afflicted person has become so abased! I have to help him.' With this thought he rose up into the sky, making a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning.

"Ordinary people are quickly brought to faith through miracles, so when the brahmin saw all this, he bowed down at the sage's feet like a tree felled by a saw, saying, 'O great fortunate one, please, please come down! I'm mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift me up!' Out of compassion for him, the solitary buddha descended. The brahmin invited him inside, carried away his garments,

anointed his body with fragrance, bathed him in scented water, and offered him a new Dharma robe.

4.163 “Then, after he had contented him with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that he wished, he touched his head to his feet, asked his forgiveness, and prayed, ‘May no portion of the act of having done harm to this supreme object of worship ripen unto me. By the root of virtue of having paid homage to him, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues. Should it be the case that this nonvirtue must certainly bear fruit, then as soon as I feel a sense of renunciation, may my ugliness disappear, and may I become good looking.’

4.164 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that brahmin then is now Siṃha’s very own son. At that time, the act of doing harm to that solitary buddha ripened such that wherever he was born, he was ugly in eighteen different ways, and his entire body emitted a smell of excrement. Later, he paid homage to him and prayed, ‘By this root of the virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues. Should it be the case that this nonvirtue must certainly bear fruit, then as soon as I feel a sense of renunciation, may my ugliness disappear and may I become good looking.’

4.165 “Monks, I am more exalted than even a hundred thousand solitary buddhas, and he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, manifested arhatship, and as soon as he felt a sense of renunciation, his ugliness disappeared and he

became good looking.”

“Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what action did the army chief take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

4.166 The Blessed One replied, “He became a lay vow holder in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Then, he gave gifts and made merit, took refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life. At the time of his death he prayed, ‘Oh, by this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

4.167 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was a lay vow holder in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than the army chief Siṃha. There he gave gifts and made merit, took refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts, and prayed at the time of his death. Those acts ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

4.168 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, and not displeased me.”

THE END

Next: *The Schism in the Saṅgha*



Part Four (9)

The Schism in the
Saṅgha

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 The Schism in the Saṅgha

4.169 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, there was a famine of such severity and duration that beggars did not receive any food. After all, if parents could not hope to provide even their own children with food, what need is there to speak of beggars.

4.170 The Blessed One addressed the monks, saying, “Monks, I would very much like to spend three months in meditative seclusion. During that period let no monk approach the Blessed One except on the fifteenth day for the poṣadha purification ceremony or to bring food.” Having spoken thus, the Blessed One spent three months in secluded meditation, and the monks agreed among themselves that none of them would go to see the Blessed One except on the fifteenth day for the poṣadha purification ceremony or to bring food.

4.171 At this Devadatta thought, “The time has come for me to cause a schism in the saṅgha of the ascetic Gautama’s disciples—to cause a schism in his circle.” So he said to the monks, “Lords, behold how the ascetic Gautama treats his disciples! Just when he ought to provide for all the monks’ needs, he remains in secluded meditation. Come, monks! Stay with me and I shall provide for all your needs.”

4.172 Some five hundred monks heeded his words and decided to disregard the Blessed One. They went to meet with Devadatta, who gathered those monks around him and declared the following:

“Since the ascetic Gautama stays in a remote hermitage, we will stay in the village. Why? Because, monks, there are many disadvantages to staying in a remote hermitage.

4.173 “Since the ascetic Gautama permits the eating of meat, we will not eat it. Why? On the grounds that beings will be killed.

“Since the ascetic Gautama eats salt, we will not eat it. Why? Because it comes from salt water.

4.174 “Since the ascetic Gautama drinks milk, we will not drink it. Why? On the grounds that it causes the calves distress.

“Since the ascetic Gautama dons fringed robes, we will not wear them. Why? Because they are a waste of people’s earnings.

4.175 “Whoever wishes to take these five vows as the basis of his conduct and to accept and receive them, and wishes to part now from the ascetic Gautama, to follow another, and to sever himself from the ascetic Gautama, let him take a tally stick.” He distributed the tally sticks among the saṅgha, and five hundred monks took them. After the sticks had been handed out, Devadatta led the monks make the following supplication:

4.176 ‘Lord, please heed this saṅgha:

‘Since the ascetic Gautama stays in a remote hermitage, we will stay in the village. Why? Because, monks, there are many disadvantages to remaining in the monastery.

“If the ascetic Gautama permits the eating of meat, we will not eat it. Why? On the grounds that beings will be killed.

“If the ascetic Gautama eats salt, we will not eat it. Why? Because it comes from salt water.

4.177 “If the ascetic Gautama drinks milk, we will not drink it. Why? On the grounds that it causes the calves distress.

“If the ascetic Gautama dons fringed robes, we will not wear them. Why? Because they are a waste of people’s earnings.

“With your consent, if the time is right, we, your saṅgha, request to take these five vows as the foundation of our conduct.”

4.178 Led by Devadatta, the five hundred monks strode into Kurkuṭārāma Gardens. The foremost of his monks—Kokālika, Khaṇḍadravya, Kaṭamorakatiṣya, and Samudradatta—organized them into seated rows on the right and on the left. Devadatta took a seat in the middle of the group, and felt like a masterful Dharma teacher. The idea had come to him, “Now I have finished creating a schism in the ascetic Gautama’s saṅgha of monks. I have finished creating a schism in his retinue,” and, sitting in the middle of the group, he felt like a masterful Dharma teacher.

4.179 Because of the schism in the saṅgha, the monks did not practice, contemplate, give any precepts or instruction, or recite. They did not recollect the sūtras, nor did they recollect the vinaya, nor did they recollect the abhidharma. There were obstacles to every virtuous endeavor.

4.180 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what activities did the Blessed One undertake that ripened into a division of the saṅgha?”

“It was I myself,” the Blessed One replied, “who, in previous lifetimes, put the conditions in place and accumulated the causes for this. It was as inevitable as the tides. If I alone committed and accumulated these actions, which are certain to return, who else could come to experience them?”

4.181 “Monks, the actions that I committed and accumulated did not ripen into the external element of earth. They did not ripen into the element of water, nor the element of fire, nor the element of wind. The actions I committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but my own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

4.182 “When the time arrives—and even if

A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act
That sentient beings amass.

4.183 “Monks, it took place in times gone by, during King Brahmadata’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī. At that time in Vārāṇasī, in one of the sages’ dwellings there lived a certain sage who was clairvoyant and supported by five hundred of his disciples.

4.184 “One day a brahmin came from the south with five hundred disciples and established himself near the sage’s dwelling. There he began to teach his five hundred young brahmins the secret mantras of the brahmins. That brahmin was also a master of the eighteen sciences. When some disciples of the first brahmin sage who had already been living there heard about the brahmin, they went to see him, saying, ‘Teacher, work your benefit upon us as well!’

4.185 “ ‘How, then, am I to benefit you?’ the brahmin asked.

“The young brahmins said, ‘We request that you benefit us by teaching recitation.’

“ ‘I don’t teach the disciples of others,’ the brahmin said.

4.186 “The disciples of the first brahmin thought, ‘Our preceptor may have attracted us with food and clothes, but he is not capable of instructing us in recitation. Let us abandon that one and entrust ourselves to this brahmin instead. Let’s get together and learn recitation.’ So they said to the second brahmin, ‘We are abandoning our teacher. We shall entrust ourselves to you alone.’

4.187 “ ‘If that’s the case,’ the brahmin said, ‘let me help you by providing you with food and clothes, and by teaching you recitation.’

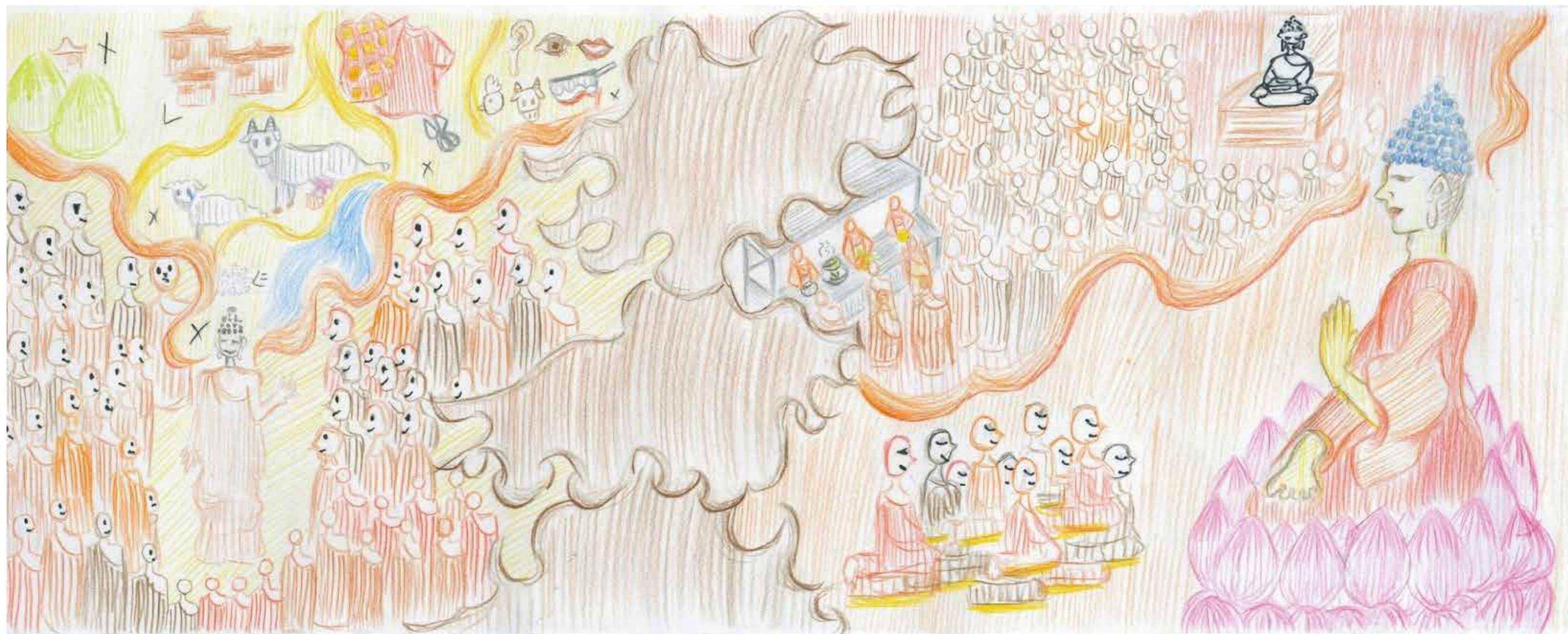
“No sooner had they heard this than the young brahmins left the sage friendless and all alone and entrusted themselves to the brahmin, who gathered them around him by providing them with food and

clothes and by teaching them recitation.

4.188 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that brahmin then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The action of causing a schism in that sage’s retinue ripened such that for hundreds upon hundreds and thousands upon thousands of years I took rebirth as a hell being and was cooked. Then when I died from there and transmigrated, wherever I was born I underwent separation from my disciples up until this very day, when, due to the ripening of that action, Devadatta has divided my circle.”

THE END

Next: *The Dark Forest*



The Schism in the Saṅgha

Part Four (10)

The
Dark Forest

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཏུང་།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 The Dark Forest

4.189 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there was a certain very dark forest, and in that forest was a certain place where spring water pooled. Some five hundred sages lived at the spring and practiced austerities. All of them were in their final existence, like ripe fruit ready to burst at the touch of a blade.

4.190 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

4.191 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I

lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

4.192 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

4.193 The Blessed One thought, “The time has come to tame those five hundred sages.” He disappeared from Śrāvastī and traveled to the dark forest. The five hundred sages saw the Blessed One from a distance, and when they saw him they said to one another, “Oh no! Here comes the ascetic Gautama, who has taken on many distractions and given up begging for his livelihood. When he gets here, let us not speak to him at all but only indicate the huts with a hand gesture.”

4.194 So all five hundred sages hunkered down and said nothing at all. As the Blessed One, lord of taming actions, stepped before them and addressed them, they did not answer the Blessed One at all, but only indicated the huts with a hand gesture. The Blessed One entered a hut and took his place on a grass seat. Then, in order to set right the five hundred sages, the Blessed One performed a miracle that dried up the pool of spring water. When the five hundred sages saw that there was no more water in the pool, they suffered greatly and began making supplications to their deity, but still no water came from the spring.

4.195 Then, in order to engender faith in them, the

deity revealed his bodily form to the five hundred sages and said, “What is the use of fasting and going thirsty, my friends? The Blessed One is a person of great miracles and great power. Go, take refuge in the Blessed One. By the power of the Blessed One, the pool will again be as it was.” Hearing the deity’s advice, the five hundred sages were elated. In their joy they went to see the Blessed One, and upon their arrival they implored the Blessed One for his forgiveness and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

4.196 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right where they sat, Having seen the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and made this request of the Blessed One: “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

4.197 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had

no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods. After the Blessed One had led them to go forth and ordained them, he disappeared from the forest and traveled to the garden of Prince Jeta.

4.198 In the meantime, the brahmins and householders of faith had heard that five hundred monks had taken up residence in the forest, so they built a monastery in the forest that was complete in every respect and offered it to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks.

4.199 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did the five hundred monks take that ripened into their pleasing the Blessed One and not displeasing him, and that they went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

4.200 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, they went forth in his doctrine and practiced pure conduct all their lives.

4.201 “At the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘While we may not have attained any great virtues, still we have gone forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all our lives. By this root of virtue, may we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in

his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

4.202 “O monks, what do you think? The five hundred monks who went forth then are none other than these five hundred monks. At that time they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

4.203 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The One Who Heard*



The Dark Forest

Part Four (11)

The
One Who Heard

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

11 The One Who Heard

4.204 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there was a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

4.205 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

4.206 His father built three houses for him—one for summer, one for winter, and one for spring—with three different gardens, and the son married three wives, a primary wife, a middling wife, and a lesser

wife. He would stay up on the roofs of his palatial homes in the company of the women, reaping the fruits of his merit as they played music, enjoyed themselves, and coupled.

4.207 One day in the spring, when many trees were in bloom and the parrots, mountain birds, cuckoos, peacocks, and jīvaṃjīva birds began to call out, he strode into his garden grove with his attendants, and they began to enjoy themselves and couple amid a flourish of cymbals.

4.208 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

4.209 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of

virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?"

4.210 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

4.211 The Blessed One knew that the time had come to tame the householder's son, so he emanated another garden nearby, and in that garden he began teaching the Dharma to a great crowd of people with a voice like Brahmā. The householder's son heard the Blessed One's voice ringing out in the garden, and thought, "I have never heard a human voice like this before." He found it marvelous. "I will go and find out who could have such a voice," he thought.

4.212 Following the sound into the next garden, the householder's son and his servants saw the Blessed Buddha. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart.

4.213 He saw the Blessed Buddha, and the sight of him filled him with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

4.214 Seeing the Blessed Buddha in this way, the householder's son felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he went to see the Blessed One, touched the top of his head to the Blessed One's feet, and took a seat at one side. The Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual

tendencies, temperament, and nature of the householder's son, and taught him the Dharma accordingly.

4.215 When he heard it, the householder's son destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. Having seen the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested, "Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life."

4.216 "Have you informed your parents?" the Blessed One asked.

"I have not, Lord."

"Young man," the Blessed One said, "the buddhas and their disciples neither lead novices to go forth nor confer full ordination on young persons without their parents' permission. Go and ask your parents, then come back here. This will make things easier for you later on."

4.217 "I shall do as the Blessed One has instructed," said the young man, and he heeded the Blessed One's advice and approached his parents. "Mother, Father," he said, "I ask for your kind permission to go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One."

"We shall not be able to stop him," thought his parents, so they told him, "You have our permission, child. And should you achieve any special attainments, please come see us."

"I shall," he replied.

4.218 Then the young man returned to see the Blessed One. Upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested

him again, “Lord, now that my parents have given me their consent, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

4.219 With the words “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led the householder’s son to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

4.220 After he attained arhatship he established his parents in the truths. He inspired them to give gifts and to share what they had, until their home became like an open well for those in need.

4.221 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what action did this householder’s son take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him; that he went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; and that by entrusting themselves to him, the people of his house pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

4.222 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past, in the ninety-first eon,

when people lived as long as eighty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Vipāśyin was in the world, he performed all of the deeds of a buddha and then passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates, like a fire when all the wood is gone.

4.223 “The king of the city of Bandhumatī built a reliquary stūpa and was preparing to raise the life pillar when a great crowd gathered. So the king exhorted them, ‘Whoever generates the most wealth on behalf of this stūpa will raise the stūpa’s life pillar.’

4.224 “A certain householder’s son in that region heard of the king’s declaration, and an idea came to him, ‘If I can generate a lot of wealth on behalf of the stūpa, I shall get to raise the life pillar. I’m not that wealthy, but I will go see my family and generate some wealth.’

4.225 “The householder’s son went to his family, and they said, ‘Be strong. You have to believe. Whatever wealth you generate, we will match.’ When he heard this, the young man immediately began to generate greater sums than the king, generating 600 million in gold all together.

4.226 “The king was not pleased about this. ‘How can I harm this boy?’ he thought, and sat there, unhappy. His officer said to him, ‘Deva, I implore you, remain committed. You must believe. We shall offer our wealth to you, Deva.’

4.227 “Many of the young man’s relatives tried to stop him. ‘Take care not to upset the king,’ they cautioned him. ‘One should not vie with a king.’ And the young man immediately relented.

4.228 “The king was very pleased about this, for the life pillar of the stūpa would have been raised based on

the donations given to the young man. In no time at all the stūpa was completed in every respect, and people made offerings to the stūpa of flowers, and burning sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones, and prepared for the traditional stūpa festival.

4.229 “The householder’s son thought, ‘This 600 million in gold was donated for the stūpa. I don’t dare use it for myself. I shall offer all of it to the stūpa.’ So the young man and his relatives made a large offering to the stūpa, and the young man prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever we are born, may it be into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May we be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May we please and not displease a teacher just like this one. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

4.230 “ ‘Child,’ his relatives asked him, ‘what prayers are you making?’

“He told them what kind of prayers he was making, relating everything in detail, and as soon as they heard him they prayed in the same way, saying, ‘Entrusting ourselves to you alone, may we please and not displease a teacher just like this one.’

4.231 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the householder’s son then is this young man. The act of venerating the stūpa and praying ripened such that he was born into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.

4.232 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Vipāśyin—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

4.233 “Those who were his relatives then are none

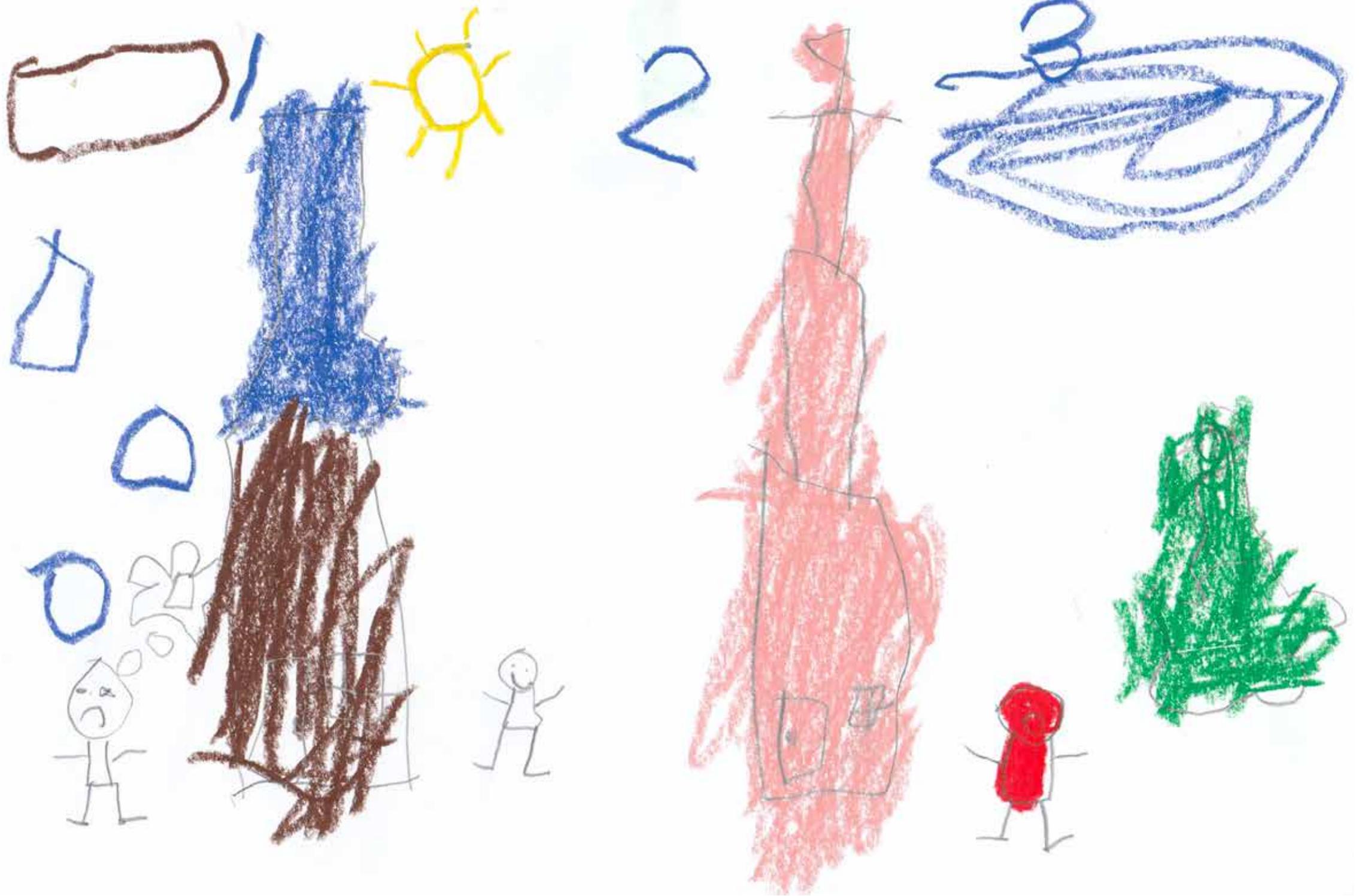
other than these relatives of his. At that time they prayed, ‘Entrusting ourselves to you alone, may we please and not displease the Blessed One. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

“So it is, monks, that they have pleased me and not displeased me.”

4.234 *This concludes Part Four of The Hundred Deeds.*

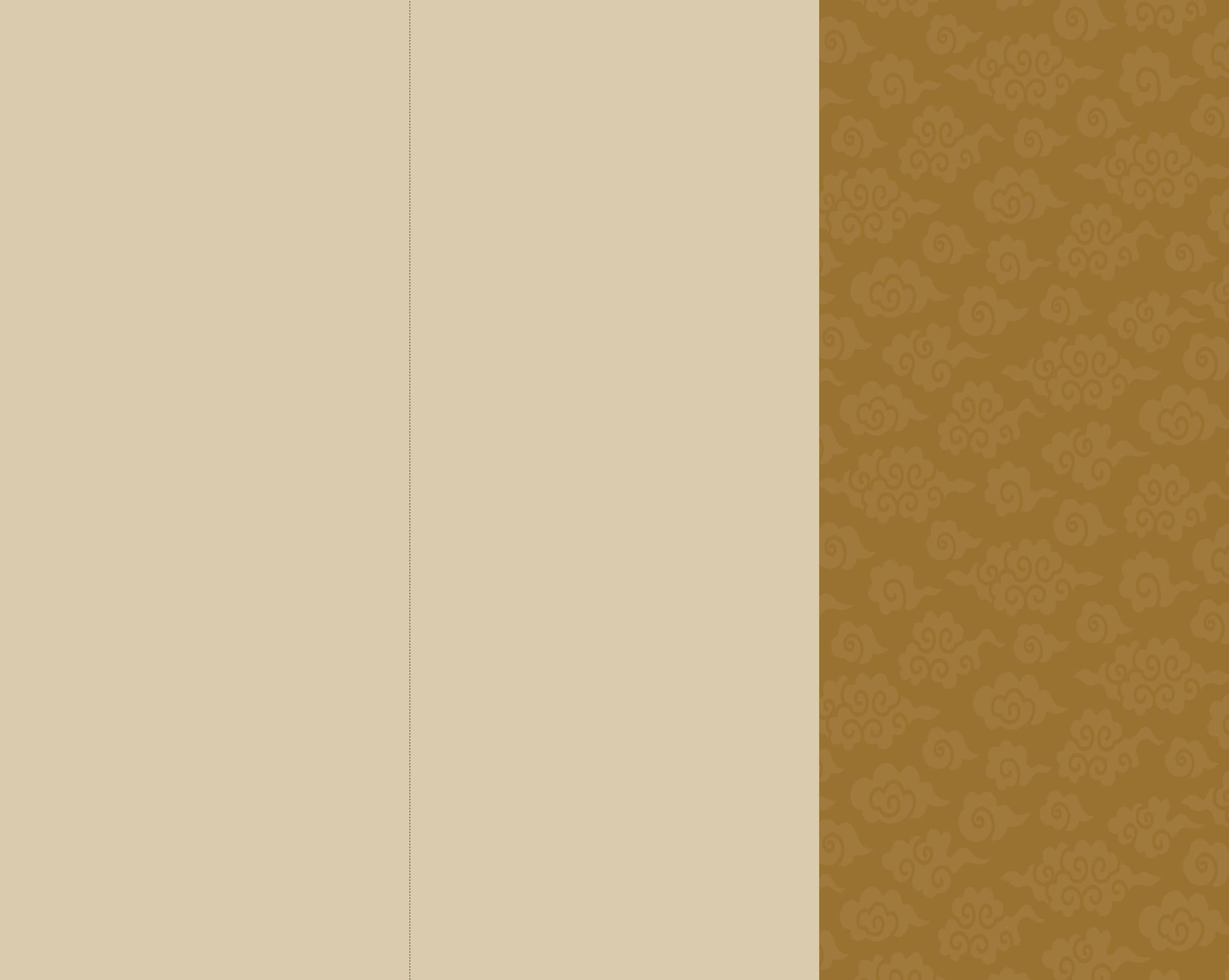
THE END

Next: *Part Five: The Story of Virūpa*



The One Who Heard

Alex Lyu / 6 years old



The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་པ།
Karmaśataka

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Part Five

1. The Story of Virūpa
 2. The Story of Kṣemaṅkara
 3. The Young Untouchable
 4. The Story of Subhadra
the Charioteer
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Compassion
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 11. The Man Who Was
Trampled
 12. The Story of Jackal
-

Part Five (1)

The Story of
Virūpa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Story of Virūpa

5.2 As the Blessed One was traveling through the countryside in the land of Garga, he came to Mount Śiśumāri and stayed there in the deer park in The Terrifying Forest. On Mount Śiśumāri there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. He took a wife of the same caste, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was ugly in eighteen different ways.

5.3 When his parents saw him they were wracked with suffering. “Though a son has finally been born to us,” they thought, “what good is he, with such singular flaws? He’d be better off dead—when night falls, we’ll toss him out and feed him to the dogs.”

5.4 Then the householder’s wife said, “Not only is murder disgraceful, but if we commit such an act we will take rebirth as hell beings, so this we cannot do. Even though the child is flawed, let us raise him in some remote place. Then when he’s grown, we’ll throw him out of the house to seek his pitiful livelihood.”

5.5 So the two of them raised the baby in a remote place. They named him Virūpa (Ugly), and as soon as he was grown, they threw him out of the house. Emaciated from hunger and thirst, he began to beg, carrying around a walking stick and a pot.

Whenever he came to the door of a house, or to someplace where goods were kept, or to a shop, the people of the village would punch him, cuff him, pelt him with sticks and dirt clods, shout “Here comes a ghost!” and chase him away.

5.6 He suffered greatly and wondered, “What nonvirtuous act did I commit that has ripened into such suffering for me now? Let me give up living in the city and leave to go begging from garden to garden. I shall find something to fill my stomach there.” With this thought he set out from the city.

5.7 As he began making his way from garden to garden, the people there also thought he was a ghost. They punched him, cuffed him, pelted him with sticks and dirt clods, and chased him away. Finally, terrified of being beaten and terrified of people, he went into the thick of the forest and spent his days there, walking after sundown from garden to garden, nourishing himself only with whatever food fell to the ground. Now it is impossible and out of the question for a being in their final existence to die an untimely death. Thus, he found just enough to stay alive there.

5.8 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

5.9 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who

is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?"

5.10 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

5.11 The Blessed One knew that the time had come to tame young Virūpa, and entered into meditative absorption in cessation. Then the Buddha rose from his meditative absorption in cessation just to tame young Virūpa, emanating a form with features even uglier than his. Then, after filling a vessel with food and drink, he set out to see young Virūpa.

5.12 When young Virūpa saw the Blessed One in the distance he fled, thinking, "This person is coming to beat me!" But the Blessed One performed a miracle of preventing the young man from fleeing. The Buddha's miracle also caused Virūpa to wish to see the Blessed One.

5.13 "I would like to know who that is," he thought, and came walking back. As soon as young Virūpa saw the emanation's extraordinarily ugly features

he began to wonder, "Who could this be?" so he went to where the Buddha's emanation stood.

5.14 The Buddha's emanation saw young Virūpa, and made as if to run away. Young Virūpa called to him, "You've already seen me, friend. Why are you running away?"

The Buddha's emanation replied, "By the ripening of my past actions, my friend, my form has become like this. I was afraid you might beat me, thinking that I am a ghost, so I ran."

5.15 "It was likewise by the ripening of actions of my past lives that I gained these unattractive features, my friend," said young Virūpa. "Because of my unattractive features my parents threw me out of the house. As I went wherever I could for alms, I was punched, cuffed, and pelted with sticks and dirt clods, and chased away, until I lived in terror of being beaten and chased away. In terror of being beaten by people, I went into the thick of the forest, and there I have stayed—that is, until you came along. Let's be friends and make our way together."

5.16 "Let's do that," the emanation said, and he sat down there and divided his food with Virūpa. After they had filled their bellies with food and drink until they were quite content, young Virūpa felt joy toward the emanation. Then the Blessed One made his own unattractive features disappear and assumed his natural form.

5.17 Young Virūpa beheld the Blessed One. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When young Virūpa saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled him with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not experienced even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

Thus seeing the Blessed One, he felt a surge of joy toward him, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

5.18 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the young man destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right where he sat.

5.19 After seeing the truths he thought, "If my body weren't like this, I too would go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort." No sooner did he wish to go forth than his unattractive features disappeared and he became well proportioned and handsome, endowed with the finest of complexions.

5.20 He felt another surge of joy toward the Blessed One, rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and made this request of the Blessed One: "Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya monastic discipline of the Dharma so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life."

5.21 With the words "Come, join me, monk!" the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and

discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

5.22 "Lord," the monks asked the Blessed One, "what action did young Virūpa take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that his appearance had eighteen unattractive features, and that because of his unattractive features he was cast from the house by his parents; that as soon as he felt a sense of renunciation, the unattractive features went away and he had a fine face and form; and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?"

5.23 "Monks," the Blessed One explained, "such are the actions that Virūpa committed and accumulated:

"Monks, in times gone by, in a certain mountain village there lived a miserly, avaricious householder who hoarded all his belongings. This was during a time when blessed buddhas were not in the world, and so solitary buddhas had arisen. One day when he was at home, a solitary buddha came to the householder's home for alms. The householder gave alms to him and then regretted having given him alms.

5.24 " 'Better to eat the vegetables myself or to give them to someone who works than to give them to this monk who's got only a shaved head to show for himself!' Now regretful, he stole back the food, and chased the sage away from the house, cruelly intending to physically and verbally abuse him.

5.25 "The solitary buddha thought, 'It's not right for this emotionally afflicted person, who has become so abased, to continue in this downward spiral. I have to help him.' So he rose up into the sky, making a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning.

5.26 “Ordinary people are quickly brought to faith through miracles, so when he saw all this, the householder bowed down at the sage’s feet like a tree felled by a saw and said, ‘O great fortunate one, please come down! I’m mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift me up!’ Solely out of compassion for him, the solitary buddha descended.

5.27 “The householder bowed down at his feet, asked his forgiveness, gave him alms, and prayed, ‘May no portion of the act of harming this person so worthy of offerings ripen to me. By the root of virtue of having thus venerated him again, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues. Should it be the case that this nonvirtue must certainly bear fruit, then as soon as I feel a sense of renunciation, may my unattractive features disappear and may I become well proportioned and handsome.’

5.28 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that householder then is none other than Virūpa. The acts of giving alms to the solitary buddha, then stealing them back and chasing him away from the house, cruelly intending to physically and verbally abuse him, ripened such that wherever he was born, he had unattractive features and was cast out of the house. The act of giving alms to the solitary buddha again and praying, ‘Wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues,’ ripened such that wherever he was born it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

5.29 “Monks, I am more exalted than even one hundred billion solitary buddhas, and now he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

5.30 “He also went forth in the doctrine of the totally

and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Then, having practiced pure conduct all his life, at the time of his death he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.31 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Kṣemaṅkara*



The Story of Virūpa

Part Five (2)

The Story of
Kṣemaṅkara

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Story of Kṣemaṅkara

5.32 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, King Prasenajit reigned in the city of Śrāvastī, and King Brahmadata reigned in Vārāṇasī. The two did not agree with one another, and at various times a great many people were killed.

5.33 One day King Brahmadata arrayed the four divisions of his army—the elephant division, the horse division, the chariot division, and the infantry division—and advanced on the kingdom of King Prasenajit to wage war. King Brahmadata made camp and stayed on the banks of the Ajiravatī River. King Prasenajit heard that Brahmadata, King of Kāśī, had arrayed the four divisions of his army to wage war, had made camp, and was staying on the banks of the Ajiravatī River, so he also arrayed the four divisions of his army and advanced toward King Brahmadata to wage war and made camp, staying on the banks of the Ajiravatī River. Over time, many people were slaughtered as the two groups camped there. Both sides were powerful, and neither could defeat the other.

5.34 Time passed, and one day while they were camped there King Brahmadata’s queen conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, and as soon as she was born, celebratory music resounded from the palace.

5.35 King Prasenajit heard that a daughter had

been born to King Brahmadata who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. As soon as he heard this, his spirits lifted, and he thought, “I’ve found a way to become King Brahmadata’s kin. Because of this little child there will be no more resentment between us.”

5.36 King Prasenajit sent an envoy to King Brahmadata with the following message: “Let there be no more resentment, my friend. Because of your daughter there will be no more resentment. Hand your daughter to me in marriage.”

5.37 As soon as King Brahmadata heard this, his spirits lifted too and he thought, “Over time he and I have both slaughtered many people. But because of my daughter there will be no more resentment between us.” He sent an envoy with his response: “As you wish.”

5.38 The two kings met, embraced, and King Brahmadata pledged his daughter and returned to his own country. Upon returning to his country, he held an elaborate feast celebrating her birth, and asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named her, saying, “Since her birth brought happiness to the two kingdoms, her name will be Kṣemaṅkarā (She Who Brings Happiness).” They raised young Kṣemaṅkarā on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids.

5.39 Now desires are like salt water—the more you use to slake your thirst, the more you need. So one day, King Brahmadata’s queen conceived again, and when nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. They held another elaborate feast, celebrating his birth, and they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since this child was born after his sibling Kṣemaṅkarā, his name will be Kṣemaṅkara (He Who Brings Happiness).”

5.40 They raised young Kṣemaṅkara on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished

like a lotus in a lake. When they grew up, young Kṣemaṅkarā and Kṣemaṅkara became close friends, and could not bear to be apart for even a moment.

5.41 Then one day King Prasenajit sent an envoy to King Brahmadata with the message, “We will receive your daughter now.” As soon as King Brahmadata heard this, he sent an envoy with the message, “There is nothing preventing this, so please come on such-and-such a date.”

5.42 King Prasenajit responded, “As you wish,” and with great opulence and a great display of royal power he traveled to Kāśī, where King Brahmadata handed his daughter to him in accordance with the customs of householders. Afterward, King Prasenajit bore the girl back to his own country.

5.43 Young Kṣemaṅkara said to his parents, “I can’t bear to be without my elder sister, Kṣemaṅkarā. I shall be with her again.”

“My child,” King Brahmadata replied, “you are my precious, beloved only son—my regent. After I pass away, you will have to become king. It wouldn’t be right for you to go to another country.” Many times the king tried to impede him from going, but he was not able to stop him.

Then King Prasenajit said, “Deva, I shall protect brother and sister both. If he comes it changes nothing,” and King Brahmadata replied, “As you wish.”

5.44 King Prasenajit took young Kṣemaṅkarā and Kṣemaṅkara both to Śrāvastī. King Prasenajit had the young man study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold,

employ footwork, guard one’s head, strike from a distance, strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

5.45 Now the young man was unruly and careless, and he had intercourse with a sex worker. He broke some one hundred of the country’s laws, and though his sister Kṣemaṅkarā and King Prasenajit tried, they were not able to stop him. Finally King Prasenajit sent an envoy to King Brahmadata with the message, “Since your son has been here, he has done about a hundred vulgar things, and though we have tried, we have not been able to stop him.”

5.46 Immediately upon hearing this, King Brahmadata sent a message to his son: “My child, come back here. Don’t stay there anymore. After my death it will be necessary for you to take on the dominion of the king. Don’t act in such a vulgar manner. Live here.”

Still, Kṣemaṅkara ignored his father’s message and did not return to his country. After he refused to give up his careless ways, King Brahmadata, unable to stop him, finally disowned him. King Prasenajit also gave up on him and no longer permitted him to enter the royal palace.

5.47 One day he wished to enter the royal palace, and though the doorkeeper physically restrained him, he forced his way inside. “I will see my sister!” he insisted, and took a seat at the queen’s door. King Prasenajit and Queen Kṣemaṅkarā were inside playing lutes, and young Kṣemaṅkara, bow in hand, overheard them. In anger he let loose an arrow, hoping to kill King Prasenajit. The arrow severed a string of the king’s lute and fell to the ground.

As soon as King Prasenajit saw this he fled in terror. Then, seething with anger, he thought, “If I kill him in some ordinary manner, King Brahmadata too will come to shame. So I will convict him in a court of law and have him executed.”

5.48 It was King Prasenajit's custom that when a trial was to be held, if the dispute was trivial, two intertwined conches were sounded, and if the dispute was grave, the two intertwined conches were sounded over the beating of a great drum. In this case King Prasenajit had them sound both. As soon as this was heard, every high functionary in Śrāvastī gathered in the royal palace. King Prasenajit convicted the young man in court, draped his neck with garlands of oleander flowers, and handed him over to the executioners.

5.49 Clad in black, the executioners unsheathed their swords, and with a thundering of drums they led him to the crossroads on the main highway. As they neared the place where he was to be executed, young Kṣemaṅkara cried for mercy, flailed all about, and thought, "Who can protect me from such desolation, distress, and suffering? Who can save my precious life?"

5.50 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

5.51 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: "Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower

realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?"

5.52 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

5.53 The Blessed One knew that the time had come to tame young Kṣemaṅkara, so he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī. Young Kṣemaṅkara saw the Blessed One in the distance. Upon seeing him, he approached the Blessed One, bowed down at the Blessed One's feet, and pleaded, "Blessed One, Blessed One, please take on the difficult task of saving my precious life!"

5.54 "Young man," the Blessed One said, "don't be afraid. Your life will not be lost." Then the Blessed One spoke to the executioners, saying, "My friends, release this young man."

"Do we look to you like we have spare heads?" the executioners replied. "How can we release him, Blessed One?"

5.55 "My friends," the Blessed One requested, "hold him a little while, until I have met with the king."

"As you wish, Blessed One," they replied.

5.56 So the Blessed One went to see King Prasenajit. Upon arriving, the Blessed One addressed the king,

saying, “Great King, release this young man.”

“Lord,” the king replied, “if he goes forth, I shall release him.”

5.57 At that, King Prasenajit countermanded his execution and offered him to the Blessed One. The Blessed One took the young man to the garden of Prince Jeta, led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

5.58 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “please tell us why the unruly Prince Kṣemaṅkara had been sent to his death, and the Blessed One rescued him and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

5.59 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, he was unruly and committed sexual misconduct, Brahmadata sent him to be executed, and I rescued him, placing him in the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Listen well!

5.60 “Monks, in times past during King Brahmadata’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī, there lived a certain man in Vārāṇasī who was unruly and lascivious, and who had the whole city in turmoil. A crowd seized him and presented him to King Brahmadata, and King Brahmadata sent him to be executed. As the executioners were carrying him to the spot where he was to be executed, he became terrified of being executed and looked all about, thinking, ‘Who can take on the difficult task of saving my precious life?’

5.61 “At that time, there was a certain sage living in the Vārāṇasī area who had all the five superknowledges and was a person of great miracles and great power. The man saw him approaching the vicinity of Vārāṇasī, and as soon as he saw him, he bowed down at his feet and said, ‘Sage, please undertake the difficult task of saving my precious life.’

“‘My friends,’ the sage told the executioners, ‘do not kill him. Release him instead.’

5.62 “‘Do we look to you like we have spare heads?’ the executioners replied. ‘How can we release him, sage?’

“The sage said, ‘Hold him a little while, until I have met with the king.’ Then the sage went to see King Brahmadata and implored him, ‘Great king, do not kill this man. Release him instead.’

5.63 “‘Sage,’ King Brahmadata replied, ‘if he goes forth, I shall release him.’

At that, King Brahmadata sent a message countermanding the execution order and offered him to the sage. The sage brought him to a hermitage, led him to go forth, and instructed him. While staying in that very hermitage, the man generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

5.64 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that man then is none other than this young man. The one who was the king then is now King Prasenajit himself. At that time he sent the man to be executed, and I rescued him, led him to go forth, and placed him in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well he was sent to be killed by King Prasenajit, and I rescued him and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

5.65 “Lord,” the monks asked, “what action did Prince Kṣemaṅkara take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

5.66 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct,

the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, he went forth in his doctrine and acted as steward for the monks.

5.67 “He acted as steward of the saṅgha in accord with the Dharma, and progressed in meditative stabilization on love. He practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

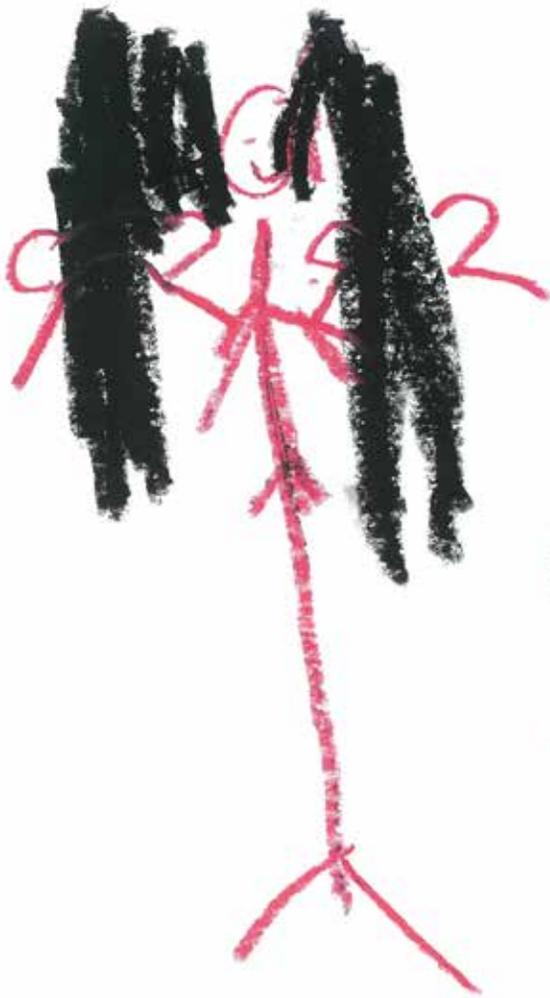
5.68 “Monks, what do you think? The monk who acted as steward then is now none other than Prince Kṣemaṅkara. At that time he acted as steward in accord with the Dharma, cultivated the meditative stabilization on love, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.69 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

5.70 “By acting as steward in accord with the Dharma he was born into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. He cultivated the meditative stabilization on love, and so he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.”

THE END

Next: *The Young Untouchable*



The Story of Kṣemaṅkara

Amber Zheng / 6 years old

Part Five (3)

The
Young Untouchable

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Young Untouchable

5.71 When the Blessed One was dwelling near the city of Ujjayinī, in Śiṃśapā forest north of town, King Pradyota reigned in Ujjayinī, and King Udaya reigned in Suvīra. The two were dear friends, and from time to time they sent envoys to each other bearing gifts.

5.72 There were hardly any mangoes in King Pradyota's country, so the king of Suvīra sent gifts of many mangoes to please King Pradyota. King Pradyota gave some to the queen, some to his sons, and some to his ministers. Then King Caṇḍapradhyota himself ate some of the mangoes, and the thought came to him, "Here in my country there are no mangoes, so I'll plant these mango pits in the garden." He took those mango pits and planted them in his own garden, and before long the trees grew big, and there was a large grove with mature branches. Later, the trees blossomed and bore fruit, and King Pradyota charged some untouchables with protecting the mangoes so they would not be eaten by others.

5.73 One day the untouchables ate the mangoes themselves. They shouted, "Thieves! Thieves!" and claimed, "Thieves ate them."

King Caṇḍapradhyota was suspicious, and thought, "Perhaps the untouchables have eaten the mangoes themselves." He sent his servants to search the untouchables' dwellings. After they

went there and saw remnants of the mangoes, the royal servants informed King Pradyota. Then, in a fit of anger, King Caṇḍapradhyota corralled all the untouchable families back into their dwellings, heaped up dry grass all around the dwellings, and set fire to it, burning them to the ground.

5.74 One of the young untouchables from the village who felt embarrassed about the way the untouchables had acted had already gone south. After he left he took on the guise of a brahmin and trained in the science of invisibility. Having mastered it he later returned to the city of Ujjayinī, where, on the way to his house, he saw that the entire village had burned to the ground.

5.75 When he saw this he asked, "Who destroyed our village?" and was told, "It was King Caṇḍapradhyota." "Where did my family go?" he asked.

"In a fit of anger, King Caṇḍapradhyota surrounded their houses with heaps of dry grass," they said, "and he and his servants burned them up in the fire."

5.76 The young man was devastated when he heard all this. "In truth it was the men's fault, and they have been dealt with according to the law," he thought. "But the children and the women did him no harm at all, and they too were burned up in the fire. I will take revenge on the king of our wicked age."

5.77 He made himself invisible, entered the royal palace, and struck the king on the head with a whip. "King of our wicked age!" he said. "What harm did the untouchables ever do to you?"

"They stole my mangoes!" replied King Caṇḍapradhyota.

5.78 "The men were to blame," said the young untouchable, "but what did their wives and children do wrong? Put your affairs in order, vile king. Your life is at its end, for in seven days you must die!"

Every day after that the young untouchable went to the royal palace to beat the king and to say, "On

such-and-such a date you will be no more!”

5.79 King Caṇḍapradyaota was terrified, and his ministers entreated him, “Deva, don’t be afraid. We will make supplications to Noble Kātyāyana.”

The ministers approached Venerable Kātyāyana and implored him, “Noble one, disembodied spirits are doing harm to the king. We ask you, please protect him!” As soon as Noble Kātyāyana heard this, he counteracted the young untouchable’s secret mantra so that he could never become invisible again.

5.80 The young man thought, “Who destroyed my mantra?” and he asked the ministers, “Tell me, who protected the king from fear of disembodied spirits?”

“Kātyāyana did, noble one,” the ministers replied.

When he heard this, the young untouchable immediately went to see Venerable Kātyāyana and asked, “Lord, why did you neutralize my mantra?”

“Sit down child,” Kātyāyana replied, “and I shall tell you in detail.”

5.81 The young untouchable bowed down at Noble Kātyāyana’s feet and sat before him, and Venerable Kātyāyana taught him the Dharma in a gradual way, in a manner agreeable to him. When he heard it the young untouchable destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry.

5.82 After seeing the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward Venerable Kātyāyana with palms pressed together, and requested, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

5.83 Venerable Kātyāyana led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination,

and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

5.84 When the ministers heard this, they told King Caṇḍapradyaota, “Deva, Noble Kātyāyana has led the one who terrified you so to go forth.” As soon as he heard this, the king joyfully went to see Noble Kātyāyana, bowed down at his feet, and said, “Noble one, you undertook the difficult task of saving my precious life. Please permit me to invite you, together with the saṅgha of monks, to take your meals at my house for seven days.”

5.85 “Deva,” Kātyāyana said, “the Blessed One is staying right here in Ujjayinī. Therefore, you should invite the Blessed One instead.”

No sooner had he heard this than the king went to see the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma, and then sat in silence.

5.86 Knowing that the Blessed One had completed his discourse, King Caṇḍapradyaota rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and asked the Blessed One, “Out of solicitude for Noble Kātyāyana, please permit me to invite you, together with the saṅgha of monks, to take your meals at my house for seven days.” The Blessed One assented to King Caṇḍapradyaota by

his silence.

5.87 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, King Caṇḍapradya then praised this assurance from the Blessed One, rejoiced, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and took leave of him.

5.88 After he had offered food to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for seven days inside the palace, on the last day he offered food of a hundred flavors to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe. He offered a set of robes fashioned from cotton to each of the other monks, and after the Blessed One had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma, he rose from his seat and departed.

5.89 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “what action did the young untouchable take that ripened such that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Buddha, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that he committed and accumulated:

5.90 “Monks, in times past, in the ninety-first eon, when people lived as long as eighty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Vipāśyin was in the world, he performed all the activities of a buddha and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates, like a fire when all the wood is gone.

5.91 “King Bandhumat used his great fortune to heap up fragrant wood in a wide open space and burned all of Buddha Vipāśyin's remains in a fire. Then he interred the relics so that others would

not remove them, and charged a nearby group of untouchables with protecting them. One night, as the untouchables were sleeping there, a tiger in the area carried one of them off. One of the others cried out in terror, ‘I bow down to the Buddha!’ and by the power of the Buddha, the gods protected him.

5.92 “Then King Bandhumat built a stūpa for the relics of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Vipāśyin. When it was complete in every respect and the time came to celebrate its traditional festival, the thought occurred to that untouchable, ‘It is by the power of the Blessed Buddha that I am alive at all.’ Knowing this, he made a large offering to the stūpa and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, may I please and not displease a teacher just like this one. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.93 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that young untouchable then is none other than this young untouchable. At that time he venerated the stūpa and made those prayers.

“So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Vipāśyin—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

5.94 “Later, he also went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Quarrelsome as a monk, he became a scholar. At that time out of anger he called a group of monks untouchables. One day he felt regret, asked forgiveness of the monks, and practiced the conduct leading to liberation all his life. While he may not have attained any great virtues, at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth

in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.95 “O monks, what do you think? The monk who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than this untouchable. At that time the act of calling a group of monks untouchables ripened such that for five hundred lifetimes he took rebirth as a untouchable. He also practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.96 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Subhadra the Charioteer*



Part Five (4)

The Story of Subhadra the
Charioteer

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 The Story of Subhadra the Charioteer

5.97 King Śuddhodana had a certain charioteer named Subhadra. When the time came for him to marry, he took a wife. But even though they enjoyed themselves and coupled, they had no children. They desired a son, so the householder supplicated the deities. He prayed to Paśupati, Varuṇa, Kubera, Śakra, Brahmā, and the rest, and to the deities of the pleasure groves, the forest deities, the deities of the crossroads, the deities of forks in the road, the deities who receive strewn oblations, the deities of his inherited tradition, and the deities who are in constant attendance of righteous persons. Although he made every effort to pray to them, he still could not have a son or a daughter.

5.98 Then, when the Bodhisattva was born, the soothsayers prophesied, “If he remains here at home, he will become a universal monarch, but if he shaves his head and face and dons the colorful religious robes, and if with nothing short of perfect faith he goes forth from home to live as a mendicant, then he will be renowned throughout the world as a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha.”

5.99 Upon hearing these words, the charioteer Subhadra was devastated. “If I have a son,” he

thought, “he will become charioteer to the prince, and our lineage of charioteers will not be broken.” With that, he began making especially fervent prayers to all the deities.

5.100 The Bodhisattva, upon witnessing old age, sickness, and death, went to live in the forest, where he practiced austerities for six years. After practicing austerities there for six years, from the young women Nandā and Nandabalā of Serika village he accepted honeyed porridge prepared from milk that had been made into cream sixteen times over.

5.101 Then he accepted grass from Svastika the grass peddler. Then the nāga king Kāla praised him highly, and he proceeded to Bodhimaṇḍa. There he laid the grass out smooth, sat down cross-legged, and made a firm commitment to himself: “Until such time as I attain the highest wisdom,” he thought, “I shall not give up this cross-legged posture.” On that spot, he conquered the thirty-six million beings of Māra’s retinue and achieved unexcelled, total, and complete wisdom.

5.102 Then, beseeched by Brahmā three times, he enumerated the four truths of the noble ones three times in Vārāṇasī, properly setting in motion the wheel of the Dharma in its twelve aspects, and led the group of five to go forth. After he had established another five in the truths, as well as a party of sixty fathers, the sons of fifty village chieftains, and the two siblings Nandā and Nandabalā, he led the brothers Uruvilvā Kāśyapa and Nadi Kāśyapa to go forth and traveled on to Gayā.

5.103 He tamed others with three types of miraculous displays, traveling to the Forest of Reeds, where he established in the truths King Bimbisāra, eight thousand gods, and the hundreds and hundreds of brahmins and householders of Magadha. Then he went to Rājagṛha, where he accepted the gift of Bamboo Grove, and led Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana to go forth.

5.104 He proceeded to Śrāvastī, subjugated King Prasenajit through the discourse on “the similes of the young ones,” accepted the gift of the garden of Prince Jeta, and went to stay in Kapilavastu, where he was reunited with his father and son. With support from Kapilavastu he lived on to act for the benefit of those to be tamed.

5.105 Thereupon the thought occurred to Subhadra, “Seeing as I have no heir, after I die all I have will become the king’s property. I will bring it to bear on my next life.” So the next day he invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for a meal and with his own hands contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Once he knew that their bowls had been taken away and their hands washed, he brought in a very low seat and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma. Once he had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a great variety of Dharma discourses, he sat there silently.

5.106 Knowing that the Blessed One had completed his discourse, the charioteer Subhadra said to the Blessed One, “Lord, you will be my teacher for a long time. If I’d had a son, he would have been charioteer to you, the prince, just as I have been charioteer to King Śuddhodana. Now the Blessed One has gone forth, but if I have a son, I shall offer him to the Blessed One as an attendant just the same.” The Blessed One saw the good it would bring and said, “The virtuous keep their promises.” Then he left the house, and returned whence he came.

5.107 One day, the charioteer Subhadra’s wife finally conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name

should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since he is Subhadra’s child, his name will be Bhadra.”

They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

5.108 As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

5.109 One day, the Blessed One saw that the time had come for the young man to go forth, so he reminded the charioteer Subhadra, “Subhadra, before this child was born you offered him to me. The virtuous keep their promises, do they not? Didn’t you yourself make such a promise?”

5.110 “Yes, Blessed One,” Subhadra replied, “I did make just such a promise.” As he said this, he took the child by his two hands, offered him to the Blessed One, and told him, “Child, before you were born, I offered you to the Blessed One. Therefore go, and be an attendant of the Blessed One.”

“This will be of benefit to me,” the child said, and with those words he followed the Blessed One away.

5.111 The Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a great variety of Dharma teachings. Then the Blessed One led the child away and traveled to the monastery. There, the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

5.112 After achieving arhatship he thought, “The Blessed One has dispelled so many kinds of suffering and anguish, brought me so many kinds

of happiness and bliss, cleared away so many of my sins and nonvirtues, and secured for me such virtues. How could I repay the kindness of the Blessed One?" Then he thought, "Anytime a buddha arises in the world, it is only to benefit beings. So undoubtedly I too should act for the benefit of beings!" Reflecting in this way, he wondered, "Whom might I tame?" When he looked out, right away he saw he could tame his own parents. So he disappeared from the monastery, and burst forth right in front of them from the floor of their house. Like a regal swan spreading its wings before them, he rose into the sky, making a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning, and descended to the earth.

5.113 He directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. When they heard it they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

5.114 After they saw the truths they said, "Child, we are also going to give up living at home and go forth just as you were."

"As you wish," Bhadra replied, and he left the house.

5.115 Thereupon his parents gave up household affairs, gave gifts, made merit, and went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One. Casting away all afflictive emotions with diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship.

5.116 "Blessed One," the monks asked, "what action did Bhadra take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?"

5.117 "What actions did his parents take that ripened into their trusting him completely, and that they pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?"

"It came about by the power of their prayers," the Blessed One replied.

5.118 "Lord, where did they make these prayers?"

"Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as forty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Krakucchanda was in the world, he performed all the activities of a buddha and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates, like a fire when all the wood is gone.

5.119 "King Śobha performed a reliquary offering for the Blessed One's relics and began to cover the stūpa and the entire surrounding area within one mile with four different kinds of jewels. The minister he had appointed to oversee this had no faith, and told his son, 'My child, I must complete this task on behalf of the king in addition to executing the royal duties. If I can't handle both, I shall lose my position at the royal palace. Therefore, my child, please supervise work on the stūpa, and I shall serve the king.'

"'As you wish, father,' the young man said, and he remained there to supervise the work on the stūpa.

5.120 "He began to work on the stūpa, and as he was working there, he found faith in the doctrine of the Buddha Krakucchanda, so he went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts. Then he led his parents to live a life of perfect faith and to likewise take refuge and the fundamental precepts.

5.121 “King Śobha completed every aspect of the stūpa and made great offerings to it. At the beginning of the traditional stūpa festival, the minister, his wife, his servants, and his son were elated to see that every aspect of the stūpa had been completed in full, and they made a large offering to the stūpa. The minister’s son bowed down at the foot of the stūpa and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May I please and not displease a teacher just like this one. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.122 “When his parents saw this, they asked, ‘Child, what prayers are you making?’

“He told them everything in detail, and when they heard it, right away they both prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever we are born, may it be into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May he be our son. Entrusting ourselves to him completely, may we please and not displease a teacher just like this one. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.123 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the minister’s son then is none other than Subhadra. Those who were his parents then are none other than his parents now. The act of venerating the stūpa and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever they were born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

5.124 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

5.125 “His parents’ acts of venerating the stūpa and

saying that prayer ripened such that wherever they were born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. By entrusting themselves to their son completely, they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

5.126 “The three of them also went forth in the doctrine of Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all their lives then, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Sahadeva*



The Story of Subhadra the Charioteer

Part Five (5)

The Story of
Sahadeva

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ་བུ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 The Story of Sahadeva

5.127 When King Siṃhahanu reigned in Kapilavastu, and King Suprabuddha reigned in Devaḍaha, the two were dear friends. One day King Siṃhahanu thought, “How wonderful it would be if a universal monarch was born in my lineage!” Subsequently he had four sons named Śuddhodana, Droṇodana, Amṛtodana, and Śuklodana, and four daughters named Śuddhā, Droṇā, Amṛtā, and Śuklā.

5.128 After that, King Suprabuddha prayed, “How wonderful it would be to become kin with King Siṃhahanu!” He and the queen enjoyed themselves and coupled, she gave birth to a child, and they named him Sahadeva.

5.129 As the young man grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one’s head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five

fields of knowledge, and he was without peer.

5.130 Later, King Suprabuddha had two daughters, and he named one Māyā and the other Mahāmāyā. The brahmin astrologers and augurs prophesied this about the two of them: “One will give birth to a universal monarch. The other will give birth to a youth graced with the signs.” When King Siṃhahanu heard this, he took them both to be Śuddhodana’s queens.

5.131 One day the Bodhisattva passed away and transmigrated from the Tuṣita Heaven and entered his mother’s womb. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a son. As he grew up, they made him study letters, and he mastered them. He also learned all the fields of knowledge. He mastered as well all the performing arts of dance, singing, and music.

5.132 Then King Śuddhodana thought, “Now we must train him in archery.” So he asked the Śākya, “Who here is the greatest teacher of archery from whom a young person can learn archery?”

“Deva, you can forget all other teachers of archery,” the Śākya told him. “King Suprabuddha’s son Sahadeva is the greatest teacher of archery. None can rival him.”

As soon as he heard this, King Śuddhodana dispatched a messenger to Sahadeva, saying, “Sahadeva, please teach this prince archery.”

5.133 “As you wish, Deva,” Sahadeva replied, and he began teaching the prince archery. The Bodhisattva learned everything he taught him. The Bodhisattva demonstrated other techniques that were not known in Sahadeva’s country, and Sahadeva was amazed upon witnessing the Bodhisattva’s discipline and these techniques that he had not seen before. He devoted himself to studying those archery techniques and learned them himself from the Bodhisattva.

5.134 When the Bodhisattva witnessed old age, sickness, and death, and went to live in the forest,

Sahadeva traveled to Vaiśālī. While he was staying there, the people of Vaiśālī put five hundred youths in his care and said, “Train these youths in the five fields of knowledge.” By the time he had completed archery training for all five hundred youths, they had mastered the five fields of knowledge. After that they became arrogant and thought, “No one is our equal in form, strength, and knowledge—needless to speak of their being better!”

5.135 “Don’t be so arrogant, children,” Sahadeva said. “You can’t equal even the dust under the feet of the prince born into the Śākya clan—needless to speak of his fine form, strength, and knowledge.”

Now as soon as they heard this, the youths were eager to see him and said, “We should go see this young man.”

“That young man lives in the forest,” Sahadeva told them, “so you cannot see him now.”

5.136 In the meantime, while acting for the benefit of those to be tamed, the Blessed One eventually made his way to Vaiśālī. Sahadeva heard about this and informed the youths. As soon as they heard, the five hundred youths were very eager to see the Blessed One and they went with Sahadeva to meet him. All five hundred youths saw the Blessed One, resplendent and agreeable, in the distance. His senses were tamed and his mind was perfectly tame. He was graced with tranquility, shining and magnificent like a golden pillar.

5.137 When they saw him, whatever arrogance they had about their own forms disappeared. But still they thought, “In form he may be our superior, but not in strength.” Thinking this, they went to see the Blessed One, and upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him.

5.138 The Blessed One thought, “I must destroy their arrogance.” Then the Blessed One had a thought about the world: “How good it would be for Śakra, King of the Gods, to take up his bow and arrow and

come to see me!” Just as the Buddha thought this, Śakra, King of the Gods, immediately came to see the Blessed One with bow and arrow in hand. Then, to shatter the youths’ arrogance, the Blessed One made his natural form disappear and emanated in the form of a deity. He then emanated seven iron palm trees, seven wheels, seven great drums, and seven bricks close to where the youths stood and addressed them, saying, “Children, take up this bow and arrow, and fire arrows into these targets.”

5.139 The youths hurried to take up the bow, but when he said, “Now draw,” they could not so much as pull the bowstring. The Blessed One, however, drew the bowstring with ease, and his arrow not only punctured the targets as it pierced the seven iron palm trees, seven wheels, seven great drums, and seven bricks, it even burrowed into the ground below.

5.140 When they saw this, whatever arrogance the youths had about their own strength disappeared in an instant, and they gained admiration for the Blessed One. The Blessed One directly apprehended their admiration and taught them the Dharma accordingly. When they heard it, all five hundred youths destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

5.141 After seeing the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested of the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

5.142 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices,

conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. They cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

5.143 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “tell us why, after all five hundred of these youths were put in the care of Sahadeva, the Blessed One shattered their arrogance and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, they were put in Sahadeva’s care, and I destroyed their arrogance and placed them in the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Listen well!

5.144 “Monks, in times gone by, King Glacier Lake Deity reigned in the city of Campā. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and endowed with tremendous strength. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, ‘What name should we give this child?’ And they named him, saying, ‘Since this is Glacier Lake Deity’s child, his name will be Glacier Deity.’ They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

5.145 “As the young man grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride

an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one’s head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

5.146 “Then he came to see that his father administrated the affairs of the kingdom both righteously and unrighteously. Recognizing this he thought, ‘After the death of my father, I will have to assume the dominion of the king. I will give up living at home and go live in the forest.’ Reflecting in this way, he asked for his father’s permission and went to live in the forest. After he went there, he generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

5.147 “After he had gone forth, the king’s ministers had five hundred sons. As they grew up, they were made to study letters and became educated in the five sciences. They thought, ‘No one is our equal in form, strength, and knowledge—needless to speak of their being better!’

5.148 “ ‘Children,’ their archery teacher told them, ‘don’t say such things. Your form, strength, and knowledge aren’t even a hundredth or a thousandth of that of the prince who went to live in the great forest.’

5.149 “As soon as they heard this, the youths were eager to meet the sage, so they went to see him along with the archery teacher. All five hundred youths saw the sage in the distance and he was resplendent, agreeable, and happy. His senses were tamed, and his mind was at peace. When they saw him, whatever arrogance they had about their own

forms disappeared, and they thought, ‘Since his good qualities and the splendor of his form are as great as our teacher claimed, and we ourselves are certain it is so, let’s give up living at home and, in his presence, practice the conduct that leads to enlightenment.’ With this thought, they went forth in his presence. Having thus gone forth, they generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

5.150 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the five hundred youths then are none other than these youths. The one who was their archery teacher then is none other than Sahadeva. At that time, after they were put in Sahadeva’s care, I destroyed their arrogance and placed them in the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Now as well, they have been in the sole care of Sahadeva, and I have established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

5.151 “They also went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all their lives. At the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.152 “What do you think monks? The five hundred monks who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then are now none other than these renunciants. Back then they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away

all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.153 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Bull*



宫子欢

Part Five (6)

The Bull

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Bull

5.154 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, not far from the garden of Prince Jeta there lived a certain herd of cattle. There, the two bulls that led the herd were fighting and kicking one another until one of them had his stomach gored and his intestines spilled out onto the ground. Still feeling a surge of hatred for his opponent, he collapsed to the ground.

5.155 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

5.156 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of

heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

5.157 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

5.158 The Blessed One thought, “If this bull dies in his present condition, he will take birth as a hell being. The time has come to lift him out of the lower realms.” The Blessed One disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and traveled to near where the bulls were. He put the intestines back into the bull’s stomach, sewed the wound closed, gave him grass and water, and said to him, “And so it is, my friend: all conditioned things are impermanent. All phenomena are selfless. Nirvāṇa is peace. Let your mind be filled with joy at the thought of me, and you may even be released from rebirth in the animal realm.”

5.159 Filled with joy at the thought of the Blessed One, the bull died shortly thereafter, transmigrated, and took rebirth in the house of a merchant in Śrāvastī. After nine or ten months had passed the child was born, and he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

5.160 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when he was seven years of age, he found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed

One. He asked for his parents' permission and went forth, and though he was just seven years old, he cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. After he manifested arhatship, he used his miraculous powers as a means of travel and would scoop flowers and fruits onto large leaves, carry them from one place to another, and bring them as offerings to the saṅgha.

5.161 The monks were amazed when they saw this, so they requested the Blessed One, "Lord, tell us why this one, who went forth as a novice at just seven years of age, has achieved such great virtues."

The Blessed One asked the monks, "Did you see the bull whose intestines I put back into his stomach, and to whom I taught three lines of the Dharma?"

"Yes, Lord, we saw him," they replied.

5.162 The Blessed One said, "Filled with joy at the thought of me, he died, transmigrated, and was reborn in the house of a merchant here in Śrāvastī. Then he went forth in my very doctrine, and at just seven years of age cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship."

5.163 "Lord, what action did this novice take that ripened into his birth as a bull?" they inquired. "What action did he take that, after he died and transmigrated, ripened into his birth as a human being, and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, surpassed those whose lifespans were one hundred years, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?"

"Monks," the Blessed One explained, "such are the actions that he committed and accumulated:

5.164 "Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed

one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, he went forth in Buddha Kāśyapa's doctrine, acted as water server for the monks, and distributed water from a small vase.

5.165 "Another monk who was an arhat got distracted and bumped up against the serving monk, knocking the small vase from his hand and breaking it. In anger, the serving monk shouted at him, 'This one's like a thundering bull—huge and oblivious!'

"When he heard what he said, the arhat took him aside and asked, 'Lord, do you know who I am?'

" 'I know that you have gone forth,' he replied, 'as have I.'

5.166 " 'Though we two are like brothers in having gone forth,' he said, 'you are an ordinary person, bound by every fetter, and I have been liberated from every fetter. You must confess the mistake you've made by speaking harshly to me. Otherwise you are certain to roam in saṃsāra and meet with the results of your ugly act.'

5.167 "When he heard this the serving monk was seized with regret, bowed down at his feet, and asked his forgiveness. After that he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death he prayed, 'May I not meet with the results of the act of speaking harshly to this person, so supremely worthy of offerings. While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.'

5.168 "O monks, what do you think? The one who was the water-serving monk then is none other than this novice. The act of becoming angry and speaking harshly to the arhat ripened such that for five hundred lifetimes he took rebirth as a bull. Yet

at the time of his death he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.169 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Good Compassion*



The Bull

Johnny Jiang / 5 years old

Part Five (7)

The Story of
Good Compassion

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Story of Good Compassion

5.170 When the Blessed One was in Vaiśālī, there lived a certain army chief named Siṃha. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and endowed with tremendous strength. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him Good Compassion.

5.171 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as the young man grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one's head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

5.172 But this was not enough to satisfy him, and he had intercourse with prostitutes. His father sent

him off with a group of friends, and one day in the spring, when many trees were in flower, and the parrots, mountain birds, cuckoos, peacocks, and jīvaṃjīva birds began to call out, the men brought the foremost courtesan into the forest. As they sat there, they began to quarrel over the courtesan. In anger, young Good Compassion killed three men in the group of friends.

5.173 The group of friends went and told the army chief Siṃha. When he heard about this, the army chief Siṃha declared, "That boy is no child of mine!" and threw him out of the house. The Licchavis of Vaiśālī sentenced him to death, draped his neck with garlands of oleander flowers, and handed him over to the executioners. Clad in black, the executioners unsheathed their swords, and with a thundering of drums they led him to the crossroads on the main highway. As they neared the place where he was to be executed, in terror for his life he cast all about, thinking, "Who can protect me from such desolation, distress, and suffering? Who can save my precious life?"

5.174 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

5.175 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: "Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful

state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?"

5.176 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

5.177 The Blessed One thought, "The time has come to tame young Good Compassion." He disappeared from the banks of Markaṭahrada and set out toward young Good Compassion. Young Good Compassion saw the Blessed One from a distance. Drawing close, he bowed down at the feet of the Blessed One and implored the Blessed One, "Please undertake the difficult task of saving my precious life!"

5.178 "Young man," the Blessed One told him, "don't be afraid. Your life will not be lost." Then the Blessed One spoke to the people of Vaiśālī, saying, "My friends, what is the use of killing this young man? Release him."

"Lord," the people of Vaiśālī replied, "if he goes forth, we shall release him."

5.179 So the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed

him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

"Lord," the monks requested the Blessed One, "tell us why the people of Vaiśālī sentenced young Good Compassion to death because he could not be satisfied, prompting the Blessed One to rescue him and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa."

5.180 "Not only now," the Blessed One explained, "but in times past as well, and in the same way, he could not be satisfied, practiced sexual misconduct, and was sent by a crowd to be killed, whereupon I rescued him and placed him in the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

5.181 "Monks, in times gone by, in a mountain village there lived a certain villager who lacked in discernment, practiced sexual misconduct, and intended harm to many. But the villagers found a way to harm him instead, and they caught him in the act of adultery with another man's wife. They presented him to the king, and the king sent him to be killed. The executioners led him away, and as they neared the place where he was to be executed, he spotted a sage who had been going about his business and living in a place on the mountain, devoted to austerities, not far from the villages. As soon as he saw him, he bowed down at his feet, and said, 'O sage, please undertake the difficult task of saving my precious life!' At this the sage led the king to release him, brought him to the place of his retreat, welcomed his renunciation, and there he generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

5.182 "O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that man then is none other than this young man. At that time a crowd sentenced him to death, and I rescued him and placed him in the four meditative states and

five superknowledges. Now as well, because he could not be satisfied, a crowd sentenced him to death, and I have rescued him and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

5.183 “He also went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and after practicing pure conduct all his life, at the time of his death he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.184 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that monk then is none other than this Good Compassion himself. There he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

5.185 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Fleshy*



Part Five (8)

The Story of
Fleshy

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་སྒྲིབ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Story of Fleshy

5.186 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, a certain brahmin lived in Śrāvastī who had no children but desired a son. The householder made supplications to all the deities, and finally one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. He was already corpulent, full-fledged in skin, flesh, and blood. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since he is so corpulent, and full-fledged in skin, flesh, and blood, his name will be Fleshy.”

5.187 They reared young Fleshy on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up, he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *R̥g Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

5.188 The brahmin’s house was not far from the house of Anāthapiṇḍada, and the young brahmin was an acquaintance of Anāthapiṇḍada, so he too was fond of the doctrine of the Blessed One.

5.189 Then one day both the young brahmin’s parents died. After their death, he had to go to the city of Śūrpāraka on an errand. He traveled and traveled until eventually he came to a certain dense forest in the mountainous region between Śrāvastī and Śūrpāraka. In that dense forest there lived a certain sage. The young brahmin knew him and went to him, bowed down at his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

5.190 Thereupon the sage spoke in praise of renunciation, and when he heard him the young brahmin immediately made up his mind to go forth. He went forth in the presence of the sage and lived in the forest, but he did not achieve anything of significance. One day the sage died, but Fleshy still stayed on at the hermitage.

5.191 Then as the Blessed One was traveling to Śūrpāraka, young Fleshy saw the Blessed One approaching in the distance. As soon as he saw him, he thought, “That’s the ascetic of the Śākya clan—the omniscient, all-seeing one. Here he comes down the path! It wouldn’t be right for me not to show my respect and offer my help.” And he thought, “If I clamber down from this boulder on foot, the Blessed One will have passed by. I will leap from the boulder so that I can show my respect and offer my help.” Having thought this, he leapt from the boulder.

5.192 Just then the Blessed One blessed the ground so that it became like a cotton cushion stuffed with wool, and so that when young Fleshy landed, he sprang right back up on his feet, delighted. He went to where the Blessed One was, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and followed after him. Out of compassion for him, the Blessed One stepped off the path and sat down nearby. Again Fleshy touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and then sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

5.193 The Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him, and when he heard

it he destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right where he sat.

5.194 After seeing the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested of the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

5.195 With the words “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. His state was such that Indra, Upendra, and the other gods worshiped and venerated him and addressed him with respect. The Blessed One also commended him as foremost among the faithful and devoted.

5.196 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “tell us why Venerable Fleshy leapt from a boulder when he saw the Blessed One, and why he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

5.197 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, upon seeing me he leapt from a boulder, went forth in my

presence, and generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Listen well!

5.198 “Monks, in times gone by, a certain sage was traveling a path with five hundred of his disciples. Upon reaching the face of a boulder, they took a seat at one side. There was an ascetic living on top of that boulder, practicing his austerities. He saw the sage sitting at the foot of the boulder, felt a surge of joy at the sight of him, and thought, ‘I will show my respect to that sage and offer my help.’ Then he thought, ‘But if I clamber down on foot, the sage will have left.’

5.199 “So he leapt from the boulder, and as he did so the sage dispatched a deity who took him in his hands and placed him on the ground. Then the ascetic approached the sage, bowed down at his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

5.200 “The sage spoke in praise of renunciation, and the ascetic went forth in his presence. After going forth, he generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

5.201 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that ascetic then is none other than Fleshy. At that time when he saw me he leapt from a boulder, went forth in my presence, and generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well, upon seeing me he leapt from a boulder, and went forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

5.202 Again the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did Fleshy take that ripened such that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship, and that the Blessed One commended him as foremost among the faithful and devoted?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the

Blessed One replied.

5.203 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?” they asked.

“Monks,” recounted the Blessed One, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world.

5.204 “Traveling through the countryside with a retinue of twenty thousand attendants, he entered a certain dense forest where five hundred sages lived. The five hundred sages saw the Blessed One from a distance, and upon seeing him they experienced a surge of joy. In their joy they invited the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and his retinue to their forest devoted to austerities and there offered them roots and fruit. After making this offering, they sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

5.205 “The totally and completely awakened Kāśyapa directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. When they heard it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right where they sat.

5.206 “Then all but one of the five hundred sages immediately realized the truths and manifested the resultant state of non-return. After they saw the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed Buddha Kāśyapa with palms pressed together, and requested, ‘Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so

well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.’

5.207 “Then the totally and completely awakened Kāśyapa presented the five hundred sages to the monks, and the monks led all five hundred sages to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. But one sage there did not attain a single good quality— he did not so much as generate heat.

“The totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended the preceptor who had led them to go forth as foremost among the faithful and devoted.

5.208 “After that, the one sage who did not attain anything practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as the Buddha Kāśyapa commended my abbot as foremost among the faithful and devoted, so may I too be commended by Śākyamuni, the most excellent King of Śākyas, as foremost among the faithful and devoted.’

5.209 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than Fleshy. At that time he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely

awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as the Buddha Kāśyapa commended my abbot as foremost among the faithful and devoted, so may I too be commended by Śākyamuni, the most excellent King of Śākya, as foremost among the faithful and devoted.

5.210 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship, and I have commended him as foremost among the faithful and devoted.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Black*



Part Five (9)

The Story of
Black

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲི་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 The Story of Black

5.211 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, there lived a brahmin named Bhūta. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, beautiful, and had a very dark complexion. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since this child has a very dark complexion, his name can only be Black.”

5.212 Then they reared young Black on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up, he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

5.213 Black’s father taught brahmin mantras to some five hundred young brahmins. One day, when he had become old, he thought, “Now that I am old, I shall not be able to teach mantras to these five hundred young brahmins, so I will put a leader in charge of the group.” So the father instructed his son, “Black, my child, now that I am old, I shall

not be able to teach mantras to these five hundred young brahmins. Since you are a master of mantras, you must lead these young brahmins in the study of mantras.”

“As you wish, my preceptor,” the young man replied, and after that he began teaching mantras to the five hundred young brahmins.

5.214 Now, at that time there was another brahmin living in Rājagṛha who performed a sacrifice and offered many gifts to the brahmins. In the presence of the one who had performed the sacrifice, some of them said, “It is we who should collect these offerings. You others are not worthy to do so.”

Those of them who lived in town retorted, “We are pure, whereas you are servants of the king. Therefore it is we who should collect these offerings, and not you.”

5.215 The brahmin Black thought, “These brahmins are so quarrelsome that no one will be able to appease them. I’d better be careful.”

He tried to get between them, but he could not keep the brahmins from quarreling. This made him very sad. “I shall give up my retinue and go to live in the forest alone,” he thought, and he left behind his disciples and went into the forest.

5.216 In that forest there lived a certain yakṣa, also named Black, who was fearsome and terrible. He drained the life out of others and caused suffering among thousands of beings. There lived a sage in that forest as well, and when the yakṣa saw him he felt a surge of joy.

5.217 The brahmin Black saw the sage from a distance, and when he saw him, he too was filled with joy. In his joy he went forth in his presence, received instructions to ponder, and generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

5.218 Sometime later the elder sage died, and after his death, Sage Black went on living there. One day the people of Rājagṛha beseeched the Blessed One, “Lord, we feel no resentment toward Black the

yakṣa, but he resents us so. We do not intend him harm, but he intends us harm, and he is harming thousands of beings. Lord, the Blessed One has tamed wicked nāgas like Nanda, Upananda, and others besides. You have tamed even the wicked yakṣa lord Aṭavika, and others besides. How wonderful it would be if, out of compassion, the Blessed One could tame Black the yakṣa as well.” The Blessed One assented to the people of Rājagṛha by his silence.

5.219 The Blessed One used his miraculous powers to summon the yakṣa before him and said, “You must no longer harm beings. Give up these evil acts.”

“I shall do as the Blessed One says,” the yakṣa replied, and he went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts. Then he further promised, “Lord, from this day forth I shall guard and protect the people of Rājagṛha.” Then he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, took leave of the Blessed One, went back whence he came, and there he stayed.

5.220 The yakṣa then thought, “Sage Black’s austerities are futile.” For he saw that in seven days Sage Black would be dead. Out of love, he went to see him and said, “Sage, what is the use of all your severe austerities? For seven days from now you will be dead.”

5.221 The sage was devastated to hear this. Overcome by sadness, he lost his miraculous powers, and this caused him extraordinary sorrow. He sat there wailing until the yakṣa told him, “Don’t be so sad, sage. Don’t be troubled. The Blessed One is staying in Rājagṛha. He knows the course your death will take. Take refuge in the Blessed Buddha and all good things will be done for you.”

5.222 As soon as he heard this, Sage Black cast all else aside and went to Bamboo Grove, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds. Sage Black saw the Blessed Buddha in the distance. His body, graced and

resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When he saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled him with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

5.223 Seeing the Blessed Buddha in this way, Sage Black was again filled with supreme joy. Full of such joy he went to see the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly.

5.224 When he heard it, the young man destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right where he sat.

5.225 After seeing the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One: “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

5.226 With the words “Come, join me, monk!” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his

hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

5.227 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “tell us why this sage who was terrified of dying approached the Blessed One, whereupon the Blessed One led him to go forth and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way he was terrified of dying, and I led him to go forth and placed him in the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

5.228 “Monks, in times gone by, there lived a sage in a certain hermitage who had all the five superknowledges—a person of great miracles and great power. He had one disciple, a young brahmin who was lazy and whose life was short. Even when he was being instructed, because of his exceptional laziness he could not stay focused.

5.229 “One day the sage looked out and saw that in seven days the young brahmin would be dead. Knowing that he had not achieved anything at all, in order that the young brahmin might become disillusioned with saṃsāra, he said to him, ‘Don’t be lazy, young brahmin, for in seven days you will die.’

“When the young brahmin heard this, he was filled with deep sadness, and because of his deep sadness he generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

5.230 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that young brahmin then is

none other than Black himself. At that time he was terrified of dying, and I placed him in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well he was terrified of dying, and I have led him to go forth and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

5.231 “He also went forth in the doctrine of Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all his life then, his faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Iṣudhara*



Part Five (10)

The Story of
Iṣudhara

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 The Story of Iṣudhara

5.232 In Kapilavastu there once lived a certain Śākya called Daṇḍadhara. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. He took a wife of the same caste, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named him, saying, “Since this is Daṇḍadhara’s child, his name will be Iṣudhara.”

5.233 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As the young man grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one’s head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim,

and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

5.234 One day Śākya Daṇḍadhara’s wife conceived again, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. When she was born, it was immediately well known throughout Kapilavastu that Śākya Daṇḍadhara’s daughter was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with a most radiant complexion. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” And they named her, saying, “Since she was renowned all over Kapilavastu at birth, her name will be Yaśodharā.”

5.235 They reared young Yaśodharā on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake. Then when she had grown, she was given to the Bodhisattva in marriage. Through Yaśodharā, young Iṣudhara became good friends with the Bodhisattva, so when the Bodhisattva witnessed old age, sickness, and death, and went to live in the forest, young Iṣudhara was very upset. “What was it he saw,” he wondered, “that he went forth, giving up the kingdom of a universal monarch and my sister both?”

5.236 When the Bodhisattva achieved unexcelled wisdom and began to act for the benefit of those to be tamed, he traveled to Kapilavastu. There he was reunited with his father and son, and thousands upon thousands of Śākyas went to see the Blessed One, offering their service and respect. Since he had been so upset, Śākya Iṣudhara did not wish to see the Blessed One, but the Śākyas insisted on bringing him before the Blessed One. So as not to upset the Śākyas, the youth Iṣudhara went so far as to receive the five precepts from the Blessed One.

5.237 Since he had previously been so upset, one day he thought, “Though I did take the five fundamental

precepts from him, it was a mistake, so there's no reason I have to keep them." Then, because he had previously been so upset, he broke the five fundamental precepts.

5.238 Now, when the Śākyaś heard this, they reflected on how he had broken the five fundamental precepts and felt compassion for him. "It isn't right that he should be reborn among the hell beings because he broke the fundamental precepts," they thought. So one day the Śākyaś went to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet and took a seat at one side.

5.239 Once they had taken their seats to one side, the Śākyaś beseeched the Blessed One, "Lord, Śākya Iṣudhara has broken the fundamental precepts. He's started drinking. Blessed One, attend to him. We ask you, keep him from falling to lower realms." The Blessed One assented to the Śākyaś by his silence.

5.240 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, all the Śākyaś rejoiced, praising this assurance from the Blessed One. Then, after touching their heads to the Blessed One's feet, they took leave of him.

5.241 The Blessed One thought, "I will ripen his faculties," and for a while, the Blessed One did not speak to him at all. Observing that he had only seven days left to live, the Blessed One declared to the monks, "In seven days Śākya Iṣudhara will be dead." Word spread like oil pressed from grain that it had been prophesied that Śākya Iṣudhara would be dead in seven days. But he had no faith in the Blessed One, so he stayed up on the roof of his palatial home, enjoying himself with women and coupling to the sound of music without interacting with other people.

5.242 The Blessed One thought, "First I shall send the greatest of my disciples to him, and then I shall go myself." The Blessed One then spoke to Aniruddha,

saying, "Aniruddha, attend to Śākya Iṣudhara."

"As you wish, Lord," Venerable Aniruddha replied, and he went to Śākya Iṣudhara's house with other monks trailing behind him.

5.243 Śākya Iṣudhara heard that the monk Aniruddha had come there to his house. When he heard this, out of love for his younger brother Aniruddha, he went to him, bowed down at his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. Venerable Aniruddha gave a discourse that would ripen him, and departed.

5.244 On the second day, the Blessed One sent Ānanda, and on the third day Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana. On the fourth day he sent Venerable Śāriputra, and Venerable Śāriputra taught him the Dharma in such a way as to inspire faith in the Blessed One. Then Śākya Iṣudhara became terrified of his death.

5.245 On the fifth day, the Blessed One directly apprehended his mind and went to Iṣudhara's house in person. Śākya Iṣudhara saw the Blessed One from a distance, and, when he saw him, he felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he set up a seat for the Blessed One and called out to the Blessed One, "This way, Blessed One—if you please! Welcome, Blessed One, very good! Blessed One, please have a seat on this cushion I have prepared for you!" Once the Blessed One had taken his place on the seat prepared for him, Śākya Iṣudhara touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

5.246 "Iṣudhara," the Blessed One taught, "among fears, the fear of death is but a minor one. Supreme among fears is the fear of birth among the hell beings, the animals, or the anguished spirits."

"Lord," he asked, "What is it like for the hell beings?"

5.247 So that Iṣudhara might become disillusioned with saṃsāra, the Blessed One transported him with his miraculous powers and showed him the

beings of the eight great hells. Śākya Iṣudhara asked, “Lord, what deeds cause one to take birth here?”

5.248 The Blessed One explained, “Those who inure themselves to the act of killing and commit it many times will take birth here. Thereafter, whenever they die and transmigrate, they will take birth here again into the same conditions, and their lives will be short.”

5.249 When the Blessed One showed him in detail the paths of the ten nonvirtuous actions in the same way, right away Iṣudhara became particularly afraid. “If you take the fundamental precepts from the Blessed One and don’t protect them,” he worried, “won’t you take birth as a hell being, an animal, or an anguished spirit?” So he confessed that he had broken all his precepts, and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

5.250 Then the Blessed One taught Śākya Iṣudhara the Dharma particularly suited to him. When he heard it he destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. Having seen the truths, after his death he immediately took rebirth as a god.

5.251 Upon taking rebirth as a god, he wondered, “Whence did I die and transmigrate?” and he saw that he had died as a human being. “Where have I taken birth?” he wondered, and he saw he had taken birth as a god. “What action did I take?” he wondered, and he saw that at the time of his death he had maintained the fundamental precepts and felt joy toward the Blessed One as well. “Not a day should pass without my seeing the Blessed One and offering him my respect,” he thought.

5.252 So he decorated himself with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on a crown decorated with various types of precious jewels, and perfumed his body with saffron, tamala, spr̥ka,

and other herbs. That night he filled the front of his long shirt with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers, and went to see the Blessed One. Upon his arrival he scattered the divine blue flowers over the Blessed One and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him, and then sat there in silence. Understanding that the Blessed One had completed his discourse, Śākya Iṣudhara praised the Buddha’s words, rejoiced, circumambulated the Blessed One three times, and disappeared on the spot.

5.253 Now at the time of his death, the Śākyas had been filled with doubt and wondered, “Since Śākya Iṣudhara broke his precepts and started drinking alcohol, what will be his destination? When he takes rebirth, where will his next life be? We must put this question to the Blessed One! However the Blessed One describes it to us, so shall we consider it to be.”

5.254 The Śākyas went to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival they bowed down at his feet and took their seats to one side. Once they had taken their seats to one side, the Śākyas inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, Śākya Iṣudhara broke his precepts and started to drink. Lord, what will his destination be? When he takes rebirth, where will his next life be?”

“My friends, he took rebirth as a god!” the Blessed One replied.

5.255 “Lord, Śākya Iṣudhara broke his precepts and started to drink. How could he have taken birth as a god?” they asked.

“At the time of his death,” the Blessed One explained, “Śākya Iṣudhara confessed that he had broken his precepts, and having manifested the resultant state of stream entry, he took rebirth as a god.”

5.256 As soon as they heard this, the Śākyas were filled with wonder, and exclaimed, “O Buddha! O

Dharma! O Saṅgha! Oh Dharma, so well spoken! You lift up beings, even those who have passed on to lower realms, and send them to the god realms!” Having marveled so, they engaged in especially reverent service toward the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.

5.257 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why Śākya Iṣudhara was terrified of dying and then the Blessed One rescued him from his fear of death and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

5.258 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, he was terrified of dying and then protected his precepts for seven days, because of which he took rebirth in a god realm. Listen well!

5.259 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, a certain poor merchant lived in the city of Vārāṇasī.

5.260 “One day he found faith in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Kāśyapa. The merchant wished so deeply to give gifts and make merit, and he thought, ‘With what little I have here, I shall not be able to give gifts and make merit. So, I will complete a voyage on a great seafaring vessel. If I’m able to complete even a single voyage on a great seafaring vessel, my parents’ descendants will be prosperous for seven generations.’ With this thought he loaded up his wares and set sail upon the great ocean, and after completing his voyage across the great ocean on that great seafaring vessel, he began to give gifts and make merit.

5.261 “He also had a short lifespan. So that he might become disillusioned with saṃsāra, the totally

and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa spoke about him saying, ‘That merchant is certain to die in seven days.’

5.262 “Word spread all over like oil pressed from grain, and when the merchant heard that the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa had prophesied that he would die in seven days, he became terrified of dying and immediately approached the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Upon his arrival he went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts from Buddha Kāśyapa, and after he died, he transmigrated and took rebirth as a god.

5.263 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that merchant then is none other than Śākya Iṣudhara. There, terrified of dying, he maintained the fundamental precepts and took rebirth in the god realms. Now as well, terrified of dying, he took refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts, because of which he was able to reach the god realms and liberation.”

THE END

Next: *The Man Who Was Trampled*



Part Five (11)

The
Man Who Was
Trampled

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

11 The Man Who Was Trampled

5.264 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, a certain brahmin lived there. He took a wife of the same caste, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

5.265 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up, he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Rg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

5.266 By the time he was sixteen years old, he mastered all the scriptures and thus defeated the advocates of all the different philosophical schools. Then he made a commitment to scriptural debate, saying, “None will be my equal, much less my superior.” He became arrogant about scriptural debate, and disrespected all the other brahmins. One day the thought came to the other brahmins, “The ascetic

Gautama tames those who are not tamed. Let us present this young man to the ascetic Gautama. Maybe he’ll even lead him to go forth! If that happens, we’ll be free of him.”

5.267 So that they could present the young man to the Blessed Buddha, the disrespected brahmins told him, “Child, you are like a son to us. What’s the use of saying, ‘None will be my equal, much less my superior,’ and becoming so arrogant about your wisdom? For the ascetic Gautama is both beautiful in body and beautiful in mind, omniscient and all-seeing. You don’t have even a fraction of his fine form, or his knowledge—not even a hundredth, not even a thousandth, not even a hundred thousandth.”

5.268 As soon as he heard this, the young brahmin was eager to meet the Blessed One. When he went to visit the Blessed One, the young brahmin saw the Blessed One from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart.

5.269 Upon seeing the Blessed Buddha, he was filled with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

5.270 At such a sight, whatever arrogance he had about his own form disappeared. But still he thought, “While he may be very great, he is not equal to me in wisdom. Nevertheless, I will test whether he is in fact omniscient and all-seeing.” He thought up questions in advance and went to see the Blessed One. When he arrived, he immediately made all manner of entertaining and jovial conversation and then took a seat at one side.

5.271 Now the Blessed One directly apprehended what he was thinking, foresaw the questions he had prepared, and answered them directly. Then the

young brahmin took great delight in the Blessed One, thinking, “I’m certain he is omniscient and all-seeing.” Then he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and implored him, “Blessed One, please permit me to invite you, together with the saṅgha of monks, to take your meals at my house for seven days.” The Blessed One assented by his silence. Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the young brahmin then touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took leave of him.

5.272 After that, having offered food to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for seven days, on the last day he satisfied the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with food of a hundred flavors and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe. To each of the monks he also offered a set of robes fashioned from cotton and then sat before them to listen to the Dharma.

5.273 Then the Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature of the young brahmin, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, the young brahmin destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

5.274 After seeing the truths, he asked for his parents’ permission, then drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

5.275 With the words “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination,

and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

5.276 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “what action did the young brahmin take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he mastered all the scriptures and defeated the advocates of all the different philosophical schools; and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

5.277 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?” they asked.

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, he carried out all the activities of a buddha and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates.

5.278 “King Kṛkī covered his reliquary stūpa and the entire surrounding area for the distance of one mile with four different kinds of jewels. When it was complete in every respect, he made great offerings

to it and announced the opening of the traditional festival of the stūpa. Then the king proclaimed, 'When the festival occurs, every single person living in Vārāṇasī must go to venerate the stūpa. Those who do not go will have all their possessions confiscated.'

5.279 "King Kṛkī's magistrate was a faithless person, whose son had become an intimate of the prince. Out of anger, that faithless brahmin magistrate did not go to the stūpa. When King Kṛkī heard this, he thought, 'My magistrate has disobeyed my command,' and felt an upsurge of anger. 'I shall confiscate all his possessions, and never return them!' he shouted. The prince heard his words and told the magistrate's son, 'Hurry to the festival of the stūpa, and tell your father that the king may confiscate all your possessions!'

5.280 "As soon as he heard this, the brahmin magistrate's son fled to the monastery. There he saw a great crowd in earnest veneration of the stūpa. After the magistrate's son saw this, he found faith in the stūpa, made a large offering to it, and prayed, 'By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May I master all the scriptures. May I defeat the advocates of all the different philosophical schools. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.'

5.281 "As it happened, the young man was trampled by the crowd, and died, but dying as he did—filled with joy at the thought of the stūpa—he transmigrated and took rebirth as a god.

5.282 "Now when young gods and goddesses are born they possess three different types of innate knowledge. They know (1) whence they have died and transmigrated, (2) where they have been born,

and (3) why they have taken birth there.

5.283 He saw that when he died as a human being, filled with joy at the thought of the stūpa of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, he transmigrated and took rebirth as a god. As soon as he recognized this, he immediately recalled the buddha's previous kindness. He began to decorate himself with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on a crown decorated with various types of precious jewels, perfumed his body with saffron, tamala, spr̥ka, and other herbs, and that very night he filled the front of his long shirt with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers, and traveled to the stūpa of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. When he arrived he scattered the divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers over the stūpa of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and after he scattered the divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers, he sat filled with joy at the thought of the stūpa.

5.284 "While he was sitting there, his father heard the news that his son had been trampled by the crowd and died, and he hurried to the stūpa. The young god saw him there holding the child's corpse on his lap, wailing in sorrow and lamenting, and said to him, 'Oh Father, you needn't mourn for me. Don't mourn for me. Don't sit and suffer so.'

5.285 " 'Who are you?' the brahmin asked.

" 'I am your son,' he replied.

" 'Where did you take rebirth?' he asked.

" 'I took birth among the gods,' he replied.

5.286 " 'What action did you take to be born there?' he asked.

" 'I venerated the stūpa, and was filled with joy at the thought of it. If you give up your former attitude, venerate the stūpa, and become filled with joy at the thought of it, you too will become a source of goodness.' Having said this, the young

god disappeared on the spot.

5.287 “When he heard these words, the brahmin no longer mourned his son and felt great happiness toward the stūpa. In his happiness he made a large offering to the stūpa and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. Entrusting myself to my son, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

5.288 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the magistrate’s son then is none other than this young brahmin. The one who was his father then is none other than this brahmin. The young brahmin’s act of venerating the stūpa and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; such that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful; and such that he mastered all the scriptures and defeated the advocates of all the different philosophical schools.

5.289 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

5.290 “His father’s act of venerating the stūpa and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. His son was the sole condition that caused him to please me, and not displease me.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Jackal*



The Man Who Was Trampled

Tenpa Tsering / Sonam Drosangma
/ 9 & 5 years old

Part Five (12)

The Story of
Jackal

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

12 The Story of Jackal

5.291 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there was a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived, whereupon her whole body began to smell of excrement. Then she had the impulse to eat excrement and drink urine, and she told her husband, "Lord, I'm having certain impulses." When he heard this, the householder was devastated, and he thought, "Has my wife been possessed by one of those rotting spirits?"

5.292 He took her to the soothsayers, and the soothsayers assured him, "Your wife has not been possessed by a rotting spirit. All this has taken place on account of the being in her womb. When the child is born, the smell of excrement will disappear from her body and such impulses will disappear from her mind."

5.293 As soon as he heard this, the man began applying all manner of ointments to his wife's body. He was also worried that she would eat excrement and drink urine, so he appointed attendants and guards for his wife. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child caked in excrement and urine. Upon his birth the house was suffused by the

smell of excrement. The women washed the child and laid him out on the bed, but still the smell of excrement did not clear from his body, so his mother began applying all manner of ointments to him and left him like that. After his birth the mother's previous impulses disappeared.

5.294 At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, but once he was able to walk, he would pick up excrement—some to eat, some to smear on his body—until the women put a stop to this. As he grew up they made him study letters, but when they sent him to a teacher, wherever there was some filthy excrement, he would go and eat it.

5.295 When his parents heard about this, they were devastated. "Oh sure, we had a son," they thought, "but if he has problems like this—spoken ill of, all over the world—what use is he to us?" and they threw him out of the house. And so he went to live in filthy excrement, and constantly ate excrement and drank urine. Many people saw him eating filth, and when they saw this, they remarked to one another, "This young man is like a jackal, eating excrement and drinking urine." So instead of his old name they started calling him Jackal, since he ate excrement and drank urine like a jackal.

5.296 One day Pūraṇa Kāśyapa saw him, and thought, "We ascetics merely vow to eat only cow dung, and yet here is this child practicing even greater austerities than ours! If he went forth with us, his merit would multiply greatly." So he asked the young man, "Child, did you take a vow to do this, or is it merely your custom to do so?"

"I don't know that I've taken a vow, really," the young man replied. "I just crave excrement. I don't care for ordinary food and drink."

5.297 "Child, become a renunciant like us," urged Pūraṇa Kāśyapa. "Go forth with us and take a vow to do this. That will cause your merit to multiply

greatly.”

“Sure, I’ll do whatever you like,” the young man said.

5.298 With those words the young man followed him to his dwelling place, and after they had plucked out all his hair, they gave him a cup and a broom of peacock feathers, and he made a vow to eat excrement. Then he went to where there was some excrement, and there he stayed.

5.299 Now at that time some five hundred anguished spirits had settled down in Śrāvastī. At night when all the people were sleeping, they would go from one pile of excrement to another, eating the excrement and drinking the urine. The young man could hear the sounds the anguished spirits made, but he could not see their forms.

5.300 One day Pūraṇa Kāśyapa checked up on him and asked, “Child, you took vows of yogic discipline. Have they brought you any special attainments?”

“What do you mean by ‘special?’” the young man asked in return.

Pūraṇa asked him, “Have you seen something like a divine form, or have you heard the sounds of gods?”

5.301 “I have not seen anything like a divine form,” he said, “though I did hear the sounds of many people. But I couldn’t see them, exactly.”

“Those are the great souls whose yogic disciplines have been successful!” Pūraṇa exclaimed. “Renew your vow and stay on here. For if you do, it’s possible they will also show their bodies.”

5.302 One day the anguished spirits thought, “Just as we have committed misdeeds and taken birth here and now undergo such sufferings as these, so too this young man is undergoing these sufferings as a result of his previous misdeeds.” And then they said, “What reason do we have then for not showing our bodies to him?” So the anguished spirits showed their bodies to the young man, and he cavorted with them.

5.303 Soon after, Pūraṇa Kāśyapa checked up on him again and asked, “Child, have those whose yogic disciplines were successful shown their bodies to you at all?”

“They did show me their bodies,” he said, “but in a very ugly way.”

5.304 “Renew your vow yet again and stay on here,” Pūraṇa Kāśyapa suggested. “It’s possible they will show you their true forms.”

Around that time Venerable Śāriputra thought, “These anguished spirits have exhausted their previous deeds. They will die without delay. Thus I will tame them.”

5.305 Venerable Śāriputra went to see the five hundred anguished spirits and said, “So it is, my friends: All conditioned things are impermanent. All phenomena are selfless. Nirvāṇa is peace. Let your minds be filled with joy at the thought of me, and you may even be freed from taking birth as anguished spirits.” With that, he departed. The anguished spirits died, filled with joy at the thought of Venerable Śāriputra, and after they died, they took rebirth in the realm of the gods.

5.306 Now when young gods and goddesses are born they possess three different types of innate knowledge. They know (1) whence they have died and transmigrated, (2) where they have been born, and (3) why they have taken birth there.

5.307 They saw that when they had died as anguished spirits, filled with joy at the thought of Śāriputra, they transmigrated and took rebirth as gods. The young gods who formerly were anguished spirits thought, “It’s been a whole day since we went to see the Blessed One. This isn’t proper of us. Not a day should pass without our seeing the Blessed One.”

5.308 Then the young gods who formerly were anguished spirits decorated themselves with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on crowns decorated with various types of precious jewels, and perfumed their bodies with

saffron, tamala, sprka, and other herbs. That night they filled the front of their long shirts with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers. They approached the Blessed One and scattered the divine flowers over him. Then the Blessed One taught them the Dharma, and all of them saw the truths.

5.309 After seeing the truths, they took leave of the Blessed One. On their way back whence they came, they recalled young Jackal and thought, “By entrusting ourselves to Noble Śāriputra, we were freed from rebirth as anguished spirits, and took rebirth as gods. Let us go now and act for the benefit of Jackal. Then he too will go to see the Blessed One, and by entrusting himself to the Blessed One, perhaps he too will be freed from suffering.” With this thought, they disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and traveled to the area of Śrāvastī where Jackal was. They stayed in the sky above the region in an immense celestial mansion, and the entire region of Śrāvastī was filled with a bright light.

5.310 Young Jackal saw the five hundred gods and asked, “Who are you?”

“We’re your former friends,” they replied.

“I’ve never before seen you in this kind of dress,” said the young man.

“We have died from this place and taken birth among the gods,” they explained.

5.311 “You took a vow of yogic discipline, and that was enough for you to take birth among the gods?” Jackal said.

“It was not because we took vows of yogic discipline,” they told him. “Due to our previous misdeeds we had taken birth as anguished spirits. But by entrusting ourselves to Noble Śāriputra, we were freed from rebirth as anguished spirits and took rebirth as gods. Take refuge in the Blessed Buddha, and perhaps you too will be freed from suffering.” After they said that, the gods all

disappeared.

5.312 Pūraṇa Kāśyapa saw the five hundred gods go to see Jackal, and he told the others, “Just like that, the gods even showed him their bodies and then departed. This great soul has accomplished his vow!” No sooner had they heard this than many of those beings took vows to eat excrement.

5.313 After young Jackal heard the gods’ words he thought, “I should go see the Blessed Buddha and offer him my respect, but I can’t bear to see the Blessed One with my body covered in excrement like this.” So he went to the banks of the Ajiravatī River, scoured his whole body with earth, washed himself, and then went to see the Blessed One.

5.314 Young Jackal saw the Blessed One. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart.

5.315 When he saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled him with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

5.316 Seeing the Blessed Buddha in this way filled him with supreme joy. Full of such joy he approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

5.317 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, young Jackal destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right

where he sat.

5.318 After seeing the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

5.319 With the words “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

5.320 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “what action did Jackal take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that as soon as he was born, the smell of excrement arose from all over his body, he desired excrement, and he lived in excrement? What action did he take that ripened such that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

5.321 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that he committed and accumulated:

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened

buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived in Vārāṇasī a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa —with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

5.322 “In admiration for the Buddha, in admiration for the Dharma, and in admiration for the Saṅgha, he went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts. Manifesting the resultant state of non-return, he thought, ‘Seeing as I do not have a son or daughter, after I die all I have will become property of the king. I will show my respect to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.’ He built a monastery complete in every respect, provided the monks with everything they needed, and appointed a monk to act as steward.

5.323 “Then one day the steward had something to do out in the countryside, and after making a request of the householder, he departed. After he had gone, an arhat, who had been traveling and traveling through the countryside, arrived at the monastery. The householder saw his elegance and the elegance of his attendants, and immediately admired him. In his admiration he thought, ‘If I extend an invitation to him alone, he will not assent, so I will invite the entire saṅgha of monks to my house for food.’ He bowed down at his feet and said, ‘Noble one, please permit me to request you and the saṅgha of monks to take your food at my house tomorrow.’

5.324 “Then the arhat thought, ‘If I don’t accept, it will not only be an obstacle to the benefit of these monks. It will also be an obstacle to this patron’s merit.’ With this in mind, he assented by his silence.

“The next day, the householder readied his house with ritual bathing implements, beds, and seats for the saṅgha of monks. He prepared the water pitchers and then extended an invitation to

the monks that said, 'Noble ones, noon is upon us and it is time for the baths. Know that the time has come, noble ones, and your presence is requested.'

5.325 "As the monks arrived at his house, the householder called for a barber, had him cut all the monks' hair, offered them a bath, and by his own hand contented them with many good, wholesome foods.

"When the steward monk had completed his work in the valley, he returned to the monastery. Not seeing the other monks upon his return, he asked, 'Where did they go?' and the answer came, 'The householder invited them to his home.'

"On whose behalf?' he asked.

"He invited them on behalf of a new monk who just arrived,' they replied.

5.326 "As soon as he heard this, he was very dismayed. 'What is it he did, that on his behalf the entire saṅgha of monks received such an invitation?' he thought. This made him irate, and he went to the householder's home. Upon his arrival he looked and saw the householder serving the arhat with devotion and respect, and his jealousy caused him to become even more irate.

5.327 "As the monks were all returning to the monastery after finishing their meals, he went to see the arhat and said, 'Lord, do you even know who this householder is?'

"I know he is a non-returner,' replied the arhat.

"Well if that's the case,' the steward monk said, 'better that you would pluck out your own hair than for him to shave your head! Better that you would sink in excrement than make off with his bathing implements! Better that you would eat excrement and drink urine than take his food and drink!'

5.328 "Then the arhat thought, 'It's not right for this emotionally afflicted person, who has become so abased, to continue in this downward spiral. I have to help him.' With this thought, he said, 'Venerable One, do you know who I am? And do you know

who you yourself are?'

"I know that you have gone forth,' he replied, 'as have I.'

5.329 "Though we two are like brothers in having gone forth,' the arhat said, 'you are an ordinary person, bound by every fetter, and I am an arhat, liberated from every fetter. You must confess the mistake you've made by speaking harshly to me. Otherwise you are certain to roam in saṃsāra and meet with great suffering.'

5.330 "Hearing him, the monk was flooded with regret and bowed down at the feet of the arhat and asked his forgiveness. After that he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, 'By this root of virtue, may I not meet with the results of the act of speaking harsh words to an arhat. By the root of the virtue of later rendering service to the saṅgha in accord with the Dharma, and practicing pure conduct all my life, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.'

5.331 "O monks, what do you think? The monk who was the steward then is none other than Jackal. The act of speaking harshly to an arhat and telling him, 'Better that you would pluck out your own hair than for him to shave your head!' ripened such that wherever he was born, his hair was plucked out. The act of telling him, 'Better that you would sink in excrement than make off with his bathing implements!' ripened such that wherever he was born, he lived in excrement. The act of telling him, 'Better that you would eat excrement and drink urine than take his food and drink!' ripened such that wherever he was born, he ate excrement and drank urine. The acts of serving as steward for the

saṅgha in accord with the Dharma, practicing pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, praying, ‘Wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth,’ ripened such that wherever he was born it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

5.332 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

“Lord,” the monks inquired, “what action did the five hundred anguished spirits take that ripened into their births as anguished spirits? What actions did they take that ripened such that, once they took rebirth as gods, they also pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

5.333 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that they committed and accumulated:

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, they all became lay vow holders. When the monks came asking them for provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick, overcome with stinginess they said, ‘Kāśyapa’s ascetics are just like anguished spirits, going around begging food from others!’ and called after them with other such harsh words.

5.334 “O monks, what do you think? Those who were the five hundred lay vow holders then are none other than these five hundred anguished spirits. The act of speaking harshly to the monks ripened

into their taking birth as anguished spirits for five hundred lifetimes. At that time they went for refuge in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. They maintained the fundamental precepts, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

5.335 *This concludes Part Five of The Hundred Deeds.*

THE END

Next: *Part Six: The Bird: Two Stories*



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The Hundred Deeds

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Part Six

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Part Six (1)

The Bird:
Two Stories

- 1. i The First Bird Story
- 1. ii The Second Bird Story

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ཀར་མཁའ་མཁའ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Bird: Two Stories

1. i The First Bird Story

6.2 Once, when the Blessed One was staying at Vulture Peak Mountain in Rājagṛha teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds, from Gandhamādana Mountain a certain peacock named Beautiful to See came gliding through the sky over the garden of Prince Jeta. The bird overheard the Blessed One teaching the Dharma as he sat amid the company of hundreds, which inspired him to descend to the earth and alight at the feet of the Blessed One.

6.3 The Blessed One taught him three lines of the Dharma: “All conditioned things are impermanent. All phenomena are selfless. Nirvāṇa is peace. Let your mind be filled with joy at the thought of me, and you may even be released from rebirth in the animal realm.” The peacock was delighted and gazed upon the Buddha’s countenance for a long time.

6.4 Then, as he flew up into the sky above, he was killed by a falcon. He died filled with joy at the thought of the Blessed One, transmigrated, and took rebirth into the family of a trader there in Rājagṛha. After nine or ten months had passed the wife gave birth to a child. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

6.5 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

6.6 One day, in admiration for the Buddha, admiration for the Dharma, and admiration for the Saṅgha, he asked for his parents’ permission and went forth. Though he was just seven years old, he cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship. After he manifested arhatship he became a person of great miracles and great power. He used his miraculous powers as a means of travel and would scoop flowers and fruits onto large leaves, carry them from one place to another, and bring them as offerings to the saṅgha.

6.7 When the monks saw all this they were amazed and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why this one, who went forth as a novice at just seven years of age, cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship.”

6.8 So that they might become disillusioned with saṃsāra, the Blessed One asked them, “Did you see the bird that descended from the sky and alighted before me some time ago?”

“Yes, Lord, we saw him.”

6.9 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “as that bird departed, filled with joy at the thought of me, he was killed by a falcon, and since he died filled with joy at the thought of me, he took birth into the family of a trader in Rājagṛha. When he grew up he went forth in my very doctrine. After he had gone forth, though just seven years old, he cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship.”

6.10 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what action did this novice take that ripened into his

birth as a bird? What action did he take that, after he died, he transmigrated and took rebirth as a human being, and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

6.11 “Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times gone by, in the city of Vārāṇasī, King Brahmadata reigns in Kāśī, and King Videha reigns in Videha. The two did not get along with each other, and from time to time a great many people were killed.

6.12 “So it was that one day the king of Videha arrayed the four divisions of his army and advanced to wage war with King Brahmadata. King Brahmadata of Kāśī, upon hearing that the king of Videha had arrayed the four divisions of his army and advanced to wage war, likewise arrayed the four divisions of his army and advanced on the king of Videha to wage war.

6.13 “He was defeated by the king of Videha, however, and was forced to flee. Only the king was spared, and he fled into the forest. His body was tired and aching, so he dismounted from his horse, removed his helmet, pulled off his cloak, spread it out, and sat down on it.

6.14 “Not far off was a peacock surrounded by peahens. The peacock and peahens enjoyed themselves and coupled, and when he saw them, he was envious. ‘This peacock indulges his desires,’ he thought, ‘and no one does him harm. Such a life is beautiful.’

6.15 “Now in times when a blessed one has not arisen in the world, the solitary buddhas appear. So it was that a solitary buddha was leaning up against a tree directly in front of the king. To catch the king’s attention, the solitary buddha made a sound like he was clearing his throat. When the king heard it, he leapt up in terror, thinking, ‘Has my opponent’s army come here?’

6.16 “Then the king saw the solitary buddha leaning on the tree. At this sight his mind became filled with joy. ‘He is content in a forest where there are no people,’ he thought. ‘Certainly this is a great soul.’

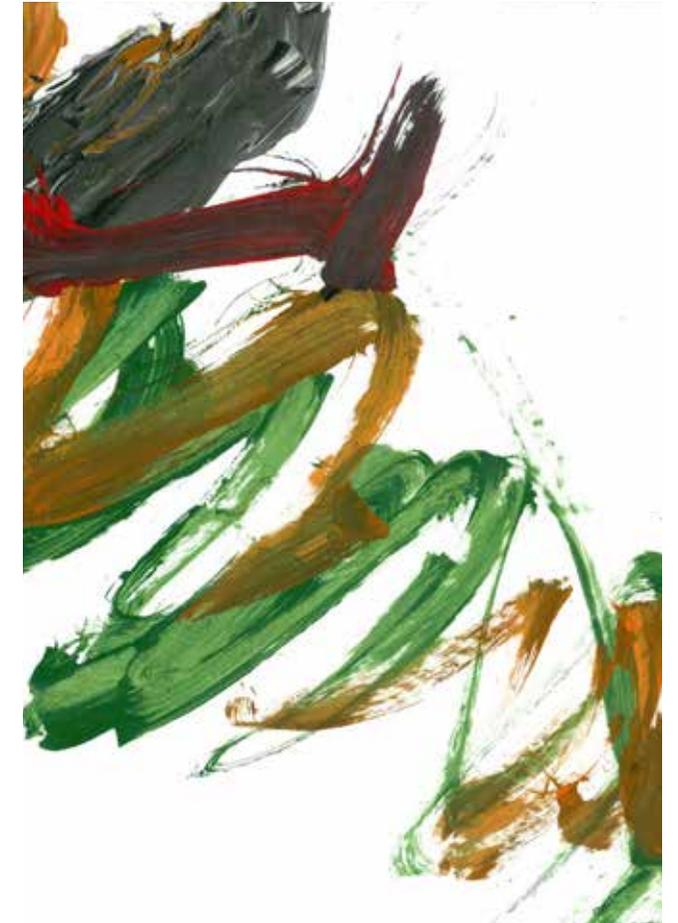
6.17 “Now it was the custom of the ancient kings that when they rode into battle or hunted deer, they would pack some food in the side bags of their horses before setting out. A little such food hung in King Brahmadata’s horse’s side bag, and he offered these provisions to the solitary buddha.

6.18 “The solitary buddha then carried the king up into the sky and established him in a state of fearlessness, whereupon the king prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may I be born as a peacock. May I thereby also please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

6.19 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was King Brahmadata then is none other than this bird. Because he offered food to the solitary buddha and prayed thus, now he has pleased me and not displeased me.”



The First Bird Story



Aakasha Minocha / 3 years old

1. ii The Second Bird Story

6.20 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived on Gandhamādana Mountain a certain bird named Kumudavicitramaha who was sick and sure to die soon.

6.21 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

6.22 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a

buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

6.23 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

6.24 The Blessed One thought, “The time has come to teach this bird. He will be instrumental in guiding a great many disciples.” With this thought, the Blessed One disappeared from Śrāvastī and arrived on Gandhamādana Mountain not far from where the bird was.

6.25 The Blessed One performed a miracle that caused five hundred Indian roller birds to come and circumambulate the Blessed One. When the bird saw the five hundred Indian roller birds performing circumambulation, he wished that he could do the same and thought, “I will also circumambulate the Blessed One.” He died with joy in his mind at the thought of the Blessed One and took rebirth as a god. Having taken birth as a god, he approached the Blessed One, the Blessed One taught the Dharma to him, and he saw the truths. After he saw the truths, he went back to where he belongs.

6.26 Then the Blessed One spoke about the bird’s carcass to Venerable Śāriputra among the assembly of monks. “Śāriputra,” he said, “what action did this bird take that ripened into its birth as a bird?”

6.27 As soon as he heard this, Venerable Śāriputra began to reflect, and though he went deep into equipoise and reached the far limits of concentration, he could not see an end to the bird’s sufferings as he died from one life as a bird and transmigrated, only to take birth as a bird again.

6.28 Venerable Śāriputra rose from his meditation, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and responded to the Blessed One, “Lord, I have not been able to apprehend the bird’s

origins. I saw him dying from one life as a bird and transmigrating, only to take birth as a bird again. Lord, your wisdom and vision are unimpeded—your wisdom and vision are infinite. Lord, Blessed One, I implore you, please explain the action this bird took that ripened into his taking birth only as a bird.”

6.29 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that this bird committed and accumulated:

“Monks, in times gone by, when the one who transcended the levels of the listeners and solitary buddhas, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Arthadarśin was in the world, this bird went forth in his doctrine and served as steward.

6.30 “In this capacity he would solicit food and drink from patrons and donors. As he was appealing to a householder, a group of monks prevented him. He became irate and shouted, ‘You’re like animals—you don’t even think! You don’t act the way that monks should act!’

6.31 “In time he came to regret this, confessed his mistake, and then practiced pure conduct all his life. At the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I not meet with the results of the wrongful act of speaking harshly to such pure beings. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this.’

6.32 “O monks, what do you think? The one who served as steward then is none other than this bird. The act of speaking harshly to the monks ripened into his birth as an animal. Monks, from the time of the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Arthadarśin until my own, he has died, transmigrated, and taken rebirth only as an animal. Now he has died with joy in his mind

at the thought of me, transmigrated, and taken rebirth as a god. After being reborn as a god, he came before me and I taught him the Dharma. He heard the Dharma from me, saw the truths, and then went back to where he belongs.

6.33 “At that time he served as steward in accord with the Dharma, and at the time of his death he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this.’

“So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Arthadarśin—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Majestic Body*



Part Six (2)

The Story of
Majestic Body

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་ལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Story of Majestic Body

6.34 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain brahmin of high lineage called Majestic Body. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, "What name should we give this child?" And they named him according to their clan, saying, "Since this is the brahmin Majestic Body's child, his name will be More Majestic."

6.35 They reared young More Majestic on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive

offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences and he could defeat anyone in debate.

6.36 One day the brahmin Majestic Body had the thought, "I shall perform a sacrifice." Then another idea occurred to him: "The ascetic Gautama is omniscient and all-seeing, and that being the case, there is nothing he does not know—there is nothing in the past, present, or future that he does not see, know, or directly perceive. Since it wouldn't be right for any part of my sacrifice to be lacking, I shall ask the ascetic Gautama about it first."

6.37 At that he mounted a chariot drawn by a white mare. Bearing a golden staff and a golden water pitcher, and surrounded by a company of young brahmins, he left Śrāvastī and traveled to the garden of Prince Jeta. He went as far as he could by chariot, then descended and continued to the garden on foot. He proceeded to where the Blessed One was and when he arrived he made all manner of entertaining and jovial conversation with the Blessed One. When they were finished, he took a seat at one side.

6.38 Once he had taken a seat at one side, the brahmin Majestic Body asked the Blessed One, "Gautama, I have started a great sacrifice, and to perform that great sacrifice I have tied five hundred of the finest bulls to a post, as well as cattle, male and female buffalo, riding horses, calves, young calves, goats, sheep, and even insects. For the sacrifice I have also arrayed a great deal of food and drink and invited ascetics from the neighboring kingdoms, and brahmins from foreign lands, other regions, and other valleys. So that my sacrifice is effective, I have come to Śrāvastī, and I ask the Blessed One to please explain whether any part of my sacrifice may be lacking."

6.39 The Blessed One taught him the Dharma that

accorded with him, taking only his sacrifice as the point of departure. As a result the brahmin Majestic Body and his son More Majestic both destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

6.40 Then More Majestic said, “After this, of what use are ceremonies to us brahmins?”

“More Majestic, don’t say such things,” the brahmin Majestic Body replied. “Now we’ll offer food to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, and after we’ve made those offerings we can give the leftovers to the brahmins.”

“As you wish, preceptor,” More Majestic said.

6.41 The brahmin Majestic Body rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Blessed One, please permit me to invite you, together with the saṅgha of monks, to take tomorrow’s meal at the sacrificial site.” The Blessed One assented to the brahmin Majestic Body by his silence.

6.42 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the brahmin Majestic Body then touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and took leave of him. When he arrived at the site of the sacrifice he released his entire fine herd—cattle, male and female buffalo, riding horses, calves, young calves, goats, sheep, and all the different insects as well—saying, “As you travel to the four directions whence the cool air appears, from this day forth may you all eat of the finest, unwilted plants, and drink from placid, tranquil, clear waters.” He released all the different insects as well.

6.43 After preparing many good, wholesome foods that night, he rose the next morning, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then he sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was

time for the midday meal: “Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested.”

6.44 In the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and holy robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out for the brahmin Majestic Body’s reception room, surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. Once the brahmin Majestic Body and the brahmin child More Majestic knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by their own hands they contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Having by their own hands contented them with many different kinds of good, wholesome food, proffering all that they wished, they offered each of them a set of clothes. Once they knew that the Blessed One had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, they sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma. After the Blessed One had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted them with a Dharma teaching he rose from his seat and departed.

6.45 After the Blessed One had departed, all the brahmins at the site of the sacrifice were irate. They said, “Look—everything that was prepared for the sacrifice has been given to the ascetic Gautama.”

When the brahmin Majestic Body heard they were angry, he immediately approached the brahmins and said, “What harm has the ascetic Gautama done to you? I shall repay you for the offerings you set out.”

6.46 “We no longer need your offerings,” said the brahmins, for they were going to kill both father and child.

“They’re coming to kill us,” the father and child thought, so they both fled. They traveled to the garden of Prince Jeta, where they went to see the Blessed One. When they arrived they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and told him

the story in detail. Then they requested, “Lord, let us give up living at home. Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

6.47 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Having cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship.

“Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “tell us why the brahmins were going to put the brahmin Majestic Body and the brahmin child More Majestic to death, which was enough for them to become disillusioned with saṃsāra so that they went forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

6.48 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, the brahmins were going to put them to death, and that was enough for them to become disillusioned with saṃsāra so that they went forth and practiced the holy life. Listen well!

6.49 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there was as a certain brahmin who was preparing a sacrifice. Another brahmin began to quarrel with him, became irate, and stabbed the brahmin with a weapon until that brahmin died from his stab wounds. This angered all the other brahmins, who said, ‘Never again will we make use of your gifts.’ No longer considering him a brahmin, they went

on to curse him and prepared to kill him.

6.50 “He and his son fled in fear of the other brahmins. They traveled to R̥ṣivadana and went forth in the presence of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Thereupon they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and though they did not achieve any great virtues, at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘While we may not have attained any great virtues, still we have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all our lives. Therefore, may we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

6.51 “O monks, what do you think? The brahmins who were father and son then, and went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, are none other than the brahmins Majestic Body and More Majestic. At that time the brahmins were going to put them both to death, and then, terrified of dying, they went forth and practiced pure conduct all their lives. Now as well, the brahmins were going to kill them both, and, terrified of dying, they have gone forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

6.52 “At that time they went forth, practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

6.53 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that

they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Teacher*



The Story of Majestic Body

Jigme Hanley / 7 years old

Part Six (3)

The
Teacher

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟོ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Teacher

6.54 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, a certain householder lived there. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. As time went on, the householder's second son was born, and then a third, and so on up to seven. At the elaborate feasts celebrating their births, they named them according to their clan.

6.55 They reared them on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when they were grown they studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. They became skilled at writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, masters of the eight types of examination.

One day the father told them, "Heed what I say—entrust yourselves to the householder Anāthapiṇḍada, for he will benefit you in this life and the next."

6.56 Six of his sons replied, "What is the use of entrusting ourselves to the householder Anāthapiṇḍada?" and they did not heed his word. One son began to favor Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, the second liked Maskarin Gośālīputra, the third liked Saṃjayin Vairaṭīputra, the fourth liked Ajita Keśakambala, the fifth liked Kakuda Kātyāyana, and the sixth liked Nirgrantha

Jñātiputra. The seventh did heed his father's word, however, and entrusted himself to the householder Anāthapiṇḍada. Having entrusted himself to him, he delighted in the doctrine of the Blessed One, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts.

6.57 Later the householder's eldest son invited Pūraṇa Kāśyapa and gave him food, the second invited Maskarin Gośālīputra and gave him food, the third invited Saṃjayin Vairaṭīputra and gave him food, the fourth invited Ajita Keśakambala and gave him food, the fifth invited Kakuda Kātyāyana and gave him food, and the sixth invited Nirgrantha Jñātiputra and gave him food. At this the seventh said to his elder brothers, "Each of you has given food to his own teacher. I shall likewise offer provisions to the Blessed One. You all should help me."

6.58 The young man extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, and that night he prepared many good, wholesome foods. In the morning the young man rose, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then he sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was time for the midday meal: "Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested."

6.59 In the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks, until they arrived at the householder's reception room. He took his place on the seat prepared for him there amid the saṅgha of monks.

6.60 When the householder, his sons, and his servants knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by their own hands they contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Having by their own hands contented the Buddha and the saṅgha of monks with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished, once the householder, his sons, and his servants

knew that they had finished eating, that their bowls had been taken away and their hands washed, they brought in very low seats and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

6.61 Then the Blessed One, directly apprehending the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature of the householder, his sons, and his servants, taught them the Dharma accordingly. Upon hearing it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

6.62 After seeing the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and said to the Blessed One, “Because of you, Blessed One, we have been lifted up from among the hell beings, animals, and anguished spirits. Leading us to live among the gods and humans, you have dried up the ocean of blood and tears, led us over the mountain pass of bones, slammed shut the doors to lower births, and swung wide open the doors to the god realms and liberation. You have brought to an end the afflictive emotions to which we have been accustomed since beginningless time, pacifying them, tossing them aside, and casting them away. Blessed One, for as long as we live, may you and the rest of the saṅgha of monks please accept from us your provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick.” The Blessed One replied, “Householder, please relent—there are others who also need my help,” and departed.

6.63 After the Blessed One had departed, the householder’s sons thought, “We will give up living at home to go forth.” They asked for their parents’ permission and went to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, drew down the right shoulder of their

upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and made this request of the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

6.64 With the words “Come, join me, monks! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands were like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. Their state was such that Indra, Upendra, and the other gods worshiped and venerated them and addressed them with respect.

6.65 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why six of the householder’s seven children had divergent views and could not agree with each other until the youngest brother brought them around to a single view and they all went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

6.66 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, the other six brothers could not come to an agreement until the youngest brother alone brought them into agreement and all of them went forth in the presence of a sage and generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Listen well!

6.67 “Monks, in times gone by, the seven kings of the central country each reigned in their own lands. None of them was friendly with the others, and

from time to time a great many people were killed. One day King Brahmadata of Kāśī thought, ‘How can I restore relations among the kings of these neighboring lands?’

6.68 “At that time in the land of Brahmadata, king of Kāśī, there was a sage living in a certain hermitage who had all five superknowledges, a person of great miracles and great power. King Brahmadata thought, ‘If I call upon that sage, he can restore relations between them.’ He went to see the sage, bowed down at his feet, and said, ‘The six neighboring kings are not friendly with one another, and from time to time a great many people are killed. It would be right of you to restore relations between them.’ The sage assented to King Brahmadata by his silence. Understanding that by his silence the sage had given his assent, King Brahmadata bowed down at his feet and departed.

6.69 “One day the six kings arrayed all four divisions of their armies and advanced on Vārāṇasī. With the four divisions of their armies all arrayed, they completely surrounded the city in siege, whereupon Brahmadata, king of Kāśī, sent word to the sage. As soon as he heard, the sage traveled through the sky from his dwelling to the very place where the six kings were encamped.

6.70 “Upon seeing the sage, all six kṣatriya kings were immediately overcome with joy toward him. In their joy they went to see the sage, and upon their arrival they bowed down at his feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. After he taught them the Dharma, the sage got them all to form a truce. After having made a truce, they resolved to go forth in the presence of the sage. Each informed the other of his intention and traveled back to his own land. After each had abdicated in favor of his son, given gifts, and made merit, they all went forth in the presence of that sage. Having gone forth, they generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

6.71 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The six kings who disagreed with each other then are none other than the six brothers who could not come to an agreement now. The one who was King Brahmadata then is none other than the youngest son himself. At that time the sage brought them into agreement and they went forth before him, generating the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Six of the brothers had divergent views, were brought around to a single view, went forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

6.72 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what action did the householder, his sons, and their servants take that ripened into their births into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that they pleased and did not displease the Blessed One; and that they went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

6.73 “When did they make these prayers?” they asked.

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there was a householder in Vārāṇasī with six older sons who had divergent views and could not come to an agreement.

6.74 “The youngest of the sons delighted in the Buddha. He led his six older brothers to the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. All of them asked for their parents’ permission, went forth in the doctrine of the totally

and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and practiced pure conduct all their lives. At the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

6.75 “The householder also gave gifts and made merit, went for refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life. At the time of his death, he prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. At that time may these same seven children be my children. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

6.76 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that householder then is none other than this householder. The acts of giving gifts and making merit, taking refuge and maintaining the fundamental precepts, and praying at the time of his death ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he has pleased me and not displeased me; and that they alone were his sons. The sons also practiced the conduct that leads to enlightenment all their lives, and prayed at the time of their deaths.

6.77 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *A Story about Kāśyapa*



Part Six (4)

A Story about
Kāśyapa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 A Story about Kāśyapa

6.78 Once, when the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, Venerable Mahākāśyapa had spent a long time in a retreat hermitage. After the hair on his head and face had grown long and his clothes were worn out, he went to see the Blessed One. At that time the Blessed One sat amid a company of hundreds teaching the Dharma to the saṅgha of monks. The monks saw Venerable Mahākāśyapa from a distance and felt contempt for him. They thought, “A person who has gone forth—a monk—with long hair on his head and face, and so carelessly dressed, in such shoddy clothing! Where does he come from?”

6.79 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts and reflected, “After my parinirvāṇa, the monk Kāśyapa will fulfill the purpose of my teaching. He will recount the Sūtras, Abhidharma, and Vinaya, yet these monks feel such contempt for him. I must settle this objection for them, for he will become a worthy object of worship and reverence, and be spoken of with respect by all the world with its gods and humans.”

6.80 The Blessed One addressed the monks, saying, “Monks, you should not feel such contempt for this monk. After my parinirvāṇa he will recount my teaching. He will perfectly recount the Tripiṭaka and propagate the way of the Dharma.”

6.81 Then the Blessed One addressed Venerable

Mahākāśyapa, “Kāśyapa, come along! Welcome, Kāśyapa! Share this seat with me. Let us examine which of us first went forth—you or me?”

6.82 All the monks felt horrible regret and their hair stood on end. “Venerable Mahākāśyapa has such great miraculous powers,” they said. “How wonderful that our teacher is sharing a seat with his disciple.”

6.83 Then Venerable Mahākāśyapa drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, knelt down on his right knee, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and said, “Blessed One, you are my teacher. I am a disciple of the Blessed One. The Sugata is my teacher. I am a disciple of the Sugata.”

6.84 “Kāśyapa, so it is,” the Blessed One replied. “It is just as you say, Kāśyapa. I am your teacher, Kāśyapa. You are my disciple. Kāśyapa, wherever my seat may be, you shall sit upon it.” Venerable Mahākāśyapa touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side.

6.85 The Blessed One wished to make the monks greatly disillusioned with saṃsāra and to affirm Venerable Mahākāśyapa’s greatness in the Dharma, so he said to the monks, “Monks, should I wish to remain in the perfected state of the first concentration, which is secluded from craving, secluded from sinful and nonvirtuous factors, accompanied by initial consideration and subsequent analysis, and imbued with the joy and pleasure born of seclusion, I could remain in that state throughout the day, or throughout the night, or throughout a day and night, or for even two, three, or seven such days and nights.

6.86 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to remain in the perfected state of the first concentration, which is secluded from craving, secluded from sinful and nonvirtuous factors, accompanied by initial consideration and subsequent analysis, and imbued with the joy and pleasure born of seclusion,

the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.87 “Monks, should I wish to be free of initial consideration and subsequent analysis, inwardly serene, with single-pointed focus, and thereby abide in the perfected state of the second concentration, which is without initial consideration and subsequent analysis, and imbued with the joy and pleasure born of meditative stabilization, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.88 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to be free of initial consideration and subsequent analysis, inwardly serene, with single-pointed focus, and thereby abide in the perfected state of the second concentration, which is without initial consideration and subsequent analysis, and imbued with the joy and pleasure born of meditative stabilization, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.89 “Monks, should I wish to be free from attachment to joy, and thereby settle in impartiality, with mindfulness, introspection, and physical pleasure, and become, as the noble ones say, ‘impartial, mindful, and at ease,’ to abide in the perfected state of the third concentration devoid of joy, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.90 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to be free from attachment to joy, and thereby settle in impartiality, with mindfulness, introspection, and physical pleasure, and become, as the noble ones say, ‘impartial, mindful, and at ease,’ to abide in the perfected state of the third concentration devoid of joy, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.91 “Monks, should I wish to relinquish pleasure and, having already given up pain, and with happiness and unhappiness also already gone, abide in the perfected state of the fourth concentration, with neither pleasure nor pain, and with pure impartiality and mindfulness, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.92 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to relinquish pleasure and, having already given up pain, and with happiness and unhappiness also already gone, abide in the perfected state of the fourth concentration, with neither pleasure nor pain, and with pure impartiality and mindfulness, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.93 “Monks, should I wish to abide with a loving mind, which is free of hostility, enmity, and ill will, and which is lofty, expansive, nonjudgmental, immeasurable, and well developed, focused on one cardinal direction, pervading it to its very end, and then extend this loving mind, which is free of hostility, enmity, and ill will, and which is lofty, expansive, nonjudgmental, immeasurable, and well developed, to pervade to their very end the second cardinal direction, the third, the fourth, above, below, and straight ahead, encompassing the worlds in their entirety, monks, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.94 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to abide with a loving mind, which is free of hostility, enmity, and ill will, and which is lofty, expansive, nonjudgmental, immeasurable, and well developed, focused on one cardinal direction, pervading it to its very end, and then extend this loving mind, which is free of hostility, enmity, and ill will, and which is lofty, expansive, nonjudgmental, immeasurable, and well developed, to pervade to their very end

the second cardinal direction, the third, the fourth, above, below, and straight ahead, encompassing the worlds in their entirety, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.95 “The mind suffused with compassion, joy, and equanimity can be elaborated in kind.

“Monks, should I wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of boundless space, in which I have transcended the perceptions of form in all respects, such that my perception of physical barriers has vanished, and, no longer bringing to mind the perceptions of diversity, I recognize this to be the sphere of boundless space, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.96 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of boundless space, in which he has transcended the perceptions of form in all respects, such that his perception of material barriers has vanished, and, no longer bringing to mind the perceptions of diversity, he recognizes this to be the sphere of boundless space, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.97 “Monks, should I wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of boundless consciousness, in which I have transcended the sphere of boundless space and recognize this to be the sphere of boundless consciousness, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.98 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of boundless consciousness, in which he has transcended the sphere of boundless space in all respect and recognizes this to be the sphere of boundless consciousness, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain

in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.99 “Monks, should I wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of nothing whatsoever, in which I have transcended the sphere of boundless consciousness in all respects and recognize this to be nothing whatsoever, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.100 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of nothing whatsoever, in which he has transcended the sphere of boundless consciousness in all respects and recognizes this to be nothing whatsoever, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.101 “Monks, should I wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception, in which I have transcended the sphere of nothing whatsoever in all respects, I could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.102 “Monks, should the monk Kāśyapa wish to abide in the perfected state of the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception, in which he has transcended the sphere of nothing whatsoever in all respects, the monk Kāśyapa too could remain in that state for a day, or a night, or a day and night, or even two, three, or seven such days.

6.103 “Monks, when I wish to do so, I can employ a vast array of miracles. With clear understanding and knowledge of how to materialize and dematerialize I become one and then become many, and having become many, I then become one. I pass directly through walls. I pass directly through enclosed spaces. Bodily I pass directly through mountains, unobstructed, just as if they were empty space. I dive into the earth like a seagull into water. I walk on water without sinking into it, just as if it were the

surface of the earth. I sit cross-legged in the sky like a bird. I hold and caress radiant beams like those of the sun and moon, those in miraculous displays, and those of feats of magic. I can physically control the worlds all the way up to Brahmāloka.

6.104 “Monks, when the monk Kāśyapa wishes to do so, he too can employ a vast array of miracles. With clear understanding and knowledge of how to materialize and dematerialize the monk Kāśyapa likewise becomes one and then becomes many, and having become many, he then becomes one. He passes directly through walls. He passes directly through enclosed spaces. Bodily he passes directly through mountains, unobstructed, just as if they were empty space. He dives into the earth like a seagull into water. He walks on water without sinking into it, just as if it were the surface of the earth. He sits cross-legged in the sky like a bird. He holds and caresses radiant beams like those of the sun and moon, those in miraculous displays, and those of feats of magic. He can physically control the worlds all the way up to Brahmāloka.

6.105 “Monks, with perfectly clear divine hearing, beyond that of normal humans, I hear the sounds of both humans and nonhumans, be they near or far.

“Monks, with perfectly clear divine hearing, beyond that of normal humans, the monk Kāśyapa too hears the sounds of both humans and nonhumans, be they near or far.

6.106 “Monks, I know the minds of other beings and other persons, with their initial consideration and subsequent analysis, exactly as they are. Lustful minds and minds free of lust I know in full, exactly as they are. Hateful minds and minds free of hatred; ignorant minds and minds free of ignorance; minds closed or radiant, dull or disciplined, wild or tame, lofty, tranquil, or turbulent, resting in equanimity or not resting so, cultivated or uncultivated; and those liberated, those not, those completely and

utterly liberated, and those not—all these I know in full, exactly as they are.

6.107 “Monks, the monk Kāśyapa also knows exactly the minds of other beings and other persons, with their initial consideration and subsequent analysis exactly as they are. Lustful minds and minds free of lust he knows in full, exactly as they are. Hateful minds and minds free of hatred; ignorant minds and minds free of ignorance; minds closed or radiant, dull or disciplined, wild or tame, lofty, tranquil, or turbulent, resting in equanimity or not resting so, cultivated or uncultivated; and those completely liberated, those not, those completely and utterly liberated, and those not—all these he knows in full, exactly as they are.

6.108 “Monks, I can recall many of my previous lives. I remember one life, or two, or three—four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty—or a hundred lives, a thousand lives, a hundred thousand lives, hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of lives, hundreds upon hundreds of millions of lives, an eon of dissolution, an eon of the formation of the universe, an eon of dissolution and formation, many eons of dissolution, many eons of formation, or many eons of dissolution and formation.

6.109 “I can remember my identity as all those beings: that I was born in such-and-such a place into this family and that clan, what kinds of food I ate, the happiness and suffering I experienced during my life, how long I was in each state of rebirth, the potential duration of each life, how long each life in fact lasted, that after I died I transmigrated and took rebirth in such-and-such a place, and that when I died from there and transmigrated, what type of rebirth I took. I can recall the many aspects of my previous states, including each aspect, their locations, and the reasons behind them.

6.110 “Monks, the monk Kāśyapa can also recall many of his previous lives. He remembers one life, or

two, or three—four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty—or a hundred lives, a thousand lives, a hundred thousand lives, hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of lives, hundreds upon hundreds of millions of lives, an eon of dissolution, an eon of the formation of the universe, an eon of dissolution and formation, many eons of dissolution, many eons of formation, or many eons of dissolution and formation.

6.111 “He can remember his identity as all those beings: that he was born in such-and-such a place into this family and that clan, what kinds of food he ate, the happiness and suffering he experienced during his life, how long he was in each state of rebirth, the potential duration of each life, how long each life in fact lasted, that after he died he transmigrated and took rebirth in such-and-such a place, and that when he died from there and transmigrated, what type of rebirth he took. He can recall the many aspects of his previous states, including each aspect, their locations, and the reasons behind them.

6.112 “Monks, with perfectly clear divine vision, beyond that of normal humans, I see how beings continue to die, transmigrate, and take birth; whether they will be of good appearance, bad appearance, or good and bad appearance; and if they will take happy births or fall to lower realms. Fully aware of their actions, I am fully aware of their destinations.

6.113 “I see that when they separate from their bodies at death—by cause and condition of adopting the wrong teachings and actions—those who comport themselves wrongly, those who speak wrongly, those who reflect wrongly, those who hurl insults at the noble ones, and those who hold wrong views will fall to lower realms and take rebirth as hell beings. And I see that when they separate from their bodies at death—by cause and condition of adopting the right teachings and actions—those who comport themselves rightly, those who speak

rightly, those who reflect rightly, those who refrain from hurling insults at the noble ones, and those who hold right views will travel to happy migrations and take rebirth among gods in the heavens.

6.114 “Monks, with perfectly clear divine vision, beyond that of normal humans, the monk Kāśyapa also sees how beings continue to die, transmigrate, and to take birth; whether they will be of good appearance, bad appearance, or good and bad appearance; and if they will take happy births or fall to lower realms. Fully aware of their actions, he is fully aware of their destinations.

6.115 “He sees that when they separate from their bodies at death—by cause and condition of adopting the wrong teachings and actions—those who comport themselves wrongly, those who speak wrongly, those who reflect wrongly, those who hurl insults at the noble ones, and those who hold wrong views will fall to lower realms and take rebirth as hell beings. And he sees that when they separate from their bodies at death—by cause and condition of adopting the right teachings and actions—those who comport themselves rightly, those who speak rightly, those who reflect rightly, those who refrain from hurling insults at the noble ones, and those who hold right views will travel to happy migrations and take rebirth among gods in the heavens.

6.116 “Monks, in this very life I have exhausted the outflows. My mind, thus free of outflows, has been liberated, wisdom has been liberated, and having directly realized and accomplished this through my own superknowledge, rebirth is extinguished for me. I have lived the holy life, I have done what was before me, and I understand that I shall know no other existence.

6.117 “Monks, in this very life the monk Kāśyapa has also exhausted the outflows. His mind, thus free of outflows, has been liberated, wisdom has been liberated, and having directly realized this though

his own superknowledge, rebirth is extinguished for him. He has lived the holy life, he has done what was before him, and he understands that he will know no other existence.”

6.118 As the Blessed One, there amid hundreds of disciples, affirmed Venerable Mahākāśyapa’s greatness as being like his own, he made him supreme guru of the entire world with its gods.

6.119 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why the Blessed One affirmed the vast greatness of Venerable Mahākāśyapa as being like his own, making him guru of all the entire world with its gods.”

6.120 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, when I venerated him, he became the guru of all of the many people living in this realm. Listen well!

6.121 “Monks, in times past, during King Brahmadata’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī, the kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. King Brahmadata did no harm, and he ruled the kingdom gently and mercifully, as a parent cares for a beloved only child.

6.122 “The king had as many as five hundred queens. Though they all enjoyed themselves and coupled, they had no children. Wishing for an heir he supplicated every possible deity, but despite his earnest supplications neither son nor daughter was born.

6.123 “The king had five hundred ministers, every one of them arrogant and imprudent. But his chief minister, whose name was Treasure, was capable, clear-minded, shrewd, disciplined, and prudent.

6.124 “King Brahmadata had a disagreement with a certain neighboring king, so he thought, ‘Which minister can I send to that neighboring country

who will be able to form a truce with its king and safeguard my country?’

6.125 “When the king pondered this, he saw that his chief minister Treasure was capable, clear-minded, shrewd, disciplined, and prudent. ‘He can form a truce with that king and safeguard my country,’ the king thought. The king appointed him to a post among the surrounding mountains and told him: ‘Go, stay there, and safeguard the country.’

6.126 “ ‘As you wish, Deva,’ he replied. He went out among the mountains, and there he stayed. After he got there and had assumed control of the neighboring territory, no harm befell the country at all.

6.127 “One day, after King Brahmadata had grown old, one of his wives conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

6.128 “They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. Once he was able to walk, the king thought, ‘I’m old now, and it will not be long before I die. After I pass away, this child will not be able to rule the kingdom. Who among my ministers can safeguard my child and my kingdom, then?’ He pondered and recognized that every one of his five hundred ministers was arrogant and imprudent, and he wondered, ‘Who else is there?’

6.129 “Upon examination he realized, ‘My chief minister Treasure is capable, clear-minded, shrewd, disciplined, and prudent. After I pass away he will be able to safeguard my child and my kingdom.’ And he thought, ‘If I offer him my respect, all the many inhabitants of my country will respect him in the same way.’ So he sent a messenger to him, saying, ‘I wish to meet with you. Come quickly.’

6.130 “As soon as he heard this, chief minister Treasure hurried to Vārāṇasī, where the king had the streets

and houses beautified to show his respect. The king arrayed the four divisions of his army and received chief minister Treasure in person. When he greeted Treasure, King Brahmadata descended from his elephant, and, beside himself with joy, put his arms around him. They rode a single mount, traveling to the city of Vārāṇasī in great opulence.

6.131 “After he bade him sit together with him on a single seat, their food was prepared together and they ate from a single plate. Then the king gave him a great mountain of wealth and said to him, ‘O Treasure, I am old now, and it will not be long before I die. After my death, the five hundred ministers will all think, “This child is king?” and they will come to revile him. After my death you will be able to safeguard my son and my kingdom. Therefore, I entrust my son and kingdom to you. Safeguard them after my death!’

“ ‘As you wish, Deva,’ replied the chief minister Treasure.

6.132 “One day King Brahmadata fell ill. Though he was treated with medicinal roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits, he could not be cured so he ceded the throne to the prince, entrusted both to the chief minister Treasure, and proclaimed that after his death, it was he who would safeguard his son and his kingdom.

6.133 “After the elder king died, the chief minister Treasure dispatched his retinue, summoned the five hundred ministers, and told them, ‘I say to all of you, it may be that the elder king has died, but you should not think there is no one to unify us. I shall grant each of you a portion of the country. We must make certain that this young king is not harmed by anyone.’

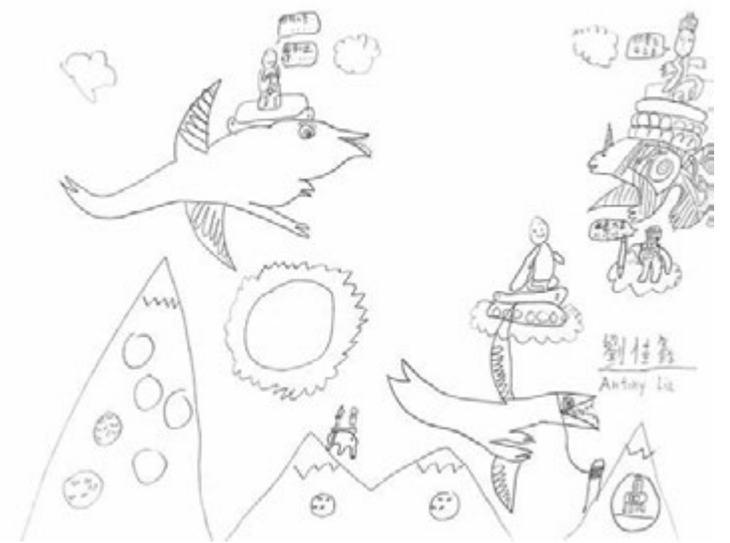
6.134 “He granted a portion of the country to each of the five hundred ministers, and safeguarded both the prince and his family. When the prince had grown, the chief minister Treasure told him, ‘Deva, your father, the king, entrusted you, Deva, and

the kingdom to me. After your father’s passing I safeguarded you, Deva, and the kingdom.’

6.135 “O monks, what do you think? It is none other than Kāśyapa who was the chief minister Treasure then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. At that time when I offered him my respect, he became the guru of all the many people who lived in this country. Now as well I have offered him my respect, and when I affirmed his vast greatness as being like my own, he became guru of all the world.”

THE END

Next: *A Story about Ānanda*



Part Six (5)

A Story about
Ānanda

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཅུ་བཤེན།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 A Story about Ānanda

6.136 After Venerable Ānanda had gone forth, he learned all 84,000 divisions of the Dharma, and the Blessed One commended him as foremost among keepers and compilers of the teachings. The Blessed One also commended Mahākāśyapa's vast greatness as being like his own. Thereupon they both became gurus of the entire world with its gods.

6.137 The Blessed One thought, "After my parinirvāṇa, these two monks will be able to fulfill the purpose of my teachings. One will be able to safeguard the treasury of teachings, and the other will be able to recount my doctrine." Having reflected thus, the Blessed One traveled to the city of Kuśinagarī.

6.138 When the Blessed One was passing into parinirvāṇa he thought, "If I pass my doctrine on to only human beings and don't pass it on to any nonhuman beings, it will not remain for long; and if I pass it on to only nonhuman beings, and do not pass it on to any human beings, then it also will not remain for long. So I will pass on my doctrine to gods and humans, and to both these monks as well, for then its keepers will be gods and human beings alike. Then, kept by gods, humans, and both these monks as well, the doctrine will remain for a long time."

6.139 Having reflected thus, the Blessed One said to Venerable Mahākāśyapa, "Kāśyapa, after I pass into parinirvāṇa, you must not pass into parinirvāṇa

until you have carried on my doctrine and perfectly recounted the Tripiṭaka, and the monk Ānanda has cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship."

6.140 Then the Blessed One spoke to Venerable Ānanda, saying, "Ānanda, do not pass into parinirvāṇa until the sage Mādhyandina has gone forth. Then you must tell him, 'You must not pass into parinirvāṇa until you have tamed the nāga king Hulluru, founded the kingdom of Kashmir, and established the doctrine there. As it flourishes there the householder Śāṇavāsa will go forth. You must not pass into parinirvāṇa until he has cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship, and you have passed on to him all that you have heard.'

6.141 "Then Mādhyandina must tell Śāṇavāsa, 'You must not pass into parinirvāṇa until you have tamed the two nāga kings Naṭa and Vīra, and they have established the hermitages of Naṭa and Vīra. There shall be a perfume merchant named Gupta in Mathurā, and he will have a son named Upagupta. You must not pass into parinirvāṇa until he goes forth, casts away all afflictive emotions, manifests arhatship, and you have passed on to him all that you have heard.'

6.142 "Then Śāṇavāsa must tell Upagupta, 'You must not pass into parinirvāṇa until noble Dhītika has gone forth, manifested arhatship, and you have passed on to him all that you have heard.'

"Upagupta must tell Dhītika, 'You must not pass into parinirvāṇa until you decide to consume poisoned food in Pāṭaliputra.' "

Venerable Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda rose, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and said, "As you wish, Blessed One."

6.143 The Blessed One spoke to Venerable Mahākāśyapa, saying, "Kāśyapa, go now and lead the saṅgha of ordinary beings to wander the

country. Let there be no disagreement among you prior to my parinirvāṇa.”

“As you wish, Lord,” he replied, and Venerable Mahākāśyapa went and led the saṅgha of ordinary beings to wander the country.

6.144 Not long after Venerable Mahākāśyapa had left, the Blessed One had a thought about the world: “It would be good if Śakra, King of the Gods, and the four great kings—Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Virūpākṣa, Virūḍhaka, and Vaiśravaṇa—would come to see me.” So the Blessed One performed a miracle that caused Śakra, King of the Gods, and the four great kings to disappear from among the gods and appear instantly seated before the Blessed One. They scattered divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers over the Blessed One, and again sat down before him.

6.145 “Lords,” the Blessed One said to Śakra, King of the Gods, and the four great kings, “before long the Tathāgata will pass into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. After my parinirvāṇa, may you safeguard my doctrine.

6.146 “Lords, in a thousand years, when the doctrine has begun to decline, when injustice prevails in the world and the path of the ten virtuous actions has lost all its strength, Jambudvīpa will be filled with an ill wind. With the arrival of this ill wind, rain will cease to fall. When the rain ceases to fall, all the rivers and wells will have but little water in them. The trees will neither flower nor bear fruit, the harvests and fruits will lack any vitality, and they will also be devastated by hail. The grain too will be ruined, and there will be famine. When the famine occurs, human beings will be forced to eat wild millet. They will have little strength and their life force will diminish.

6.147 “Śakas, Yavanas, Bāhlikas, kings, and brigands will harm the living. After the Śakas, Yavanas, Bāhlikas, kings, and brigands have done their harm, they will also seize the Tathāgata’s crown

protrusion, eye teeth, alms bowl, stūpas, and such, and take them east. After that a king of the barbaric outlying regions named Śaka will come from the south with a suite of a hundred thousand attendants, raze the monasteries of the saṅgha, tear down the stūpas, and slay the monks.

6.148 “A king of the barbaric outlying regions named Bāhlika will come from the west with a suite of a hundred thousand attendants, raze the monasteries of the saṅgha, tear down the stūpas, and slay the monks.

6.149 “A king of the barbaric outlying regions named Yavana will come from the north with a suite of a hundred thousand attendants, raze the monasteries of the saṅgha, tear down the stūpas, and slay the monks. Because of all this, the people and the robbers will blame and harm one another, and the monks will wish to travel east.

6.150 “Lords, at that time a king named Mahendrasena will rule in Kauśāmbī with a suite of a hundred thousand attendants. When his son is born, he will be wearing armor on his body, have blood on his hands, and be tremendously strong. On the same day, sons will also be born to the king’s five hundred ministers who are wearing armor, have blood on their hands, and are tremendously strong.

6.151 “On that day a rain of blood will fall on Kauśāmbī. When the king consults the soothsayers, they will issue a prophecy saying, ‘Deva, he will become the sole sovereign over the whole world, but he will slaughter many beings.’

6.152 “At the elaborate feast celebrating the birth of the king’s son, they will name him, saying, ‘Since he is infamous and overwhelming, his name will be Duṣprasaha.’ As he grows up, the kings of the barbaric outlying regions will slaughter many people over twelve years and then travel east. When King Mahendrasena hears of it, he will become fearful and unhappy, and the gods will advise him, ‘Let young Duṣprasaha be king, and he will defeat

the kings of the barbaric outlying regions once and for all.’

6.153 “Thereupon King Mahendrasena will remove the crown and diadem from his head and grant them to young Duṣprasaha, at which point King Duṣprasaha will appoint the sons of Mahendrasena’s five hundred ministers as his chief ministers. He and his five hundred ministers will don their armor and he will lead them into battle against the kings of the barbaric outlying lands.

6.154 “They will slaughter the three kings of the barbaric outlying lands along with the hundreds upon hundreds of thousands in their retinue, and he shall become the sole sovereign over the whole world. He shall bring them under his command and then return to Kauśāmbī.

6.155 “Lords, at that time in Pāṭaliputra there will appear a brahmin called Agnidatta, a master of the Vedas and the supplements to the Vedas. When the time comes for him to marry, he will take a wife, they will enjoy themselves and couple, and a being will enter his wife’s womb. Then his wife the brahmiṇī will begin to think things like, ‘Wouldn’t it be good to converse with those who debate the scriptures!’

6.156 “The brahmin will consult the soothsayers and the soothsayers will say, ‘The being in her womb will understand all the treatises and confound those who debate the scriptures. It is on account of that being that the brahmiṇī has such fervent wishes and thinks, “Wouldn’t it be good to converse with those who debate the scriptures!”’

6.157 “After nine or ten months have passed, she will give birth to a child who is well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. When he is grown, he will master all the treatises and confound those who debate the scriptures. He will act as a master of disciples of the brahmin mantras for five hundred brahmins. He will have many disciples, and therefore he will be called Śiṣyaka.

6.158 “Then he will ask for his parents’ permission, go forth in my very doctrine, be educated in the Tripiṭaka, become a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of wisdom and freedom, and gather around himself a great retinue.

6.159 “Lords, at the same time, in Pāṭaliputra a trader called Sudhana will appear. When the time comes for him to marry, he will take a wife, they will enjoy themselves and couple, and a being in its final existence will enter his wife’s womb. The woman will become patient, gentle, peaceable, and calm.

6.160 “When the trader Sudhana consults the soothsayers, they will reply, ‘The being who has entered her womb will be gentle. It is on account of that being that your wife has become patient, gentle, peaceable, and calm.’ After nine or ten months have passed, she will give birth to a child who is well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. They will name him Sūrata.

6.161 “When he is grown, he will ask for his parents’ permission to go forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. He will have little learning and few desires, be known by all, and make his home in a remote place.

“One day King Duṣprasaha’s father Mahendrasena will die. King Duṣprasaha will take his remains in his hands and cradle them in his lap, grieving and suffering, wailing and lamenting, and there will be no one able to dispel his sorrow.

6.162 “Soon thereafter the elder Śiṣyaka and hundreds of his disciples will travel to Kauśāmbī, where he will go before King Duṣprasaha and teach him the Dharma. Hearing it will clear away the king’s sorrows, and he will find faith in the doctrine. Now faithful, he will give the gift of protection to the monks. He will say to the monks, ‘How many years has it been since the Blessed One’s doctrine was destroyed by the kings of the barbaric outlying regions?’ And they will reply, ‘Twelve years.’ Then he will proclaim with a lion’s roar, ‘For twelve

years I shall hold a Festival of the Fifth Year of the Doctrine of the Blessed One in Kauśāmbī.’

6.163 “When the king inaugurates the Festival of the Fifth Year in Kauśāmbī, on the very day it commences rain will begin to fall, and people the world over will be sated with water, all the way to the ocean’s edge. The many inhabitants of Jambudvīpa will come to Kauśāmbī specifically to celebrate the Festival of the Fifth Year.

6.164 “Monks will put all their efforts into working for offerings. They will be fixated on worldly profit and high acclaim. They will indulge themselves on donations given in faith. They will not receive instruction, and neither read nor recite. They will pass their days in gossip and their nights in sloth and slumber. They will crave money and acclaim. They will be obsessed with physical hygiene and pour their efforts into their attire. They will have neither renunciation, tranquility, solitude, nor perfect enlightenment. The only thing dear to them will be their outfits.

6.165 “Lacking the great virtues of the holy ascetics, and acting as enemies to the holy Dharma and friends with this time of strife, they will lay down the banner of the Dharma and hoist the banner of Māra, snuff out the flame of Dharma and ignite the flame of afflictive emotions, cleave the Dharma drum, grind the wheel of holy Dharma down to dust, let dry up the ocean of holy Dharma, level the mountain of holy Dharma, raze the city of Dharma to the ground, rip out the Dharma tree by its roots, cast aside calm abiding meditation and insight meditation, snip off the adornments of their morality, and repudiate the path.

6.166 “Then the gods, nāgas, and yakṣas shall curse, desert, and defeat them, saying, ‘It isn’t right that these lowest of beings spoil the excellent speech of the Blessed One.’ And they will also say:

6.167 “ ‘These wretched persons, engulfed in wrong

views,

Whose sorry misdeeds know no bounds,
In their benighted state have felled the Blessed One’s teaching,
The fruit-bearing tree, and now it’s gone.

6.168 “ ‘The heartless tossed out the Dharma way.
The true Dharma they have cast away. In greed,
They tore the Dharma banner, the Blessed One’s teaching,
Left it on the ground, and now it’s gone.

6.169 “ ‘These countless restive, wicked persons
In the thrall of sin, these evil ones,
Destroyed that bridge, the Sage’s teaching,
And now it’s gone.

6.170 “ ‘These ignoble persons with shaven heads,
Lax in conduct, whose lives are a ploy,
Dishonest folk, have destroyed that market,
The Sage’s teaching, and now it’s gone.

6.171 “ ‘Anger, pride, and arrogance
Like foul spirits possess them.
Fond of money, inhumane—other than evil,
They’ve done nothing at all.

6.172 “ ‘Now is the time that the holy Dharma is razed.
The signs, they tell an awful tale.
The virtuous are filled with grief;
The teacher, he saw it all.

6.173 “ ‘All of what the perfect sage predicted,
Everything has come to pass—
A trifling remnant of the Sage’s teaching
Remained, and now it’s gone.

6.174 “ ‘The ocean of the Sage’s teaching
Will be a wasteland before long.
The wanton, with their vulgar wisdom,

Through negligence have done their harm.

6.175 “ ‘They don’t know how to serve the just.
They cling to faults and abandon good.
Like children, fearful when alone,
They are never in solitude, ever unaware.

6.176 “ ‘These deluded persons, trailing after
Nasty masters who were poorly trained,
Convinced of what is totally wrong,
Have spoiled the Dharma, and now it’s gone.

6.177 “After they speak these words, in bitter
disappointment never again will the gods, nāgas,
and yakṣas look after the monks or shelter them.
With the holy Dharma due to vanish in seven
days’ time, the gods will be unhappy and hover in
the sky, crying out this pronouncement: ‘Friends,
seven days from now, when the time comes for the
poṣadha purification ceremony, the holy Dharma
of the Tathāgata will vanish because of a dispute.’

6.178 “Upon hearing this, five hundred lay vow holders
of Kauśāmbī will go to the monastery to pacify all
the monks’ fighting, faultfinding, quarrels, and
disputes, protesting, ‘Alas! The Buddha’s doctrine
will vanish soon because of a dispute.’ And they
will also say:

6.179 “ ‘The Śākya lion’s teaching
That gladdened every being
Very soon will be destroyed,
Crushed beneath the wheel of time.

6.180 “ ‘Many a thousand hearts are broken.
Even the greatest, made of iron—done.
The peaceful times are now long past.
A dreadful time has come. It’s gone.

6.181 “ ‘The wise of the world
Have dwindled to none.

All the signs upon earth,
Whatever forms they take, concur:

6.182 “ ‘It’s certain that the doctrine
Will fall to ruin before long.
Think well, those who wish for happiness,
What could be of benefit.

6.183 “ ‘Know it now, think well on this—
That the true Dharma is vanishing.
Where before there was boundless worship
Now a mere measure remains.

6.184 “Thus the five hundred lay vow holders will come to
reflect, ‘Common enjoyments are meaningless. We
should do something more meaningful.’ And so, on
the very day when the holy Dharma is to disappear,
the group of five hundred lay vow holders will
provide support for five hundred monasteries. But
when it comes time for poṣadha, the five hundred
lay vow holders will be occupied and will not be
able to go to the monastery.

6.185 “Meanwhile the monk Sūrata, living upon
Gandhamādana Mountain, will wonder, ‘Where
should I go to convene for poṣadha?’ When he
looks out toward Jambudvīpa, seeing all the Blessed
One’s disciples converging upon Kauśāmbī, he will
wish to travel to Kauśāmbī for poṣadha. Among the
hundred thousand monks assembled for poṣadha,
there will be but a single arhat, the one called
Sūrata, and there will be but a single Tripiṭaka
master, the one called Śiṣyaka.

6.186 “Lords, that will be the final gathering of the
Tathāgata’s disciples. One hundred thousand
monks will be there. Then the monk in charge of
implements will distribute tally sticks among the
saṅgha of monks and say to the elder monk Śiṣyaka,
‘Elder brother, now that the saṅgha of monks has
convened, we ask you, please recite the *Prātimokṣa*
Sūtra.’

6.187 “Śiṣyaka will reply, ‘All the Blessed One’s disciples in Jambudvīpa have come here. There are a hundred thousand monks here, and I am the most senior among the entire saṅgha and have completed my study, so if I do not instruct them in the precepts, no one else will instruct them in the precepts. I wonder, for whose sake should I recite the prātimokṣa, then?’ And he will also say:

6.188 “Now, upon the fifteenth night,
As the constellations all align,
Those monks whose aim is the poṣadha rite
Are sitting heedful in their seats.

6.189 “All of the Śākya’s offspring
Who dwell in Jambudvīpa
Have come to this place.
This will be their final convocation.

6.190 “Among the saṅgha of monks,
Only I have completed my studies,
So if even I am not able to give the precepts,
Of course no other person can.

“So if there are some here
Well trained in the precepts
Taught by the Lord of Sages, the wise Śākya lion,
Please express your qualifications.’

6.191 “Then the arhat Sūrata will rise from his seat before the row master, bow toward the saṅgha with palms pressed together, and bid elder monk Śiṣyaka, ‘Elder brother, please recite the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra*. For in the same way that the great disciples—Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, and the rest—maintained their precepts perfectly while the Blessed One dwelt among us, I likewise have maintained the doctrine perfectly, some thousand years after the Blessed Buddha passed into parinirvāṇa.’”

6.192 The Blessed One continued:

“Having listened to the words
Spoken by the elder monk,
Then Sūrata, the Sugata’s heir,
Will speak with a lion’s roar:

6.193 “I have borne the precepts of the Sage,
Never wavering.
With precision I have learned the precepts
of the Teacher’s monastic discipline.’”

6.194 “Thereupon Śiṣyaka’s fearsome disciple Aṅgada
will rise to his feet and say, ‘You’re but a newcomer,
and one of little learning! How can you speak such
nonsense to our preceptor?’ And he will take up a
sharp sword to slay the arhat Sūrata.”

6.195 The Blessed One continued:

“Śiṣyaka’s disciple
Aṅgada, so frightening,
Will slay the arhat Sūrata,
The Sugata’s very heir.

6.196 “Then a yakṣa called Dadhimukha will come there
and think, ‘This wicked man has killed the one
arhat that was here!’ He will light his vajra scepter
on fire and it will burn all over, covered in flames.
Wielding nothing but a single, searing flame, he
will bludgeon the monk Aṅgada’s head, and split it
into seven pieces.”

The Blessed One continued:

6.197 “Then the yakṣa Dadhimukha
Will wield a blazing scepter
And split wicked Aṅgada’s head
Into seven pieces.

6.198 “The disciples of the arhat Sūrata will rise from
their seats, and they will murder the Tripiṭaka
master Śiṣyaka, and after the murder of the arhat
Sūrata and the Tripiṭaka master Śiṣyaka, the

Tathāgata's holy Dharma will disappear.

6.199 “When the holy Dharma disappears, the earth will quake, a meteor will strike, and the thundering of a celestial drum will resound from the heavens. Comets will fall from the four directions, and some hundred thousand gods will cry out in unbearable compassion, wailing and lamenting, ‘What misery! The holy Dharma the Tathāgata cultivated for over three countless eons is no more!’ ”

6.200 The Blessed One continued:

“In the very instant
The monk Sūrata is slain,
The entire surface of the earth
Will quake six different ways.

6.201 “When the holy Dharma
Of the Great Sage vanishes,
A great many beings, overcome by suffering,
Will perish then.

6.202 “Yakṣas who once beheld the Buddha
And who love the Victor's teaching,
Will fall face-down upon the ground,
Crying in lamentation, suffering.

6.203 “From this time forth, in all the world
The holy Dharma will be no more.
Vinaya and prātimokṣa
Will not be practiced any more.

6.204 “The Dharma bridge, swept away.
The stream of Dharma, stopped.
What was an ocean, only sand.
The Dharma mountaintop, removed. It will be gone.

6.205 “The Dharma sacrifice will draw to a close.
The Dharma sacrificial pillar, felled. It will be gone.
The Dharma's base will break. It will be gone.

The vows shall be no more. They will be gone.

6.206 “The Dharma lamp will be snuffed out.
The Dharma wheel will halt. It will be gone.
The door to deathlessness will be shut. It will be gone.
The Dharma preachers will die off. They will be gone.

6.207 “The remonstrators of the righteous way,
Those superb persons will be destroyed. They will be gone.
Not long from now, human vision
Will be like that of beasts.

6.208 “Thereupon Mahāmāyādevī will descend from her home in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, and cry out in unbearable compassion, wailing and lamenting, ‘What misery! The holy Dharma my son cultivated for over three countless eons has now vanished because of a dispute and is no more!’ And she will also say:

6.209 “ ‘Alas! Virtuous Sūrata,
The Buddha's youngest heir,
Was killed in a fit of hatred
By jealous Aṅgada.

6.210 “ ‘The Buddha's mother, great Māyādevī,
So disciplined in manner,
Speaks out of pity and sadness,
For the holy Dharma is gone.

6.211 “ ‘Alas! The doctrine supreme among
Gods and humans is destroyed, it's gone.
The Tripiṭaka master Śiṣyaka,
And the monk Sūrata both were killed.

6.212 “ ‘Thus today the moon fell from the sky,
And the sun has left and gone.

The sun of the teachings is no more—
Now the world is plunged in gloom.

- 6.213 “The pure disk of the moon
Lies in the clutches of Rāhu.
A murk, thick and terror-filled,
Engulfs the whole world now.
- 6.214 “Today the boat of Dharma,
Sailing to the port of nirvāṇa,
Was wrecked by Aṅgada
And other heartless fools. It’s gone.
- 6.215 “It is gone without a trace—
In its place is irreligion.
The māras’ victory call
Resounds through Māra’s horde.
- 6.216 “Now, on the very hill in Videha
Where once thundered the lion’s roar,
Śakra and his suite of servants
Are shot through with pain and sorrow.
- 6.217 “Today the world, even Brahmāloka,
Is defenseless and in despair.
Māra and his horde run rampant,
Arrogant and unopposed.
- 6.218 “The Teacher pointed out
The way to liberation, and, at the end, he entered
nirvāṇa.
The Sage’s wings of awakening
And paths to liberation are cut. They’re gone.
- 6.219 “Those who bathed in its waters,
Kauṇḍinya and the rest, once were cured and
perfected.
But today the pool of the Dharma, where the
flowers
Of the factors of awakening bloomed, has run dry.

- 6.220 “The assembly of the doctrine—where did it go?
The doctrine holders—where have they gone?
There is no more joy in Jambudvīpa,
And we despair from seeing this today.
- 6.221 “The Buddha’s children, finely trained,
Born of the Dharma King’s speech,
Fixed the rudder and abandoned affliction.
These eloquent tigers—where have they gone?
- 6.222 “In every world, the Lord’s children,
Who held up the Buddha’s central pillar,
Have left the rubbish heaps, ravines,
And forests. Where have they gone?
- 6.223 “Ever since they went away,
Like the moon in Rāhu’s clutches,
The hermitages have no allure.
They’re devoid of any appeal.
- 6.224 “Trained in knowledge and mores,
Adorned with jewels of faith,
Patient and kind,
Winnowing the ill from good,
- 6.225 “The supremely intelligent ones,
The beings who adorned this land
With its monasteries, groves,
And stūpas—all are gone.
- 6.226 “Seeing that the world has lost its guide,
In abject suffering and out of pity,
The gods and other divine beings
Wander, lament, and weep.’
- 6.227 “When they hear this, the five hundred lay
vow holders in Kauśāmbī will emerge from the
monastery, throw up their hands, and lament,
‘The holy Dharma the Tathāgata cultivated for
over three countless eons has now vanished into

contention and is no more! And they will say:

- 6.228 “Who among the ineloquent persons
Of this fearful world
Could preach the holy Dharma?
Who could transcend sorrow?
- 6.229 “Light is shrouded in gloom.
The deluded wander about,
Bereft of the Sage’s teachings,
Virtuous deeds cast aside.
- 6.230 “Lacking sorrow for saṃsāra, they behave like
beasts—
Nonvirtue is their constant Dharma.’
- 6.231 “When the king of Kauśāmbī hears that the arhat
Sūrata and the Tripiṭaka master Śiṣyaka have been
killed, in a fit of rage and fury he will attack the
teachings, destroying the temples of the saṅgha,
demolishing the stūpas, and slaying all the monks.
- 6.232 “Lords, in the future you must band together to
protect the teachings wherever they incur harm.”
“We shall,” they said.
- 6.233 “Lord,” the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra declared, “I
shall protect the teachings in the east.”
“Lord,” Virūḍhaka declared, “I shall protect the
teachings in the south.”
“Lord,” Virūpākṣa declared, “I shall protect the
teachings in the west.”
- 6.234 “Lord,” Vaiśravaṇa declared, “I shall protect the
teachings in the north.”
“Lord,” Śakra, King of the Gods, declared, “I
shall protect the teachings in all directions.”
Having spoken thus, Śakra, King of the Gods,
and the four great kings praised the words of the
Blessed One, rejoiced, touched their heads to the
Blessed One’s feet, and disappeared on the spot.
- 6.235 After the Blessed One had handed the doctrine
to Venerable Mahākāśyapa and Venerable Ānanda,

the monks said to the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, you
have seen that after the Blessed One hands the
doctrine to the monk Kāśyapa, and the treasury
of teachings to the monk Ānanda, and passes into
parinirvāṇa, the two will propagate the doctrine.”

- 6.236 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but
in times past as well, and in the same way, I handed
my country and the four divisions of my army to
the monk Kāśyapa, and to Ānanda I handed the
treasury of my wealth. By safeguarding them after
my death, the two made my royal palace flourish.
Listen well!
- 6.237 “Monks, in times gone by, when King Mahādeva
reigned in the city of Mithilā, one day his
wife conceived. After nine or ten months had
passed, she gave birth to a child who was well
proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.
At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they
named him according to their clan. They reared
him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids,
and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.
- 6.238 “Soon after, the king fell ill. Though he was
treated with medicinal roots, stems, leaves, flowers,
and fruits, he could not be cured. The king thought,
‘I shall die from this illness, and my son is still very
small. After my death, everyone will think, “This
child is king?” and they will come to revile him.
Who could be powerful enough to maintain the
royal palace after I die and pass on?’
- 6.239 “Now the king had two wise chief ministers,
capable, clear-minded, trustworthy, shrewd,
disciplined, and prudent. Their names were Nanda
and Upananda. King Mahādeva thought, ‘After I
die and pass on, Nanda and Upananda will be able
to safeguard the royal palace.’ With this thought,
he summoned both ministers by messenger and
then instructed them, ‘The two of you should know
that soon I shall be no more. You two will be able
to care for the royal palace after I die and pass on.’
The king handed one of them the prince and the

royal treasury, and the other the country and the four divisions of the royal army, instructing them, ‘After my passing the two of you must protect the royal palace and ensure that it prospers.’

6.240 “Then the king ceded the throne to the prince and passed away. After his passing, the two ministers divided his affairs: one would safeguard the prince and the royal treasury, and the other would safeguard the kingdom and the four divisions of the army.

“When the prince had come into his own and grown strong, one of the two ministers offered him the wealth and the treasury, and the other offered him the country and the four divisions of the army, saying, ‘Deva, this wealth was your father’s. May you therefore rule righteously as king!’

6.241 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that aged king, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who safeguarded the four divisions of the army and the country then is none other than the monk Kāśyapa. The one who safeguarded the prince and the royal treasury then is none other than Ānanda. The one who was the prince then is none other than Śāṇavāsa. At that time, I handed the prince and my royal treasury to one younger than myself, and to another younger than myself I likewise handed my country and the four divisions of my army.

6.242 “At that time, after I died and passed on, they likewise cared for the royal palace and made it prosperous. Now, as I am once again nearing the end, I have handed to one the treasury of teachings, and to the other I have handed the doctrine; after my parinirvāṇa, they will make the doctrine known.

6.243 “Furthermore, regarding the monks Ānanda and Kāśyapa, one prayed, ‘May I become supreme among the learned. After the Blessed One’s parinirvāṇa, may I make known the treasury of teachings,’ while the other prayed, ‘After the Śākya sage, foremost King of the Śākyas, passes into

parinirvāṇa, may I fulfill the aim of his doctrine.’ ”

“Lord, where did they make these prayers?” the monks inquired.

6.244 “Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, the monk Ānanda went forth in his teaching, and the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended the one who had led Ānanda to go forth as foremost among keepers of the teachings.

6.245 “At that time he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship. Just as the Buddha Kāśyapa commended my preceptor as foremost among keepers of the teachings, may the Śākya sage, the most excellent King of the Śākyas, likewise commend me as foremost among keepers of the teachings. After his parinirvāṇa may I make known the treasury of his teachings.’

6.246 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that monk then is none other than Ānanda himself. At that time he prayed thus, and so it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; that I have commended him as foremost among keepers of the teachings; and that after my

parinirvāṇa, he will make the teachings known.

6.247 “Monks, the monk Kāśyapa also went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended the one who had led him to go forth as foremost among those possessing the ascetic practices.

6.248 “At that time he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone, may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended my preceptor as foremost among those possessing the ascetic practices, may the Śākya sage, the most excellent King of the Śākyas, likewise commend me as foremost among those possessing the ascetic practices.’

6.249 “When he died and transmigrated, he took rebirth in the city of Vārāṇasī in the family of a chief minister. After his birth, when he had grown, King Kṛkī made him one of his ministers. When the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa had carried out all the activities of a buddha and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder, King Kṛkī venerated his relics and commissioned a jewel stūpa that was one league in circumference, for which the king appointed as overseer the minister’s son.

6.250 “One day, when King Kṛkī had completed every aspect of the stūpa, he wished to inaugurate the traditional festival of the stūpa, so he prepared a large quantity of food, drink, and robes, and extended an invitation to the monks. When

seven days had gone by since the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa passed into parinirvāṇa, the doctrine disappeared. After his parinirvāṇa, those monks who had achieved spiritual power also entered parinirvāṇa. Those who were ordinary persons returned to home life. As a result, those who had extended the invitations could not find a single monk.

6.251 “ ‘Where have all the monks gone?’ asked King Kṛkī.

“ ‘Now that seven days have passed since the totally and completely awakened Buddha has passed into parinirvāṇa, the doctrine has disappeared,’ the ministers replied.

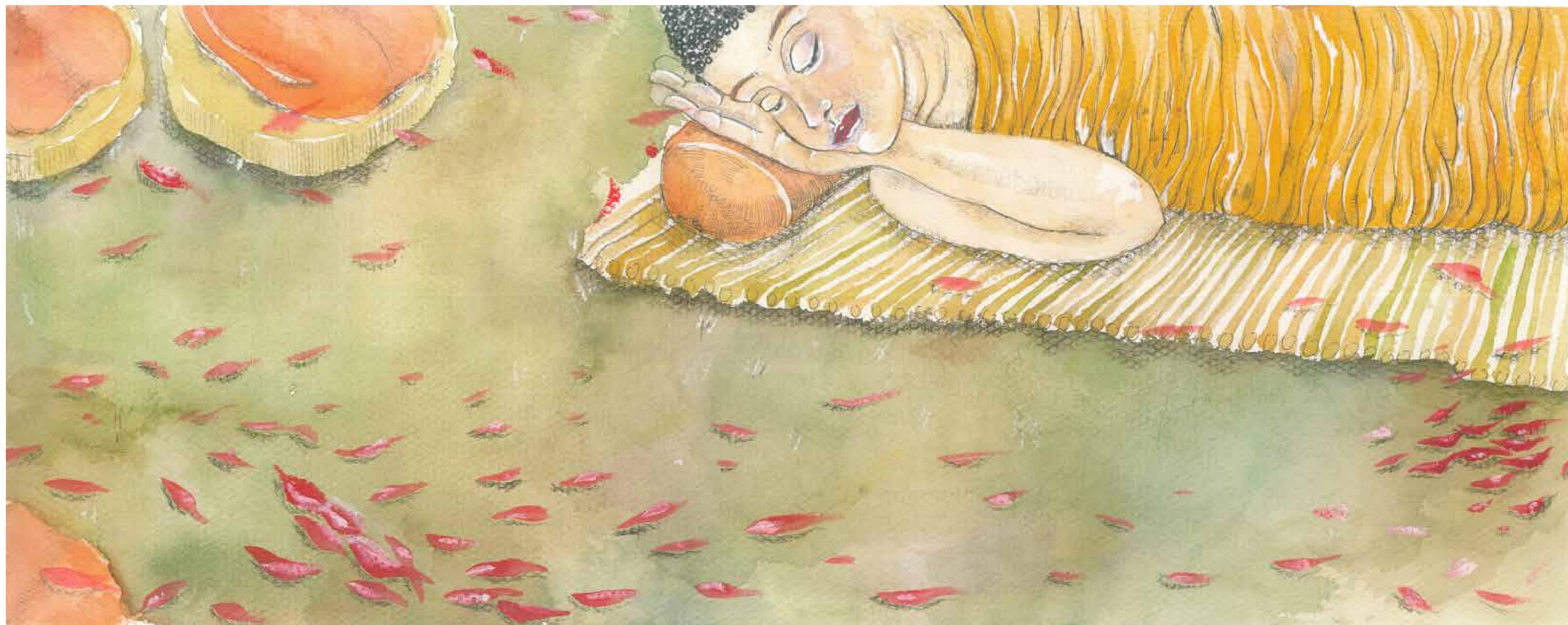
“ ‘Is there not a single monk who can act as keeper of the doctrine?’ the king asked. And with that, King Kṛkī venerated the stūpa and departed.

6.252 “Thereupon the minister’s son also venerated the stūpa and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. After his parinirvāṇa may I also become a keeper of the doctrine.’

6.253 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the minister’s son then is none other than the monk Kāśyapa. It was at that time that he made this prayer.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Son of Grasping*



Part Six (6)

The Story of Son of
Grasping

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཏུང་།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Story of Son of Grasping

6.254 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, there lived certain great brahmin named Grasping. In the village of Nālada there lived another brahmin named Tīṣya. The two were dear friends.

6.255 As the brahmin Tīṣya and his wife enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth, they named him Śāriputra Upaṭiṣya.

6.256 Then one day the brahmin Grasping's wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, "What name should we give this child?" And they named him, saying, "Since this is the great, high brahmin Grasping's child, his name will be Son of Grasping." They reared young Son of Grasping on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids.

6.257 When the brahmins' sons had grown, they were sent to school. Both perfected the study of letters and became educated in all the scriptures. When Śāriputra Upaṭiṣya was sixteen years of age, being educated in the Aindra school of Sanskrit grammar, he used the scriptures to defeat all his opponents in debate.

6.258 One day he went to live in a forest devoted to austerities. He went forth and lived among the mendicant monks known as the parivrājaka. When the Buddha came to the world, the brahmins Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana both went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. The Blessed One commended the former as foremost among those of profound wisdom and the latter as foremost among those with miraculous powers.

6.259 The young brahmin Son of Grasping became a hero in the king's court. He constantly visited the royal palace, and because he was a wise person, King Bimbisāra appointed him chief minister and awarded him a great salary, since worldly people wish for wealth.

The time came for him to marry, so he took a wife and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. He increased the wealth of their household and kept it all. He accepted money from the brahmins and householders in Rājagṛha on behalf of the king, and he accepted money from the king on behalf of the brahmins and householders.

6.260 One day, Śāriputra saw the time had come to tame Son of Grasping. In the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went to the place where Son of Grasping's house stood. At that time, the brahmin Son of Grasping was seated beneath a mālaka tree, carrying out his cow-milking duties. Son of Grasping saw Venerable Śāriputra in the distance and went to where Venerable Śāriputra stood. He embraced Venerable Śāriputra, led him to the house, and insisted he sit on the seat that he had now prepared for him.

6.261 "Śāriputra, as you take your meal, please drink some milk as well."

"Just your happiness at seeing me is enough for me," replied Śāriputra.

"Śāriputra, you traveled such a long way to my

house. Why is it you won't take even a little food?" Son of Grasping asked.

"Son of Grasping, I do this because you are becoming increasingly immoral," replied Śāriputra. "On behalf of the king you accept money from the brahmins and householders, and on behalf of the brahmins and householders you accept money from the king."

6.262 "Śāriputra," said Son of Grasping, "I am a layman. As a landowner I have to provide for myself, my parents, my children, my spouse, my servants both male and female, and the workers and others to whom I pay wages, as well as those near and dear to me and my aged relatives. I have to keep all of them happy and content. I also have to rely on the king for land. I have to propitiate the deities, put out offerings for the ancestors, and provide food for the ascetics and brahmins. If I do only as the law specifies, I am not able to easily acquire wealth."

"Well then, Son of Grasping," Śāriputra replied, "I have a question for you. Just answer as best you can."

6.263 "Take a certain person who practices unrighteousness and acts immorally for the sake of his parents. When that person, who practiced unrighteousness and acted so immorally, separates from his body after death and falls to lower states, takes rebirth as a hell being, and is seized by the guardians of hell and made to undergo dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony—when that person says, 'Please, guardians of hell, do not harm me in such-and-such ways! Why not, you ask? It was for the sake of my parents, you see, that I practiced unrighteousness and acted so immorally, and that upon separating from my body after death I fell to lower states and took rebirth among the hell beings'—Son of Grasping, what do you think? Will that person get what he wants from the guardians of hell?"

"No, Śāriputra, he will not," replied Son of

Grasping.

6.264 "Son of Grasping," continued Śāriputra, "there are faithful, noble children who have attained material comfort on account of good karma and a devout life, and who are perfectly content in the service of their parents, going from time to time to offer their genuine respect and gracious assistance. They do not carry out even the smallest nonvirtuous action but embrace the meritorious path and abide by that."

6.265 "Their parents think, 'This noble child is so faithful and capable, and thus able to suitably provide for us. This noble child has attained material comfort on account of good karma and a devout life, and is also perfectly content in our service, coming from time to time to offer genuine respect and gracious assistance. This noble child carries out not even the smallest nonvirtuous action but has embraced the meritorious path and abides by that.' Such noble children who wholeheartedly love their parents in return should expect their virtuous deeds to only increase, and never wane."

6.266 "But, Son of Grasping, take a certain person who practices unrighteousness and acts immorally for the sake of his parents, children, spouse, servants both male and female, and the workers and others to whom he pays wages, as well as for those near and dear to him, his aged relatives, the king, the deities, the ascetics, and brahmins."

6.267 "When that person, who practiced unrighteousness and acted so immorally, separates from his body after death and falls to lower states, takes rebirth as a hell being, and is seized by the guardians of hell and made to undergo dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony—when that person says, 'Please, guardians of hell, do not harm me in such-and-such ways! Why not, you ask? It was for the sake of the ascetics and brahmins, you see, that I practiced unrighteousness and acted so immorally'—O Son of Grasping, what do you

think? Will that person get what he wants from the guardians of hell?”

“No, Śāriputra, he will not,” replied Son of Grasping.

6.268 Śāriputra continued, “Son of Grasping, there are faithful, noble children who have attained material comfort on account of good karma and a devout life, who provide food for the ascetics and brahmins, and who carry out not even the smallest nonvirtuous action but embrace the meritorious path, such that the ascetics and brahmins, with minds of virtue, treat them with wholehearted love in return. So it is, Son of Grasping, that the virtues of people whom ascetics and brahmins, with minds of virtue, treat with wholehearted love in return, are expected to increase, and never wane.”

6.269 After he had spoken thus, tears fell from the eyes of the brahmin Son of Grasping. Then the brahmin Son of Grasping, wiping away his tears with the hem of his garment, lamented to Venerable Śāriputra, “Alas, Śāriputra, it was not in times past that I carefully selected my new bride. Yet for her sake, heedless, I have already committed so many sinful misdeeds. Lord, henceforth I will forsake my new bride and today receive from you, Lord Śāriputra, the fundamental precepts of pure conduct.” Thereupon Venerable Śāriputra led the brahmin Son of Grasping to abide in the fundamental precepts of the holy life, then rose from his seat and departed.

6.270 Venerable Śāriputra traveled to the mountain forests in the south, where there lived another monk who had traveled from the Kalandakanivāsa, in Bamboo Grove, to those mountain forests in the south. That monk saw Venerable Śāriputra in the distance, and approached Venerable Śāriputra. Upon his arrival he touched his head to Venerable Śāriputra’s feet and took a seat at one side. Once the monk had taken a seat at one side, Venerable Śāriputra asked him, “Monk, whence have you just

come?”

6.271 “Venerable Śāriputra,” the monk replied, “I have just come from the Kalandakanivāsa, in Bamboo Grove.”

“Do you know the brahmin Son of Grasping?” asked Śāriputra.

“Yes, Venerable Śāriputra, I do,” he replied. “He was a friend, Venerable Śāriputra, while you yet lived at home.”

6.272 Śāriputra then inquired, “Has Venerable Son of Grasping met with any harm? Does he despair? Is he happy? Is he free of illness, healthy, and strong? Is he living in Rājagṛha? Does he like to see his teacher? Does he enjoy listening to the Dharma?”

“Venerable Śāriputra,” answered the monk, “the brahmin Son of Grasping likes to see his teacher and enjoys listening to the Dharma. However, he met with some harm, and now he suffers. He has fallen ill, and from this illness he may die.”

6.273 Venerable Śāriputra donned his Dharma robes and went to the brahmin Son of Grasping’s house. There the brahmin Son of Grasping saw Venerable Śāriputra from a distance, and upon seeing him, tried to rise from his seat. When Venerable Śāriputra saw the brahmin Son of Grasping trying to rise from his seat, he said to him, “Son of Grasping, there is another seat for me to sit on. Please, don’t get up.”

6.274 Venerable Śāriputra sat on the seat prepared for him and asked the brahmin Son of Grasping, “Son of Grasping, tell me, are you able to endure? Are you recovering? Tell me, has your dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony gone away and not gotten worse? Has it abated? Has it not calmed down?”

6.275 “Lord Śāriputra,” said Son of Grasping, “I cannot endure this. I am not recovering. My body is wracked with dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony. The pain has worsened, and it seems that the illness will not abate.

6.276 “Lord Śāriputra, take a very weak person, around whose head a very strong person has tied thick leather rope very tightly. The pain in that person’s head would be unbearable. Lord Śāriputra, in my head there is an unbearable pain like this. The pain has worsened, and it seems that the illness will not abate.

6.277 “Lord Śāriputra, take for instance the belly of a cow gutted by a butcher’s apprentice with a slaughtering knife. As its stomach is ripped open, the pain would be unbearable. Lord Śāriputra, my stomach is rent with an unbearable pain like this. The pain has worsened, and it seems that the illness will not abate.

6.278 “Lord Śāriputra, take for instance a very weak person whose shoulders are gripped right and left by two very strong persons who push him down into burning embers. The pain in that person’s body would be searing and unbearable. Lord Śāriputra, my body is filled with pain that is searing and unbearable like this. The pain has worsened, and it seems that the illness will not abate.

“That is why, Lord Śāriputra, I cannot endure it. I am not recovering. My body is wracked with dreadful suffering and extreme, excruciating, unbearable agony, the pain has worsened, and it seems that the illness will not abate.”

6.279 “Son of Grasping,” Śāriputra said, “I have some questions for you. Just answer as best you can. O Son of Grasping, what do you think? Which would you choose, rebirth as a hell being or as an animal?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as an animal over rebirth as a hell being.”

6.280 “Which would you choose, rebirth as an animal or as an anguished spirit?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as an anguished spirit over an animal birth.”

6.281 “Which would you choose, rebirth as an anguished spirit or as a human?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a human over rebirth as an anguished spirit.”

6.282 “Which would you choose, rebirth as a human or a god in the Abodes of the Four Great Kings?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a god in the Abodes of the Four Great Kings over a human birth.”

6.283 “Which would you choose, rebirth as a god in the Abodes of the Four Great Kings or as a god in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a god in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three over being a god in the Abodes of the Four Great Kings.”

6.284 “Which would you choose, rebirth as a god in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three or as a god in the Strifeless Heaven?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a god in the Strifeless Heaven over being a god in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three.”

6.285 “Which would you choose, rebirth as a god in the Strifeless Heaven or as a god in Tuṣita?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a god in Tuṣita over rebirth as a god in the Strifeless Heaven.”

6.286 “Which would you choose, rebirth as a god in Tuṣita or as a god in the Delighting in Creation Heaven?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a god in the Delighting in Creation Heaven over rebirth as a god in the Tuṣita Heaven.”

6.287 “Which would you choose, rebirth as a god in the Delighting in Creation Heaven or as a god in the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a god in the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations over rebirth as a god in the Delighting in Creation Heaven.”

6.288 “Which would you choose, rebirth as a god in the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations or as a god in Brahmāloka?”

“Lord Śāriputra, I would choose rebirth as a god in Brahmāloka over rebirth as a god in the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations.”

6.289 “Son of Grasping, did you say that you would choose Brahmāloka?”

“Yes, Lord Śāriputra, I did say that I would choose Brahmāloka.”

For a moment Son of Grasping did not say anything. Then he asked Śāriputra, “Lord Śāriputra, now that I’ve chosen Brahmāloka over god in the Heaven of the Masters of Others’ Creations, is there a path that leads to rebirth in Brahmāloka?”

6.290 “Yes, Son of Grasping, there is a way. There is a path. Faithful sons and daughters of good lineage who in greater part remain in meditation upon it, casting away all yearning for their desires, will be born into worlds equal in fortune to Brahmāloka. If I explain it to you, will you be able to understand?”

“Tell me, Lord Śāriputra, and I shall listen.”

6.291 “Son of Grasping, noble listeners cast aside generating the subsidiary afflictive emotions toward the five sense pleasures, cast aside the tendency that perpetuates ignoble states of existence, and cast aside the tendency for conflict that keeps them from passing beyond suffering. Their minds are suffused with love, and they become magnanimous—without hostility, envy, or ill will.

6.292 “By meditating deeply on the nondual and the immeasurable, they devote themselves to the first of the cardinal directions, until they have pervaded it to its very end, and abide therein, their minds suffused with love for the whole world in all its aspects. In the very same way, whether in the second, third, or fourth of the cardinal directions, above, below, or straight ahead, they become magnanimous—without hostility, envy, or ill will. They meditate deeply on the nondual and the immeasurable and devote themselves to a single cardinal direction, pervading it to its very end, and abide therein.”

6.293 Śāriputra went on to also explain this in detail with regard to compassion, joy, and great equanimity.

“Son of Grasping, this is the way, this is the path. Faithful sons and daughters of a good lineage who in greater part remain in meditation on it and cast away all yearning for their desires will be born into worlds equal in fortune to Brahmāloka.” Having thus led Son of Grasping to abide in the four immeasurables, Venerable Śāriputra departed.

6.294 As soon as Venerable Śāriputra had gone, the Blessed One thought, “The truths as the monk Śāriputra told them to Son of Grasping are not complete.” Having thought this, he disappeared from Bamboo Grove and appeared sitting in the house of the brahmin Son of Grasping.

6.295 The brahmin Son of Grasping saw the Blessed One sitting there upon a cushion, and he experienced a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he rose from his own seat and stood. Then the Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him, and the brahmin Son of Grasping manifested the resultant state of non-return right where he sat.

6.296 After the Blessed One had placed the brahmin Son of Grasping in the resultant state of non-return, he disappeared from the home of Son of Grasping, and before Śāriputra was able to reach Bamboo Grove, the Blessed One arrived and took his seat at Bamboo Grove.

Soon after the Blessed One had departed, the brahmin Son of Grasping died, transmigrated, and took birth in Brahmāloka.

6.297 Venerable Śāriputra went to see the Blessed One. When he arrived, he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side. Then the Blessed One asked Venerable Śāriputra, “Śāriputra, whence have you just come?”

“Lord,” replied Venerable Śāriputra, “I have just come from leading the brahmin Son of Grasping to

dwell in the four immeasurables.”

6.298 “Śāriputra,” the Blessed One asked further, “why did you not teach the truths to the brahmin Son of Grasping? Had he understood that teaching, he would have realized the Dharma and Vinaya. Śāriputra, after you left, I disappeared from Bamboo Grove and went to the house of the brahmin Son of Grasping and taught him the truths. He manifested the resultant state of non-return, and soon after, he died, transmigrated, and took birth in Brahmāloka. After leading Son of Grasping to abide in the truths, I returned to Bamboo Grove before you had arrived here.”

6.299 Venerable Śāriputra replied to the Blessed One, “Lord, it is wonderful that the blessed buddhas possess such wonderful Dharma.”

“Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “what action did the brahmin Son of Grasping take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” replied The Blessed One.

6.300 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times gone by, during the reign of King Nāgadeva in the city of Ayodhyā, the kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma. He ruled the kingdom gently and mercifully, as a parent cares for a beloved only child.

6.301 “At that time in the city of Ayodhyā, King Nāgadeva had a certain magistrate, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. He accepted money

from the brahmins and householders on behalf of the king, and he accepted money from the king on behalf of the brahmins and householders.

6.302 “Now at that time there was also a certain poor brahmin who happened to be standing not too far from the brahmin magistrate just as the brahmin magistrate accepted money from brahmins and householders on behalf of the king and accepted money from the king on behalf of the brahmins and householders. Because he did this, the magistrate was able to stay up on the roof of his palatial home in the company of only women, playing music, enjoying himself, and coupling with them.

6.303 “The poor brahmin thought, ‘All the glorious experiences he’s having are the result of three types of actions: giving, ethical discipline, and keeping one’s vows perfectly. I will make sure to take up just a fraction of his virtuous qualities and maintain it, and my poverty will come to an end.’ Such were the thoughts he had.

6.304 “Now in times when a blessed one has not arisen in the world, the solitary buddhas appear. So it was that a solitary buddha came to his door. When the poor brahmin saw the solitary buddha from a distance, he felt a surge of joy toward him. In his joy the brahmin offered alms to the solitary buddha.

6.305 “Those great beings do not teach the Dharma with words but through their actions, so the sage accepted the alms and rose into the sky. This caused the brahmin particular delight, and, bowing down at his feet, he prayed, ‘Oh, by this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I, on behalf of the king, accept money from the brahmins and householders, and on behalf of the brahmins and householders, accept money from the king. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this.’

6.306 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that poor brahmin then is none other than Son

of Grasping. The act of offering alms to a solitary buddha and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that he accepted money from the brahmin householders on behalf of the king, and accepted money from the king on behalf of the brahmins and householders.

6.307 “Monks, I am more exalted than even one hundred billion solitary buddhas, and now he has pleased me and not displeased me.

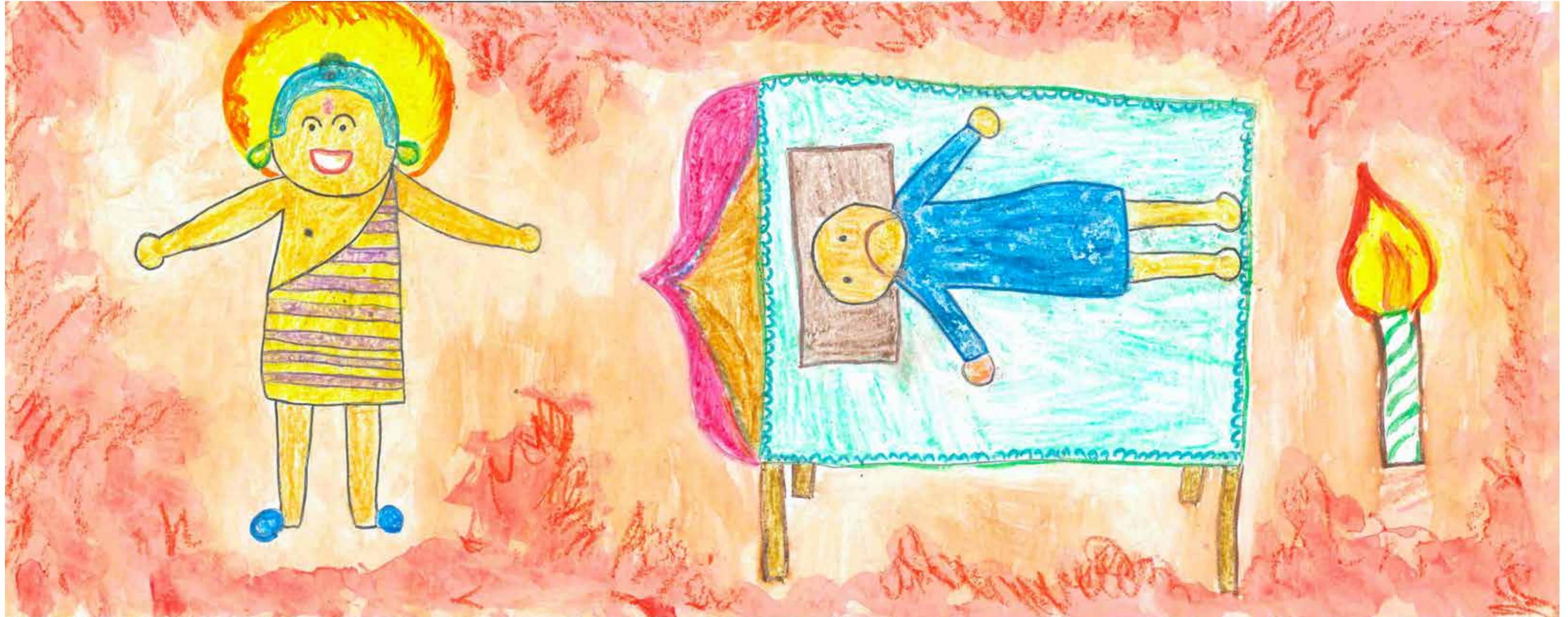
“He also became a lay vow holder in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and went for refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life. Then, at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

6.308 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that lay vow holder then is none other than Son of Grasping. At that time he went for refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

6.309 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me and not displeased me.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Subhadra the Mendicant*



Part Six (7)

The Story of
Subhadra the
Mendicant

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟླ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Story of Subhadra the Mendicant

6.310 Among the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, in the retinue of Śakra, king of the gods, there was a certain gandharva king named Supriya. Supriya would sing songs about Śakra, king of the gods, much to Śakra's delight.

6.311 Now when the Bodhisattva, having looked out upon the world and made the four observations from his place in Tuṣita Heaven, entered his mother's womb, at that time Śakra, king of the gods, said to the gandharva king Supriya, "Supriya, a certain bodhisattva has passed away from Tuṣita Heaven, transmigrated, and reincarnated in his mother's womb. After he is born and has grown, he will gain the nectar of immortality and satiate living beings. You should also take birth in Jambudvīpa so that he might also grant you a share of the nectar of immortality."

"Kauśika," Supriya told him, "I have just begun composing a song, but once it is finished, I shall go."

6.312 At that time in the city of Kuśinagarī, all the young athletes of Kuśinagarī held in high esteem a mendicant named Subhadra, a person of miracles. They revered, honored, venerated, and admired him. He spent his days on the banks of Lake Anavatapta, and the gods and nāgas there held him in high esteem, accepted him as their guru, and

honored and venerated him.

Sometimes he would spend the entire day on the banks of Lake Anavatapta. At other times he went and sat in a forest of udumbara trees, not far from the lake.

6.313 When the Bodhisattva was born, Śakra, King of the Gods, said to the gandharva king Supriya, "Supriya, now that the Bodhisattva has been born, come! Let us make an effort to offer him our adoration."

"Kauśika," Supriya told him, "I have just begun composing a song, but once it is finished, I shall go."

6.314 Through the greatness of the Bodhisattva, there in the udumbara forest the udumbara flowers began to bloom. The mendicant Subhadra saw that the udumbara flowers were blooming and was thrilled at the sight. He thought, "The mendicants of old are aged and infirm now. It was from the great masters of their school that I heard that tathāgatas, arhats, totally and completely awakened buddhas, universal monarchs, and udumbara flowers arise but rarely. It is on account of my merit that the udumbara flowers in the udumbara forest are blooming."

6.315 When the Bodhisattva witnessed old age, sickness, and death and went to live in the charnel grounds, Śakra, king of the gods, said to the gandharva king Supriya, "Supriya, the Bodhisattva has witnessed old age, sickness, and death, and has gone to live in the forest. Let us make an effort to offer him our adoration."

"Kauśika," Supriya told him, "I have just begun composing a song, but once it is finished, I shall go."

6.316 When the Bodhisattva achieved unexcelled wisdom, he enumerated the four truths of noble beings three times over, setting in proper motion the Dharma wheel in its twelve aspects, and Śakra said again to the gandharva king Supriya, "Supriya, the Blessed One has achieved unexcelled enlightenment, enumerated the four truths of

noble beings three times over, and set the Dharma wheel in its twelve aspects in proper motion. Let us go to listen to the Dharma.”

“Kauśika,” Supriya told him, “I have just begun composing a song, but once it is finished, I shall go.”

6.317 When the Blessed One enumerated the four truths of noble beings three times over and set the Dharma wheel in its twelve aspects in proper motion, all the flowers in the udumbara forest began to bloom, and their fragrance spread for many leagues. This caused the mendicant Subhadra particular delight, and he thought, “It is on account of my merit that all this has happened.”

6.318 When the Blessed One enumerated the four truths of noble beings three times over and set the Dharma wheel in its twelve aspects in proper motion, he also tamed the group of five friends, the group of five close friends, and the group of fifty of the city’s young elite.

When he traveled to the cottonwood forest he established sixty of his paternal relatives in the truths.

6.319 When he traveled to the village of Serika he established young Nandā and Nandabalā, who lived there in that village, in the truths.

When he traveled to Uruvilvā he led the one thousand longhaired ascetics to go forth as novices and then conferred on them full ordination.

6.320 When he traveled to the stūpa at Gayāśīrṣa he won the trust of thousands of monks with three miraculous transformations, and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

6.321 When he traveled to the Forest of Reeds he established Śreṇiya Bimbisāra, King of Magadha, along with eighty thousand gods and hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of the householders of Magadha, in the truths.

6.322 When he traveled to Rājagrha he accepted the gift of Bamboo Grove, led Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, and their suites of two hundred and fifty attendants

to go forth as novices, and then conferred on them full ordination.

6.323 When he traveled to Śrāvastī he accepted the gift of the garden of Prince Jeta, made a great display of miracles, and led Cunda to go forth as a novice, who then cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship.

6.324 After that, Cunda used his miraculous powers as a means of travel and, traveling from place to place, would scoop flowers and fruits onto large leaves, carry them from one place to another, and bring them as offerings to his preceptor and to the saṅgha.

6.325 So it was that one day he traveled to the banks of Lake Anavatapta. He was very happy to be there and stayed the whole day until the mendicant Subhadra said, “My friend, this is where I spend the day. Please don’t stay here.”

“This place is open to everyone,” the novice Cunda replied.

6.326 “Let us have a contest of miracles,” proposed the mendicant Subhadra said. “Whoever wins can spend the day here.”

The two began their competition in the display of miracles, and the novice Cunda defeated the mendicant Subhadra, who, quite chagrined, went back to dwelling in the udumbara forest.

6.327 When the Blessed One had carried out all the activities of a buddha, he traveled to the city of Kuśinagarī, where he took to his final bed. The Blessed One thought, “Now there are two disciples that the Tathāgata should tame— the mendicant Subhadra, and the gandharva king Supriya.” The Blessed One also thought, “I can easily tame the mendicant Subhadra, but since the gandharva king Supriya is arrogant and aloof, he will not come to see me, so I will go to him.”

6.328 The Blessed One left behind an emanation, disappeared from the copse of two śāla trees, and traveled to the Heaven of the Thirty-Three

where he arrived at the gates of the palace of the gandharva king Supriya. The Blessed One thought, “After I shatter his ego, he will become a vessel for the truths.” Then, to tame him, the Blessed One magically manifested himself as a gandharva king bearing a lute with a hundred thousand strings of blue beryl, went up to the gate of the gandharva king Supriya, and sent a message, saying, “A gandharva king stands at the gates. He wishes to play the lute with you.”

6.329 As soon as he heard this, the gandharva king Supriya thought, “What? There can’t be another gandharva king! I shall eliminate him.” With this thought, he said, “Call him inside! I will show him what I can do.”

6.330 Once he had been invited inside they began to play their lutes together. Then, to tame him, the Blessed One cut a single string from his own lute. The gandharva king Supriya, noticing this, cut one string from his lute as well. Then the Blessed One gradually cut all the strings from his lute, until only one remained, from which every note continued to sound. So Supriya also cut away all his strings, and likewise made every note sound from a single string.

6.331 Then the Blessed One cut even that lone remaining string, yet every note continued to sound.

The gandharva king Supriya thought, “I cannot do any more than this. So be it—he is far better than I.”

6.332 The Blessed One directly apprehended that Supriya’s arrogance was gone, and that he no longer thought, “There is no one like me!” Having thus shattered Supriya’s ego, the Blessed One assumed his natural form.

6.333 When he saw the Blessed One, Supriya experienced a surge of joy. In his joy he bowed down at the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly

apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly.

6.334 When he heard it, the gandharva king Supriya destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

6.335 After the Blessed One disappeared from among the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the flowers of the udumbara forest began to fade. The mendicant Subhadra saw that the flowers of the udumbara forest were fading, and great sorrow arose in him. He thought, “It is on account of my merit that flowers bloomed throughout the udumbara forest, but now that I am old and infirm, 120 years of age, the flowers of the udumbara forest are fading. It is certain, then—I shall die before long.” At this the mendicant began to grieve and suffer greatly, wailing and lamenting.

6.336 Thereupon a god who was fond of Subhadra said to him, “It was not at all on account of your merit that the flowers in the udumbara forest bloomed, for this place is the royal garden of a great universal monarch. The flowers in the udumbara forest first blossom whenever a universal monarch or a bodhisattva appears. Whenever a universal monarch is enthroned on his royal seat or a bodhisattva achieves unexcelled wisdom, flowers fully bloom throughout the udumbara forest. Whenever the time is near for the passing of the universal monarch or for the Tathāgata to pass into parinirvāṇa, the flowers of the udumbara forest begin to fade. When the universal monarch passes or the Tathāgata enters parinirvāṇa, the flowers of the udumbara forest wither.

6.337 “Now the Tathāgata is in the world, and he has taken to his final bed. Tonight, in the middle of the night, he will pass beyond sorrow into the realm of

nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. This is why the udumbara forest is fading. Do not mourn so. Do not suffer so. Do not lament.”

6.338 The mendicant Subhadra thought, “I have doubts about the Dharma, but I have hope that the Blessed Gautama can dispel my doubts. I will go see the Blessed Gautama, and if he agrees to answer my questions, I shall ask some questions of him.” So he disappeared from the udumbara forest and traveled to the copse of two śāla trees near Kuśinagarī.

6.339 At that time Venerable Ānanda drew near to the gates of Kuśinagarī and seated himself. The mendicant Subhadra saw Venerable Ānanda from a distance, and went to where Venerable Ānanda was. Upon his arrival he said to Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, I have heard that tonight, in the middle of the night, the Blessed One will pass beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. I have doubts about the Dharma but I have hope that the Blessed Gautama can dispel my doubts. Oh Lord Ānanda, if it’s no trouble, I will go see the Blessed Gautama, and if he agrees to answer my questions when I arrive, I will ask some questions of him.”

6.340 Venerable Ānanda, being skilled in the interpretation of signs, thought, “The Blessed One has left an emanation here, and departed using his powers of subjugation.” Understanding this, he said to the mendicant Subhadra, “Relent, Subhadra. The Blessed One is tired, the Tathāgata is tired. Don’t trouble the Tathāgata.”

6.341 The mendicant Subhadra said to Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, the mendicants of old are aged and infirm now. It was from them that I heard that the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas emerge in the world but rarely, like the udumbara flower. If tonight, in the middle of the night, the Blessed Gautama will pass beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates, then since

I have some doubts about the Dharma and hope that the Blessed Gautama can dispel my doubts, and if it’s no trouble, Lord Ānanda, let me go see the Blessed Gautama. If he agrees to answer my questions when I arrive, I will ask some questions of him.”

Three times Ānanda answered the mendicant Subhadra, “Relent, Subhadra. The Blessed One is tired, the Tathāgata is tired. Don’t trouble the Tathāgata.”

6.342 At that very moment the Blessed One disappeared from among the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and took to his bed. With his perfectly clear divine hearing, which transcends that of normal humans, the Blessed One heard the words that Venerable Ānanda was speaking to the mendicant Subhadra and the Blessed One instructed Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, send him in. Send the mendicant Subhadra inside, and do not impede him. Let him ask whatever he likes. This is the last occasion on which I shall address those who hold extreme views, and this mendicant, Subhadra, will be the last monk I shall lead to go forth with the words ‘Come, monk!’ ”

6.343 The mendicant Subhadra was joyful, overjoyed, and elated that the Blessed One had granted this opportunity. In his jubilation, joy, and gladness he went to see the Blessed One. Upon his arrival he made all manner of entertaining and jovial conversation with the Blessed One, then took a seat at one side.

6.344 Once he had taken a seat at one side, the mendicant Subhadra said to the Blessed One, “Gautama, in the world people hold many different kinds of extreme views, such as those of Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, Parivrājaka Gośālīputra, Saṃjayin Vairaṭīputra, Ajita Keśakambala, Kakuda Kātyāyana, and Nirgrantha Jñātiputra, each of them with their own sacred pledges.”

Then the Blessed One responded in verse,

saying:

- 6.345 “Subhadra, at twenty-nine
I went forth to seek the good.
- 6.346 “Subhadra, after going forth,
I cultivated concentration for fifty years.
- 6.347 “I cultivated ethics, proper conduct, wisdom,
And single-pointed concentration.
- 6.348 “Ascetics from other factions do not even have
A measure of the correct Dharma I expound.
- 6.349 “Subhadra, a Dharma and Vinaya in which there
is no noble eightfold path lacks even the first
monastic practitioner, and lacks the second, third,
and fourth as well. Subhadra, a Dharma and Vinaya
that includes the noble eightfold path has the first
monastic practitioner, and the second, third, and
fourth as well. That is why I have said that there
are no ascetics or brahmins of other factions,
for espousing false doctrines, they are devoid of
ascetics and brahmins. With a lion’s perfect roar I
proclaim this before the assembly.”
- 6.350 When this Dharma teaching had been
explained, the mendicant Subhadra was able to
see these things unobscured, with the Dharma
vision that has no trace of dust or stain with respect
to phenomena. Subhadra perceived the truths,
discovered the truths, realized the truths, and
fathomed the truths to their very depths, until he
overcame whatever doubts or hesitation he had.
- 6.351 Then of his own accord, completely unprompted,
and unafraid of the truths his teacher had taught
him, he rose from his seat, drew down the right
shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the
Blessed One with palms pressed together, and said
to Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, you have
achieved much that is good. Lord Ānanda, you

have been empowered as a great master by the
great master himself. Similarly, I have achieved
much that is good. If permitted I wish to go forth in
the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete
my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the
presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice
the holy life.”

- 6.352 Venerable Ānanda rose from his seat, drew
down the right shoulder of his upper garment,
bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed
together, and asked the Blessed One, “Lord, this
mendicant wishes to go forth in the Dharma and
Vinaya so well spoken, complete his novitiate, and
achieve full ordination. I would like to request the
Blessed One out of compassion to lead him to go
forth.”

- 6.353 Then the Blessed One said to the mendicant
Subhadra, “Come, monk! Practice the holy life.”

As soon as the Blessed One had finished speaking
there he stood, alms bowl and water pitcher in
hand, with but a week’s worth of hair and beard,
and with the deportment of a monk who had been
ordained for one hundred years. As it is stated:

- 6.354 Garbed in robes, with shaven heads,
And senses stilled by Buddha’s will—
From the very moment the One Thus Gone
Spoke to them, saying, “Come, join me.”
- 6.355 Then the Blessed One conferred on him
instruction, and, casting away all afflictive
emotions through diligence, practice, and effort,
he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the
attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded
gold no differently than filth, and the palms of
his hands as like space itself. He became cool like
wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance
like an eggshell. He achieved the insights,
superknowledges, and discriminations. He had
no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim.

He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

6.356 The thought occurred to Venerable Subhadra, “It is not my fate that I should see our teacher pass into parinirvāṇa, so I will make the following fivefold resolve:

“With the thought that I might enter nirvāṇa before the Buddha, may fellow practitioners of the holy life see me as a monk, and may those who hold extreme views see me as one who holds extreme views.

6.357 “May fellow practitioners of the holy life find it easy to come and see me, and may others who hold extreme views see me as surrounded by a great mass of water.

“May fellow practitioners of the holy life bear my relics on a palanquin, and may their opponents, be there even hundreds or thousands of them, not be able to lift them.

6.358 “May fellow practitioners of the holy life kindle the fire to burn my relics, and may their opponents, be there even hundreds or thousands of them, not be able to light it.

“May fellow practitioners of the holy life view my relics, and upon doing so, may they venerate my relics, and may others who hold extreme views not be able to view them.”

6.359 After Venerable Subhadra had made this fivefold resolve, he passed into parinirvāṇa. All the gods in Kuśinagarī proclaimed that Subhadra had passed into parinirvāṇa, and as soon as the philosophical extremists heard this they hoisted banners made of cotton, announcing on the highways, in the streets, at crossroads, and at forks in the road, “The ascetic Gautama claims there are no ascetics or brahmins from other factions, for they are proponents of other views devoid of ascetics and brahmins. With a lion’s perfect roar he proclaimed this before the assembly.” They went all over Kuśinagarī,

proclaiming, “This practitioner of our code of conduct has now passed into parinirvāṇa!” Then they went to the copse of two śāla trees where Subhadra lay, but they were unable to enter. The monks saw them and asked, “What are you doing here?”

6.360 “Our friend, who practiced our code of conduct, has passed into parinirvāṇa. We have come to venerate his relics,” they replied.

“It was our code of conduct he practiced, not yours,” the monks said. “Didn’t you see him with a shaved head, wearing holy robes and patched raiment?”

“We saw him carrying three sticks and a ritual vase,” they replied.

6.361 “If you believe he was practicing your code of conduct, then go ahead with your veneration,” said the monks.

When they heard this the extremists wished to go see Subhadra, but they found he was surrounded by a great mass of water and could not proceed.

6.362 “It was our code of conduct he practiced, not yours,” the monks said to them. “Thus it is easy for us to approach him. You may go to see him, with our consent.” So they all went to where Subhadra’s relics lay.

The monks said, “If you think he was practicing your disciplines, then carry his palanquin.” As soon as the extremists heard this, they all said, “We will carry Subhadra’s palanquin!” but found they were unable to lift it.

6.363 “It was our code of conduct he practiced,” said the monks, “so we will carry his palanquin and pay him homage—look here!” And the monks carried his palanquin. After they placed it in the charnel grounds the monks said, “If you think he was practicing your disciplines, then kindle the fire to burn his relics.”

“We’ll light the fire to burn his relics!” the extremists said, but they were unable to light the fire.

6.364 “It was our code of conduct he practiced,” said the monks, “so we will light the fire to burn his relics.” After they said this, the monks lit the fire to burn his relics. Then they continued, “If you think he was practicing your disciplines, extinguish the fire burning his relics with milk.”

“We’ll extinguish the fire burning his relics!” the extremists said, but they were not able to put it out.

6.365 “It was our code of conduct he practiced,” said the monks, “so we will extinguish the fire burning his relics,” and they extinguished the fire burning his relics.

After extinguishing the fire, they continued, “If you think he was practicing your disciplines, take up his relics and venerate them.”

6.366 The extremists said, “We’ll take up his relics!” but they couldn’t see the relics, so the monks collected the relics, placed them in a stūpa, and venerated it with incense, incense powders and cones, and flowers.

6.367 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “tell us why Venerable Subhadra, after going forth last of all, was first to pass into parinirvāṇa, and how the Blessed One will now pass into parinirvāṇa after him.”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

6.368 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks,” recounted the Blessed One, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, King Kṛkī reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. At that time King Kṛkī’s magistrate had a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met, graced with the thirty-two signs of great persons, and embellished by the eighty minor marks of perfection. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, ‘What name should we give this

child?’ And they named him, saying, ‘Since this is a child of the Kāśyapa clan, his name will likewise be Kāśyapa.’

6.369 “They reared young Kāśyapa on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when he had grown, the soothsayers and augurs made this prediction: ‘If young Kāśyapa does not go forth, he will become a universal monarch, but if he shaves his head and face and dons the colorful religious robes, and if with nothing short of perfect faith he goes forth from home to live as a mendicant, then he will be renowned throughout the world as a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha.’

6.370 “Bodhisattva Kāśyapa’s best friend was a young brahmin named Aśoka. When he heard the prophecy he said, ‘My friend, do not end our friendship to go live in a forest for practicing austerities.’ The Bodhisattva, in reference to his passing into nirvāṇa, said, ‘As long as we are friends, I shall not go.’ So Aśoka was very unhappy when Bodhisattva Kāśyapa went to live in the forest after witnessing old age, sickness, and death and thought, ‘He didn’t do as he promised.’

6.371 “After Bodhisattva Kāśyapa achieved unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment and traveled to Vārāṇasī, where he thrice turned the Dharma wheel in its twelve aspects, he was invited for food by King Kṛkī. That night the king arranged for the road to be beautified and prepared many good, wholesome foods. In the morning he rose, prepared seats, and filled the water pots. Then the king sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him of the time, and, bearing burning sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones, flowers, parasols, banners, and flags, amid a crashing of cymbals, he set out from Ṛṣivadana. He greeted the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa with great opulence and invited him to Vārāṇasī.

6.372 “The young brahmin Aśoka heard that

Bodhisattva Kāśyapa had achieved unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. He heard that the Bodhisattva had traveled to Vārāṇasī where he was invited for food by King Kṛkī, and that King Kṛkī had arranged for the road to be beautified, had prepared many good, wholesome foods that night, and then had risen in the morning, prepared seats, and filled the water pots. He heard that the king had sent the Blessed One a message reminding him of the time; that he had borne burning sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones, parasols, banners, and flags, amid a crashing of cymbals; that he had set out from R̥ṣivadana; and that he had greeted the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa with great opulence and invited him to Vārāṇasī. After hearing all this, because he was so upset before, he sat at a distance and looked on, not wishing to approach.

6.373 “The totally and completely awakened Buddha focused his mind and, extending his arm like an elephant’s trunk, grasped him and drew him near, saying, ‘Aśoka, why don’t you wish to come meet me?’

“ ‘You promised that wherever you went, you would bring me with you,’ he replied. ‘But even after your promise, you departed alone for a forest devoted to austerities. I didn’t come because I was so upset before.’

6.374 “The totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa explained, ‘It was in reference to my passing into nirvāṇa that I spoke thus. Now the time has come to keep my promise. What use would it have been if you had already gone to nirvāṇa?’

“ ‘Lord,’ Aśoka said, ‘if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.’”

6.375 “With the words ‘Come, join me, monk!’ the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa

led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. But as he pondered the instructions, he became lazy, and merely lay about. Then, when the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa spoke in praise of solitude, he took it to heart and went into solitude.

6.376 “While he was staying there, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa carried out all the activities of a buddha and took to his final bed. Thereupon the gods proclaimed to all, ‘This very night, in the middle of the night, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa will pass beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates.’

6.377 “The monk Aśoka heard what the gods said as they flew through the sky, and became very upset. ‘Now the Blessed One will pass into nirvāṇa,’ he thought, ‘and I have not achieved anything of significance.’ He began to grieve and suffer greatly, wailing and lamenting.

6.378 “A god who was fond of him saw him and asked, ‘O Aśoka, why do you grieve and suffer so, wailing and lamenting? What would you do if you could go see the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa?’

“ ‘Whatever the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa has said in his teachings should be done. I would do it all,’ Aśoka replied.

6.379 “No sooner had the god heard this than he picked him up and set him down right in front of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Aśoka approached the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, and upon his arrival he touched his head to his feet and took a seat at one side. Then the Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him, and when he heard it, he cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship right where he sat.

6.380 “Upon achieving arhatship, Aśoka thought, ‘It is

not my fate that I should see our teacher pass into parinirvāṇa. I will pass into parinirvāṇa before him.’ And after Aśoka had passed into parinirvāṇa, the totally and completely awakened Kāśyapa too passed into parinirvāṇa.

6.381 “The god thought, ‘Anything of significance he achieved was on account of my powers,’ and he prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May I go forth in his doctrine alone, and may my teacher pass into parinirvāṇa only after I pass into parinirvāṇa before him.’

6.382 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the god then is none other than Subhadra. At that time he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. May my teacher pass into parinirvāṇa only after I pass into parinirvāṇa before him.’

6.383 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

“Because he also prayed, ‘May my teacher pass into parinirvāṇa only after I pass into parinirvāṇa before him,’ it is only now, after he has passed into parinirvāṇa, that I too shall pass into parinirvāṇa.

6.384 “Furthermore, monks, in times gone by, some five hundred sages were living deep in a certain forest. In that particular forest there also lived a god who was very fond of the sages. At that time the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely

awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Krakucchanda was in the world.

6.385 “At that time the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda also happened to be teaching before a great gathering, of which the god was a part. After hearing the Dharma from the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda, he went to live deep in the forest, where he spoke the praises of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda to the sages. As soon as they heard him, the sages were eager to see the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda, and they prayed fervently to the god, until they were able to travel to where the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda was.

6.386 “All five hundred sages saw the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When they saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled them with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

6.387 “Filled with such joy, they went to where the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda was, and upon their arrival they touched their heads to his feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. Then the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda, directly apprehending their thoughts, habitual

tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the five hundred sages realized the truths and immediately manifested the resultant state of non-return right where they sat.

6.388 “After seeing the truths, they requested, ‘Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.’

“By speaking the words ‘Come, join me, monks!’ to the five hundred sages, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship.

6.389 “As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

6.390 “When the totally and completely awakened Krakucchanda had carried out all the activities of a buddha and wished to pass beyond all sorrow in the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates, he took to his final bed. The five hundred monks thought, ‘It wouldn’t be right to see our teacher pass into parinirvāṇa. We should pass into parinirvāṇa before him.’ And after all five hundred monks passed into parinirvāṇa, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda too passed into parinirvāṇa.

6.391 “The god prayed, ‘Whatever great virtues they achieved were on account of my powers, so by

this root of virtue, may I please and not displease a teacher just like this one. May I go forth in his doctrine alone, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship, and may my teacher pass into parinirvāṇa only after I have passed into parinirvāṇa.’

6.392 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that god then is none other than Subhadra. Monks, because of his prayers, and now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. And it is only now, after he has passed into parinirvāṇa, that I too shall pass into parinirvāṇa.”

6.393 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “tell us why, as the Blessed One was deathly ill, he protected Venerable Subhadra, then established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, as I was sick unto death, I brought him out of danger and established him in a state of fearlessness. Listen well!

“Monks, in times gone by, King Brahmadata reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. King Brahmadata had a certain extraordinarily clever horse. Because of its abilities, King Brahmadata was able to collect taxes from all the different neighboring kingdoms.

6.394 “One day this clever horse died, and the news spread far and wide as people reported, ‘King Brahmadata’s clever horse has died.’ As soon as the neighboring kings heard this, they all thought, ‘Whatever taxes he levied against us, he could levy only by the grace of this clever horse. Now when we see him coming, we can do as we please.’ They then waited for an opportunity to expose his

vulnerabilities. King Brahmadata heard the news that the neighboring kings were waiting to expose his vulnerabilities, and as soon as he heard this he became afraid and could no longer leave the city.

6.395 “Soon after, some merchants came to Vārāṇasī from the north with horses to sell. King Brahmadata heard that merchants had arrived from the north with horses to sell, and straightaway he dispatched experts in the examination of horses. ‘Go and buy all the horses that are coming,’ he told them, ‘especially if there is a clever horse among them—be on the lookout for that.’

6.396 King Brahmadata’s attendants replied, ‘As you wish, Deva.’ They bought all the horses and examined them, and took the most clever horse among them to offer to the king. As soon as he heard this, the king was very pleased, and he presented the merchants with a great deal of gold and silver.

6.397 “One day he mounted the clever horse and rode out to the gardens. When the neighboring kings heard that King Brahmadata had ridden out to the gardens, they arrayed the four divisions of their armies and met in Vārāṇasī, where they surrounded the gardens. Desperate and not knowing what to do, King Brahmadata thought, ‘Which way should I go?’ He thought, ‘I must drop everything, mount my clever horse, and leave the gardens,’ but when he looked out, he saw the gardens were surrounded by the armies of his opponents.

6.398 “It was in the clever horse’s nature to save the king’s life. There was a ditch that separated the garden from the city—a very deep ditch, thick with lotus flowers. The clever horse thought, ‘There’s nowhere else to go,’ and stepped out onto the lotus petals to return to the city. When the neighboring kings saw this, they split open the clever horse’s belly with a sharp arrow shaped like a fishtail.

“When the king saw this, he was terrified, and thought, ‘If this horse dies here in the middle of the water, I will surely be done for.’

6.399 “The clever horse knew the king was terrified, and to reassure him, said in verse:

“ ‘Though you see my body
Struck in battle by an arrow,
Do not fear, my king,
For I shall save you first before I die.’

6.400 “With those words, the clever horse bore the king into the city, and, having protected the king, he died.

“O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was the clever horse then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was the king then is none other than Subhadra. At that time, stricken with acute pain at the moment of death I delivered him from fear and established him in a state of fearlessness. Now as well, stricken with acute pain at the moment of death I have delivered him from the dangers of saṃsāra and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

6.401 “Yet another time, stricken with acute pain at the moment of death, I delivered him from fear and protected him. Listen well!

“Monks, in times gone by, King Karṇa reigned in the city of Kanyakubja. The king was very fond of deer hunting, so one day he arrayed the four divisions of his army and set out on a hunt. On the banks of a certain river a herd of five hundred deer had stopped to rest, and the king had them surrounded by the four divisions of his army so that not a single deer could escape.

6.402 “The deer that led the herd thought, ‘As the leader of the herd, I must think only of its welfare and happiness.’ He cast all about, wondering, ‘Which way should the deer go to escape?’ As he looked about, he saw a raging river, and its riverbank was the only place that was not surrounded by the four divisions of the army. No one was on the riverbank.

6.403 “The Bodhisattva thought, ‘The deer can neither

ford nor leap across the river, so they will not be able to escape. I will plant my feet in the middle of the river, then, and stay there.’ He called out to the deer, ‘Clamber over me, all of you! Use my back to support your legs and cross to the other side of the river.’ The Bodhisattva planted his feet in the middle of the river and stood still.

6.404 “Now bodhisattvas are strong and powerful, so the current did not move him, and as he stood there the deer all leapt onto his back, steadied their feet, and crossed to the other side of the river.

6.405 “Their hooves cut up the Bodhisattva’s back, and when the last deer saw this he became apprehensive and thought ‘I’m certain I won’t make it across.’ Noting his apprehension, the Bodhisattva reassured him, ‘Don’t be scared, friend. You needn’t be worried you will die,’ and he saw the deer safely across. Once the deer had arrived on the other side, the Bodhisattva passed away.

6.406 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who led the herd of deer then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the five hundred deer then are none other than the five hundred athletes of Kuśinagarī. The one who was the last deer to cross is none other than Subhadra. At that time, amid the pain of dying, I delivered him from danger and set him down in safety. And now as well, stricken with illness and near to death, I have delivered Subhadra and the five hundred athletes from all the dangers of saṃsāra and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

6.407 Then the Blessed One asked Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, did you see something?”

“Yes, Lord, I did.”

“What did you see?” the Blessed One asked.

“Lord, I saw that the Blessed One left an emanation here, then departed for the purpose of taming someone,” he replied.

6.408 “O Ānanda, so it is,” the Blessed One replied.

“It is just as you say, Ānanda. Only two persons remained for the Tathāgata to tame. Those were gandharva king Supriya and the mendicant Subhadra. Regarding them I thought, ‘I can easily tame the mendicant Subhadra, but the gandharva king Supriya is arrogant and aloof. So I will leave an emanation here and travel to the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, where I will establish the gandharva king Supriya in the truths before coming back.’ ”

6.409 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what action did Supriya commit and accumulate that ripened into his birth among the gods as a gandharva king, and that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

6.410 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the blessed one, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, an extraordinary teacher of music had come from the south to Vārāṇasī. Since he was a great teacher, King Kṛkī received him and awarded him a large salary, and since worldly people wish for wealth, he expanded the number of servants in his house.

6.411 “At that time in Vārāṇasī there also lived a certain lay vow holder who was a poor man. As he watched these wonderful things happen to the musician, a great desire for them arose in him. ‘It’s by the power of his previous deeds that such things happen to him,’ he thought. ‘Such deeds are good indeed!’ Having thought this, he went for refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed,

‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and may I become a king among musicians. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

6.412 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that lay vow holder then is none other than the gandharva king Supriya. The act of going for refuge, maintaining the fundamental precepts all his life, and saying that prayer at the time of his death ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

6.413 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

6.414 The monks requested the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why, even amid the pain of dying, you took on such difficulties for the sake of taming someone.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, amid the pain of dying I took on great difficulties for the sake of taming someone. Listen well!

6.415 “Monks, in times gone by, King Jaya (Victorious) reigned in the city of Undefeated Victory. One day the queen conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, ‘What name should we give this child?’ And they named him, saying, ‘Since this is the child of Jaya, his name will be Vijaya.’

6.416 “Then they reared young Vijaya on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as the young

man grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one’s head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

6.417 “One day his father told him, ‘Son, your father’s country is wealthy and flourishing. Go now and see the whole of the land.’

“As you wish, father,’ he replied, and with those words the son traveled through the land with scores of attendants. After he had gone, King Jaya passed away, and his ministers sent a messenger to the prince that said, ‘Your father has passed away, so please return and safeguard your father’s kingdom.’

6.418 “The prince was of a loving nature and quite compassionate, with a love for beings, so he immediately dispatched a messenger to the ministers that said, ‘There is only one way this is possible. If you set all of the beings in my father’s kingdom on the path of the ten virtuous actions, then I shall safeguard my father’s country.’

“The ministers dispatched a messenger with a reply that said, ‘As you wish, master.’

6.419 “They invited him and he assumed the mantle of the king, gave gifts, and made merit. To those who wished for food he gave food. To those who wished for something to drink he gave something to drink. To those who wished for clothes he gave clothes. To those who wished for adornments he gave adornments. To those who wished for mounts

he gave mounts. To those who wished for other goods he gave other goods, and for the sick and for homes for the sick he provided everything that they needed, appointing healers and attendants.

6.420 “He served the orphaned. He prepared a great deal of food and drink and made gifts of it to the creatures that flew through the sky, dwelt in the water, or made their homes in the fields. He set the worldly on the path of the ten virtuous actions, and thereafter, their embrace of the path of the ten virtuous actions was cause for the greater part of those beings to take birth among the gods, until they began to fill all the gods’ residences.

6.421 “Then Śakra, king of the gods, thought, ‘There are only two reasons for all the gods’ residences to fill up—the appearance of the Tathāgata, or the appearance of a universal monarch. Has the Tathāgata appeared in the world, or has a universal monarch appeared in the world?’ But when he looked, he saw that neither had the Tathāgata appeared in the world, nor had a universal monarch appeared. ‘Well then, because of whom have the gods’ residences become full?’ he wondered.

6.422 “Śakra, King of the Gods, looked, and saw that it was because of King Vijaya. He thought, ‘What is he trying to do there?’ and when he looked again he saw that he was practicing to attain unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Then Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, ‘I will go for a time and see for myself whether he is of firm resolve. If this being’s resolve is firm, I shall worship him. If this being’s resolve is not firm, I shall steady him.’ With this in mind, Śakra, King of the Gods, emanated himself in the region as a variety of beings, and the emanations said to the ministers, ‘If the king satisfies us with food and drink, afterward we too will adopt the path of the ten virtuous actions and abide by it.’

6.423 “The ministers made the request of King Vijaya, and King Vijaya summoned the emanations and

told them, ‘I shall satisfy you with food and drink.’ The emanations replied, ‘Deva, you will not be able to satisfy us with food and drink, for we eat the flesh of humans freshly killed, and drink their blood.’

“The king thought, ‘These are nonhuman spirits! Flesh and blood like that can’t be had without killing someone. Well then, if they are going to adopt the path of the ten virtuous actions and abide by it, I will satisfy them with my own flesh and blood.’

6.424 “The Bodhisattva said to the emanations, ‘If you completely adopt the path of the ten virtuous actions and abide by it, I shall satisfy you with my own flesh and blood.’

“‘As you wish,’ replied the emanations.

6.425 “The Bodhisattva immediately began carving the flesh out from all over his body and handing it to them, all the while praying for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, ‘By this root of virtue, may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way—an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a Blessed Buddha.’

6.426 “After praying for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, he set the emanations on the path of the ten virtuous actions. Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, ‘Though this bodhisattva has performed an extraordinary austerity, I cannot restore his body. Still, I must spur him on.’ With this thought, he said to the Bodhisattva, ‘My friend, are you not even a little unhappy to cut away your flesh and sever your sinews and veins?’

“The Bodhisattva replied, ‘Oh, I’m not the least bit unhappy to cut away my flesh or to sever my sinews and veins. As I witness my own distress, I feel especially strong compassion for beings born

as hell beings, animals, or anguished spirits.’

6.427 “ ‘How could I possibly believe you, my friend?’ asked Śakra.

“ ‘You will rejoice at my invocation of the truth,’ the Bodhisattva said. With that the Bodhisattva began to invoke the truth, saying, ‘If it is true that I’m not the least bit unhappy to cut away my flesh and to sever my sinews and veins, then by these words of truth may my body be restored.’ No sooner had the Bodhisattva said this than his body was restored.

6.428 “Śakra, King of the Gods, assumed his natural form, bowed down at the feet of the Bodhisattva, and asked his forgiveness. ‘My friend,’ he said, ‘forgive me for harming you with such ill intent, for though I had intended this to spur you on, in the end I only hurt you.’ With that, Śakra, King of the Gods, disappeared on the spot.

6.429 “O monks, what do you think? I was the one who was that bodhisattva then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. There as well, amid the pain of dying I took on great difficulties for the sake of taming someone.”

THE END

Next: *The Worthy of Offerings Litany*



The Story of Subhadra the Mendicant

Carmen Yang / 16 years old

Part Six (8)

The Worthy of
Offerings Litany

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་ལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Worthy of Offerings Litany

6.430 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain householder. When the time came for him to marry, he took a wife and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. In time he found faith in the Buddha, faith in the Dharma, and faith in the Saṅgha, went for refuge, took the fundamental precepts, and began to give gifts and make merit. The householder became like an open well, and the monks who were assigned to his house on behalf of the saṅgha took their food there every day.

6.431 One day the householder extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks and contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Once he knew that the Blessed One had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, the householder brought in a very low seat and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

6.432 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, the householder destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. After the Blessed One had instructed,

encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma he rose from his seat and departed.

6.433 One day it was the turn of a monk who had newly become an arhat to take his meal there on behalf of the assembly. He came accompanied by a non-returner affiliated with the monastery.

6.434 After the householder had provided food for both of them, Venerable Śāriputra thought, “That monk doesn’t know how to recite the Worthy of Offerings litany for the householder.” So Venerable Śāriputra went to the house himself and sat down upon the seat that had been prepared. The monks said to him, “Elder brother, we request that you please chant the Worthy of Offerings litany.”

6.435 Venerable Śāriputra observed that the assembly was indeed worthy of offerings, so he recited the Worthy of Offerings litany accordingly and said, “I myself cannot tell you the karmic ripening of the fruits of each portion given. The Blessed One is omniscient. He understands an action’s ripening and result.”

6.436 After he recited the Worthy of Offerings litany, he also taught the householder and his wife the Dharma particularly suited to them, such that the householder and his wife manifested the resultant state of non-return. After Venerable Śāriputra had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted them with a discourse on the Dharma, he rose from his seat and departed.

6.437 One day the householder thought, “I have had enough of living at home. I will go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.” Both spouses gave gifts and made merit, and went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One. Once gone forth, they cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood.

Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

6.438 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “what action did this married couple take that ripened into their births into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that they pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him; that they went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

6.439 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, they went forth in his teaching.

6.440 “They gave gifts, made merit, and practiced pure conduct all their lives. Then at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever we are born, may it be into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

6.441 “O monks, what do you think? Those who were the two married persons then and went forth in the teaching of Buddha Kāśyapa are none other than these two married persons who have gone

forth now. The acts of going forth, giving gifts and making merit, practicing pure conduct all their lives, and saying that prayer at the time of their deaths ripened such that wherever they were born, it was into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that they pleased me and did not displease me, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *Latecomers to the Dharma: Two Stories*



Part Six (9)

Latecomers to the Dharma:
Two Stories

- 9. i The First “Latecomer” Story
- 9. ii The Second “Latecomer” Story

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟུང་།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 Latecomers to the Dharma: Two Stories

9.1 The First “Latecomer” Story

6.442 When the Blessed One was in the garden of Prince Jeta in Śrāvastī, Anāthapiṇḍada commissioned the construction of a monastery complete in every respect. He offered it to the Blessed One and the rest of saṅgha of monks, and began to give gifts and make merit.

6.443 At that time there was another householder in Śrāvastī who thought, “How can I outshine the householder Anāthapiṇḍada in gift giving?” Then he thought, “Aha! If I venture out onto the great ocean to Ratnadvīpa and complete my voyage, upon my return I shall be able to outshine the householder Anāthapiṇḍada’s gift giving.”

6.444 So he ventured out onto the great ocean to Ratnadvīpa, completed his voyage, and returned to Śrāvastī. Upon his return he began to give gifts and make merit, but he was still unable to outshine the householder Anāthapiṇḍada.

One day the householder asked Venerable Śāriputra, “Lord Śāriputra, by what means can my virtue outshine Anāthapiṇḍada’s gift giving?”

6.445 “Householder, Anāthapiṇḍada’s merit is of great renown,” Venerable Śāriputra told him. “He can see treasures, whether they belong to someone or to no one, or whether they are in the water or on dry

land, near or far. That’s why you can’t outshine him in giving. You could only outshine him by going forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

6.446 No sooner had the householder heard this than he gave gifts, made merit, and went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One. Having gone forth, he cast away all afflictive emotions with diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

6.447 The householder Anāthapiṇḍada heard that such-and-such a householder had gone forth in the doctrine of the Buddha to outshine him, and that after going forth he had cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship. When he heard this, the householder Anāthapiṇḍada surged with joy. He went to see the monk, bowed down at his feet, and said, “By going forth you have outshone me. For as long as I live, I shall serve you with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, a seat, and medicines for the sick—whatever you need.”

6.448 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why this householder wanting to outshine the householder Anāthapiṇḍada in giving, but, unable to do so, instead outshone him by going forth, and why he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

6.449 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, this householder decided to outshine the householder

Āṣāḍha in giving, but, being unable to do so, he outshone him by going forth. He practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, 'I have practiced pure conduct in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa all my life, given gifts, and made merit. By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.'

6.450 "O monks, what do you think? The one who was that householder then is none other than this monk. At that time too he wanted to outshine the householder Āṣāḍha in giving and was unable to outshine him. Only by going forth was he able to do so. Now as well he thought to outshine the householder Anāthapiṇḍada in giving and was unable to outshine him, but by going forth he was able to do so.

6.451 "At that time he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, 'While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.' "

6.452 "Lord," the monks further asked of the Blessed Buddha, "tell us why this monk, intent on vast deeds, sought to outshine others and sought not to be outshone by others himself."

"Not only now," the Blessed One explained, "but in times past as well, and in the same way, intent on vast deeds, he wished to outshine others, and

sought not to be outshone by others himself.

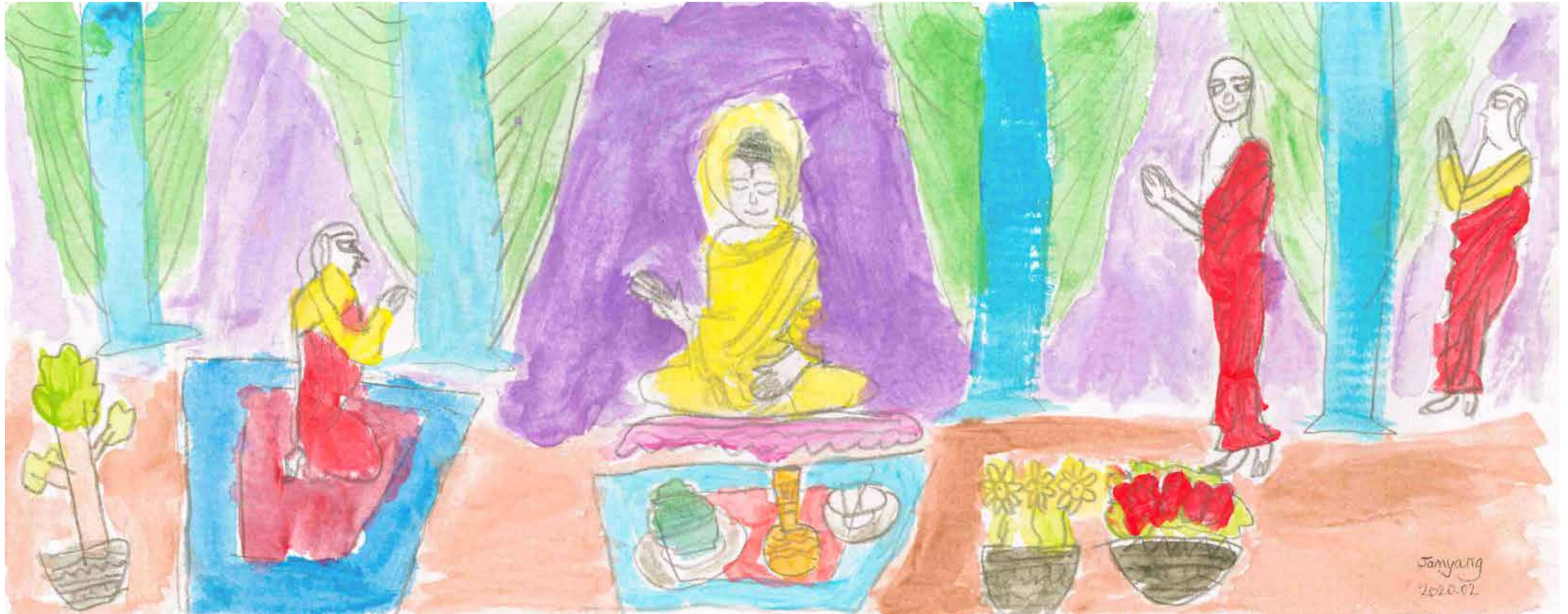
6.453 "Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as thirty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kanakamuni was in the world, he totally and completely awakened unto unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment and then traveled to the royal palace called Śobhāvātī.

6.454 "On his behalf, King Śobha started building a monastery in his own gardens. He called together his sons and ministers, the different divisions of army, the townspeople, those from the surrounding countryside, and a great mass of others, and told them, 'Let those among you who can generate a great deal of wealth build this monastery!'

6.455 "At that time there was a certain householder who began generating even greater wealth than the king. He generated wealth until he had nine billion pieces of gold, and then he could not generate any more. 'As a duly consecrated king,' he thought, 'King Śobha will be embarrassed by this.' Thinking this, he gave up generating any more wealth.

6.456 "When King Śobha had completed the monastery in every respect, he offered it to the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kanakamuni and his saṅgha of disciples, and prayed, 'By this root of virtue, may I please and not displease a teacher just like this one. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.'

6.457 "O monks, what do you think? The one who was that householder then is none other than this householder. At that time too, intent on vast deeds, he sought to outshine others, and sought not to be outshone by others himself. Now as well, intent on vast deeds, he sought to outshine others, and sought not to be outshone by others himself."



The First "Latecomer" Story

Jamyang Sun / 8 years old

9. ii The Second “Latecomer” Story

6.458 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, as the foolish people of Videha were massacring the Śākya, there lived in Kapilavastu two sons of Venerable Ānanda’s sister whose parents had been taken from them, and who were orphaned and drifting about Kapilavastu.

6.459 During that time there was a certain householder of Śrāvastī who was a friend of the boys’ father and had come to Kapilavastu to do some work. When he saw the two boys, he immediately recognized them and asked, “Boys, where are your parents?”

6.460 “The people of Videha killed them,” they said. “They have been taken from us. Now we are orphaned and drifting here and there.”

“If there are no relatives to look after you, you should go to Śrāvastī,” advised the householder. “Lord Ānanda is your uncle, and he loves his relatives. He will look after the two of you.”

6.461 “We don’t know the way to the garden of Prince Jeta,” said the two boys. “How do we get there?”

“Boys, come with me,” the householder said. “I have to go to Kapilavastu on an errand. When I’m done, I’ll bring you to the garden of Prince Jeta.” Having spoken thus, the householder departed.

6.462 After he finished his work in Kapilavastu, the householder led the boys to Śrāvastī. He brought them before the gate of the garden of Prince Jeta and told them, “Your uncle lives here in a hermitage. He will look after you,” and departed.

6.463 After he had gone, the boys walked in through a door and began to make themselves at home, but Ānanda did not recognize them and asked, “Who are you boys? Where did you come from?”

They replied, “We are the sons of such-and-such a Śākya in Kapilavastu.”

6.464 “Where have your parents gone?” asked Ānanda.

“The people of Videha killed them,” the boys replied. “We were left behind as orphans, with no one to look after us, so the two of us have been drifting here and there. We heard that our uncle was in the garden of Prince Jeta, so we came here to see him.”

6.465 Hearing this, Venerable Ānanda became despondent and thought, “What should I do?”

The monks saw him and asked, “Lord Ānanda, why are you so despondent?”

“These two boys are my sister’s sons,” Ānanda responded. “They came here because they lost their parents, and I am despondent to see them so. But how can I look after these two? For as the Buddha has said, ‘One should not misuse the donations of the faithful.’”

6.466 The monks said, “Did the Blessed One not also state, ‘You should be helpful and generous’? These two could look after the alms bowls for us and help with the flowers and fruit.”

6.467 After that, Venerable Ānanda took in the two boys and looked after them. The monks also came bearing a little food and gave it to the two of them. Venerable Ānanda also gave them half of whatever alms he received, and himself ate only what was left, such that he became frail, gaunt, and emaciated and lost all his strength.

6.468 The Blessed One observed that Venerable Ānanda had become frail, gaunt, and emaciated and had lost all his strength. Seeing this, the Blessed One asked the monks, “Monks, why has the monk Ānanda become frail, gaunt, and emaciated and lost all his strength?”

6.469 “Lord,” the monks replied to the Blessed One, “Venerable Ānanda has taken in his sister’s sons. He gives them half of whatever alms he receives, and himself eats only what is left. Lord, that is the cause, and those are the conditions, for Venerable Ānanda’s becoming frail, gaunt, and emaciated and losing all his strength.”

6.470 Then the Blessed One asked Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, are these two boys to go forth?”

“They will go forth,” was his reply.

6.471 The Blessed One declared to the monks, “Monks, I shall permit food belonging to the saṅgha to be given to those who are to go forth. There are different types of work they can do starting out, such as looking after the alms bowls, or offering flowers, fruits, and tooth-sticks.”

6.472 Once the Blessed One had given permission for the boys to partake of the food belonging to the saṅgha and they had finished eating it, they began to sit and play. So the Blessed One asked Venerable Ānanda, “You said that these two boys would go forth, Ānanda, so why have they not gone forth?”

“Blessed One, they will go forth,” he replied.

6.473 The Blessed One asked, “Well then, what has become of their going forth?”

“The Blessed One has said that a person should neither go forth as a novice nor receive full ordination before the age of fifteen years,” he replied. “How then are we to lead these two to go forth if they are hardly seven years of age?”

6.474 “Ānanda,” the Blessed One replied, “are they able to chase away crows from the food set out for the saṅgha?”

“Yes, Blessed One, they can do that.”

“If that is the case,” the Blessed One replied, “then they may go forth at the age of seven if they are able to chase away a crow. The Blessed One will similarly permit the going forth of others who are both seven years of age and able to chase away a crow.”

6.475 So Venerable Ānanda led the two boys to go forth as novices and had them learn recitation. After that, because he considered them family, loved them, and took pride in them, he was not able to teach them, and they passed their days in gossip and their nights in sloth and slumber.

6.476 When Venerable Maudgalyāyana saw them, he

asked Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, why aren’t you teaching these two boys?”

“Lord Mahāmaudgalyāyana,” Ānanda replied, “because they consider me an equal, and I am overcome with affection for them, I can’t keep them in line.”

6.477 “Ānanda, if you are overcome with affection for them and can’t teach them, then place them with another monk.”

“Lord Mahāmaudgalyāyana, who could set aside their own virtuous work to train these two?”

6.478 “Ask one of your friends,” he replied.

“You are my friend, Lord,” said Ānanda.

So Venerable Ānanda took the boys by the hand and presented them to Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, saying, “Boys, you two cannot study with me. Study with Lord Mahāmaudgalyāyana.”

6.479 The two boys thought, “This monk is no softie, that’s for sure. That’s why he handed us over to him.” Bearing this in mind they were diligent in their studies. But when they happily discovered that Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana was also gentle and friendly, the two began to consider him an equal as well, and could not learn from him.

6.480 Venerable Ānanda asked, “Lord Mahāmaudgalyāyana, why is it you aren’t teaching these two?”

“Venerable Ānanda, they consider me an equal as well,” he replied, “so I can’t teach them.”

6.481 “Then fill them with weariness for saṃsāra. If you don’t, they won’t be able to learn,” said Venerable Ānanda.

“As you wish, Venerable Ānanda,” he said.

6.482 Maudgalyāyana took the boys on a walk and along the way emanated hell beings so the boys would feel disenchanted with saṃsāra. The two boys heard very menacing sounds not far from where they were walking and went to Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana. Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana asked them, “Boys, what is that sound?”

“Master, we’re not entirely sure what that sound is,” they said.

6.483 Mahāmaudgalyāyana told them, “You two go and see where those noises are coming from.”

They did as Venerable Maudgalyāyana instructed and walked in the direction of the noise. When they neared the sounds, they saw the sufferings the hell beings endured—being cut up, hacked apart, beaten, roasted, and so on—and asked them, “Who are you?”

“We are hell beings,” replied the emanations.

6.484 Then the two noticed a great boiling iron cauldron with nothing being cooked in it and asked, “Why is this iron cauldron boiling here for no reason?”

“It isn’t boiling here for no reason,” the emanations said. “Ānanda’s sister’s two sons went forth and began to enjoy the food donated to the saṅgha, but now they’ve become lazy, and when they die they will take rebirth here. This cauldron sits and boils for those two.”

6.485 When they heard this the boys flushed with terror and fled to Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana. When he saw them, Mahāmaudgalyāyana asked, “Boys, where were those noises coming from?”

The two boys related everything in detail to Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana and he advised them, “Boys, if I had told you this, you would not have believed me. Now that both of you have seen it with your own eyes, don’t let yourselves take rebirth as hell beings.”

6.486 After they heard this the boys immediately became diligent in their studies. When they remembered the suffering of the hell beings in the morning, they would push their food away. When they remembered it in the afternoon, they would vomit up their food. This caused them both to become frail, gaunt, and emaciated and lose all their strength.

6.487 When Venerable Ānanda saw them he

asked Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, “Lord Mahāmaudgalyāyana, why have these two become so frail, gaunt, and emaciated and lost all their strength?” Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana explained everything to him in detail.

6.488 Venerable Ānanda said to him, “Their despair is overwhelming—they are going to get sick. You have to cheer them up.”

“As you wish,” Mahāmaudgalyāyana replied.

6.489 So Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana told the two boys, “Take up your mats. Let’s go for a walk.”

The two of them said, “That’s enough walking for us, noble one. We’ll just stay right here and study.”

6.490 “We’re not going back to that place on our walk, boys,” Mahāmaudgalyāyana assured them.

“We’re going somewhere else.” And he took the boys on a walk to another place.

6.491 To cheer them up, Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana emanated a god realm not far from the place where they were having their walk. In that heaven there was a young god decorated with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones and surrounded by young goddesses. They began playing music and enjoying themselves and coupling.

6.492 The boys heard the sounds of music not far from the place where they were walking and went to Venerable Maudgalyāyana. When Venerable Maudgalyāyana saw them, he asked, “Boys, what is that sound?”

“Master, we’re not entirely sure what that sound is,” they replied.

6.493 Maudgalyāyana told them, “You two go and see where that sound is coming from.”

They did as Venerable Maudgalyāyana had instructed and walked in the direction of the sound. Upon their arrival, they looked around and saw a young god decorated with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones and surrounded by young goddesses, all playing music, enjoying themselves,

and coupling.

6.494 When the boys saw them they asked, “Who are you?”

“We are gods,” said the emanations.

They noticed two lion thrones surrounded by a great number of goddesses, but no young gods sat upon them. They were amazed by this sight, and asked, “How could these lion thrones be empty, with no young gods seated upon them?”

6.495 The emanations said, “Ānanda’s sister’s two sons went forth and have now begun exerting themselves. When they die and transmigrate, they will take rebirth here, and we will enjoy ourselves with them, coupling on these lion thrones.”

6.496 Seeing this, the boys experienced a surge of happiness. “Our efforts will bring great results! Not only are we free from rebirth as hell beings, but now we shall achieve rebirth as gods.” In their happiness they returned to Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana. When he saw them Mahāmaudgalyāyana asked, “Boys, where was that sound coming from?”

6.497 The two boys related everything in detail to Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, whereupon Maudgalyāyana advised them, “Boys, if I had told you this, you would not have believed me. Now that both of you have seen it with your own eyes, you must be particularly diligent.”

Upon hearing this, the boys immediately began to study with extra diligence again.

6.498 Then one day they heard the discourse on the *Wheel-like Compendium* and thought, “Since we’ve been circling in saṃsāra over and over again like buckets on a waterwheel—as hell beings, animals, anguished spirits, gods, and humans—there’s no need for us to take rebirth as gods, nor is there any need for us to take rebirth as humans. Let us put our efforts into achieving non-existence.”

6.499 Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, knowing their disillusionment, conferred on them instructions to be pondered, and they cast away all afflictive

emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

6.500 After achieving arhatship, using emanations, they traveled from one place to another, picking up flowers and fruits that were out of season to make offerings to the saṅgha. Their fellow practitioners of the holy life thought, “These two are very powerful.” Seeing them, they developed weariness for saṃsāra and thought, “If they can achieve such great virtues as these at seven years of age, why have we not achieved the same, when the color of our hair has already gone from black to grey to white?” In weariness for saṃsāra they cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship.

6.501 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “what actions did these two novices take that ripened into their going forth at just seven years of age, casting away all afflictive emotions, and manifesting arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers.”

6.502 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, one day he traveled through Kāśi

attended by a large saṅgha of monks, and arrived in Vārāṇasī.

6.503 “At that time a group of some five hundred friends walked into the gardens, playing drums, enjoying themselves, and coupling. The group of friends saw the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa from a distance and thought, ‘Now that the world is adorned with the presence of a buddha, Jambudvīpa will fill up with arhats. We have dwelt at home long enough. We should go forth into the doctrine of the Buddha.’

6.504 “Some replied, ‘We should indulge our cravings while our bodies are still young. We’ll go forth later on, when we’re old. We’ll get there.’ Having said this, they did not go forth.

6.505 “Some among them bore children. Others died. One day some of them realized, ‘There are others who can carry out the affairs of the house now. Let us then go and go forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.’

“Some others said to them, ‘Right now we have to build houses for our children and give our daughters away in marriage,’ and they did not go forth at that time either.

6.506 “One day, after almost all of them had died, only two remained. Then those two began to feel disillusioned about saṃsāra and thought, ‘Back when we were twenty-five and young, we all felt a sense of faith and had a chance to go forth, but we did not do it. Now everyone has died, and only the two of us remain. We’ve become elderly and infirm, and we’ll probably die soon. We have dwelt at home long enough. We should go forth into the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.’ Having thought this, they gave gifts and made merit, and went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

6.507 “The Blessed One has said that beginner monks should serve and respect the saṅgha, so they stayed

and served the saṅgha. As they did, others began referring to them as ‘latecomers.’ This made one of them very unhappy. The other, who was very patient, told him, ‘Lord, they’re not to blame. We’re to blame. Let your mind not be filled with hatred toward these monks. It’s not their fault. It’s our fault. If the two of us had gone forth when we were young, they wouldn’t be calling us latecomers. They refer to us as latecomers because the two of us went forth after we were already old.’

6.508 “After his explanation, the other understood and fell silent. Then they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘While we may not have attained any great virtues, still we have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all our lives. Therefore may we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Even should he declare as a fundamental precept that those who are too young may not go forth, may we two be instrumental in his granting permission to do so.’

6.509 “O monks, what do you think? Those who were the latecomers then and went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa are none other than these two novices. At that time they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths they prayed thus.

6.510 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, manifested arhatship, and that they have become instrumental in my permitting those who

are seven years of age and able to chase away a crow to go forth.”

6.511 *This concludes Part Six of The Hundred Deeds.*

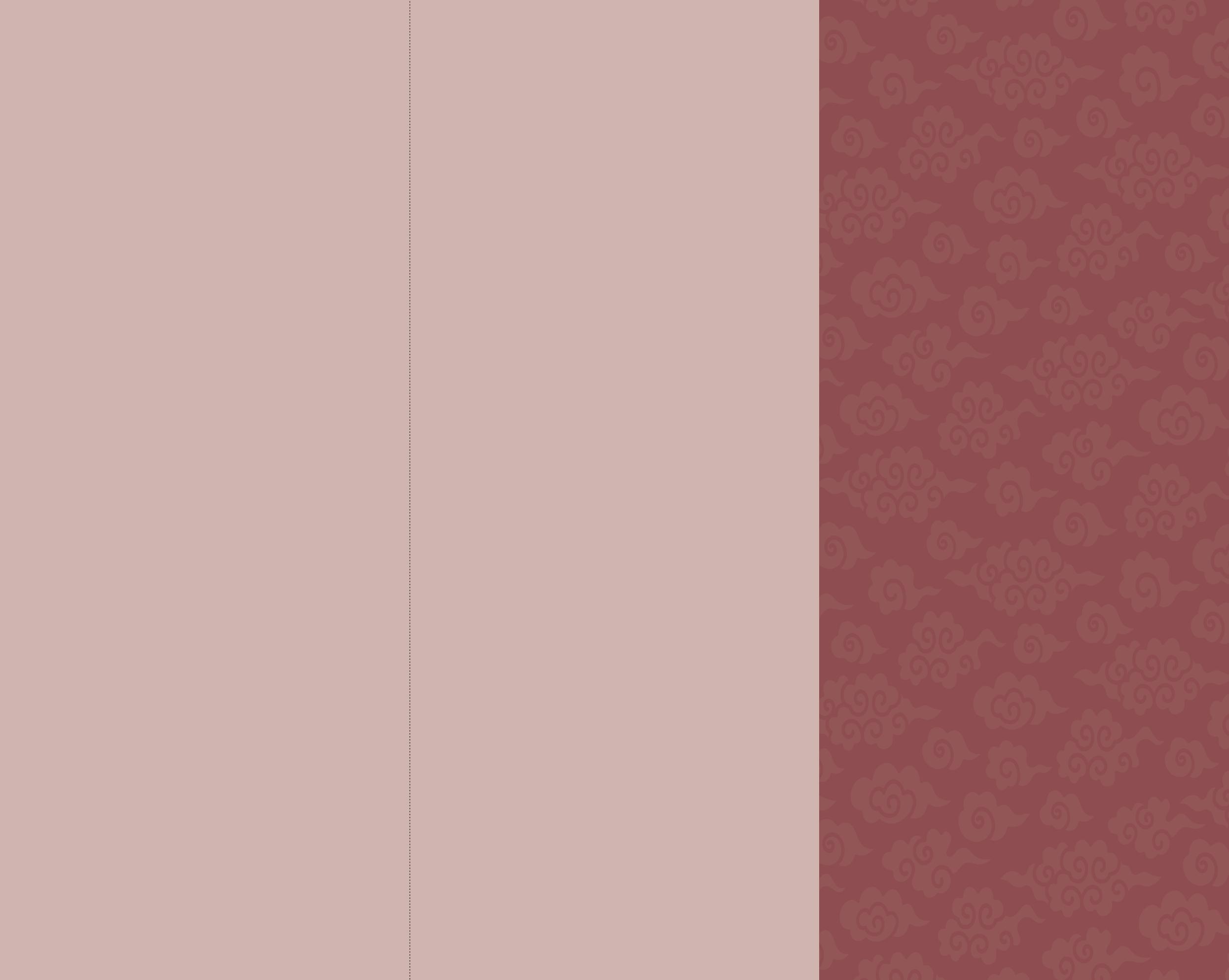
THE END

Next: *Part Seven: The Story of Paṅgu*



The Second "Latecomer" Story

Gaya Norbu Wogmatsang Wangdue & Buddhi Wogmatsang Wangdue / 9 & 4 years old



The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་པ།
Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Part Seven

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|---|---|
| 1. The Story of Paṅgu | 7. The Story of Saraṇa |
| 2. Bhādra | 8. The Mṛgavratins |
| 3. The Blind Man | 9. The Story of Candrā |
| 4. The Story of Nirgrantha
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Two Stories |
| 5. The Story of Foremost
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an Elephant | 10. ii The Second “Kinnara”
Story |
-

Part Seven (1)

The Story of
Paṅgu

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Story of Paṅgu

7.2 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder who, when the time came for him to marry, took a wife. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed she gave birth to a child. The upper part of the child's body was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, but the limbs of his lower body were incomplete.

7.3 No sooner had the child been born than the household began to succeed in all its endeavors. Its merchants traveling by land accomplished their aims, their merchants traveling by sea on great seafaring vessels accomplished their aims, and all of them safely returned. Their cattle and buffalo herds also thrived.

7.4 Since everything they did was successful, the householder thought, "It's all on account of our child that every one of our endeavors is successful. This child of mine who was born without feeling in his limbs has glorious qualities." At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, "What name should we give this child?" And they named him, saying, "Since this child is one who moves about by crawling, his name will also be Paṅgu." They reared young Paṅgu on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids.

7.5 The more he grew, the more the wealth of the household increased as well. Soon people began to say, "Because of him, whatever endeavors they

undertake are successful. What glorious qualities this child has!" As soon as they heard this, the many inhabitants of Śrāvastī started to go see him from time to time. Afterward they undertook whatever aims they wished to accomplish in the name of the child, and they were successful. So it was that he became famous throughout Śrāvastī.

7.6 When he grew up, his father made a jeweled palanquin for him to ride in. At home, they made him learn letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

7.7 One day, as he was riding in the palanquin accompanied by a great throng, he entered the grounds of the garden. When he looked out from the palanquin, he saw a large crowd—group after group and elder after elder—convening in the garden of Prince Jeta. Seeing them, he asked in amazement, "Where is this great crowd headed?"

"We're going to see the Blessed One," they replied.

7.8 "What is this 'Blessed One'?" the lame young man asked.

"At the foot of the Himalayas, not far from the hermitage of the sage Kapila, a child was born to the Śākya," they explained. "The brahmin sign tellers and augurs predicted, 'If he remains here at home, he will become a universal monarch, but if he shaves his head and face and dons the colorful religious robes, and if with nothing short of perfect faith he goes forth from home to live as a mendicant, then he will be renowned throughout the world as a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha.'"

7.9 As soon as the young brahmin heard this, he was eager to meet the Blessed One. Accompanied by

the great crowd he went to the garden of Prince Jeta, where the Blessed One sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds.

7.10 Young Paṅgu saw the Blessed One from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When he saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled him with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

7.11 After seeing him he descended from the palanquin in reverence toward the Buddha, crawled on four limbs before the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, Paṅgu destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

7.12 Having seen the truths, he thought, "If my body weren't like this, I too would go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, to ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort." No sooner had he thought this than the limbs of his body were made whole. As he rejoiced, he was especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One.

7.13 In his joy he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, and asked the Blessed One, "Lord, if permitted I wish to go

forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life."

7.14 With the words "Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life," the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

7.15 "Lord," the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, "what action did Paṅgu take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth? What action did he take that ripened into his becoming a paraplegic; that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him; that as soon as he felt a sense of renunciation, his misfortune vanished and he became fortunate instead; and that he went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?"

7.16 "Monks," the Blessed One recounted, "in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a

certain lay vow holder in Vārāṇasī who was a very learned proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of wisdom and freedom. All the other lay vow holders held him in high esteem, and revered, honored, and venerated him.

7.17 “The totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa had taken up residence in Vārāṇasī, and while he was there many lay vow holders came before him to listen to the Dharma. Whenever the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa traveled from their region to another place, the other lay vow holders would go to listen to the Dharma from that certain lay vow holder in Vārāṇasī. All the other lay vow holders would make a gift of five hundred gold coins to that lay vow holder. Those lay vow holders would also offer five hundred gold coins to the saṅgha.

7.18 “One day that lay vow holder went to the monastery with the group of other lay vow holders. The entire saṅgha of monks was performing a monastic ritual, so the caretaker of the monastery sent all the lay vow holders away from the monastery and told them they weren’t allowed to listen.

7.19 “The group of lay vow holders said, ‘The monks can send us away like that, but why should they send away a learned proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of wisdom and freedom, such as you? None among them is as erudite as you are.’

7.20 “This angered the lay vow holder and he shouted at the monks, ‘You all perch on your thrones as if you were disabled! Everything I earn I give to you, and now you’ve disgraced me in public without so much as a word to me personally!’

7.21 “The monks thought, ‘This emotionally afflicted person has become quite abased,’ and they said to the lay vow holder, ‘You must confess the mistake you’ve made by speaking harshly to us. Otherwise your actions are sure to bring an ugly result.’

7.22 “The lay vow holder was flooded with regret. He

said, ‘It was wrong for me to speak harshly to ones so worthy of offerings.’ He confessed his mistake, gave gifts and made merit, went for refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life.

7.23 “At the time of his death, he prayed, ‘Oh, in this way may I not meet with the results of the wrongful act of speaking harshly to such pure beings. Should the results of that action ripen to me, then as soon as I feel a sense of renunciation, may that misfortune vanish and may I be fortunate instead. May I serve the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha, give gifts and make merit, go for refuge, and maintain the fundamental precepts all my life. By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May my name be auspicious the world over. May all my intentions and all my wishes be successfully fulfilled.’

7.24 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that lay vow holder then is none other than Paṅgu. The act of speaking harshly to the monks ripened such that for five hundred lives he was a paraplegic. The acts of giving gifts and making merit, taking refuge, maintaining the fundamental precepts all his life, and praying at the time of his death ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that his name became auspicious the world over; that he pleased me, and did not displease me; that as soon as he felt a sense of renunciation, his misfortune vanished and he became fortunate instead; and that he went forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *Bhādra*



The Story of Pañgu

Gloria / 8 years old

Part Seven (2)

Bhādra

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 Bhādra

7.25 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, deep in a certain forest there lived some five hundred sages who had settled down there to perform ritual fire pūjās.

7.26 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

7.27 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command

of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

7.28 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

7.29 The Blessed One thought, “The time has come to tame these five hundred sages,” whereupon the Blessed One performed a miracle that caused all five hundred sages to see evidence of the Buddha’s footprints all over the inside of the hearths they used for their ritual fire pūjās. Then they found they could not kindle their fires anymore, and they thought, “It’s by the might of these footprints that we can’t kindle a fire in these hearths. It seems that these footprints must somehow be auspicious—are these the footprints of Mahādeva?”

7.30 All five hundred sages offered those things intended for the sacrificial fire to the footprints of the Buddha, and by the power of the Buddha the offerings burst into flames that reached all the way up to Brahmāloka. The sages were amazed at the sight, and they thought, “Mahādeva thinks of us.”

7.31 To guide them, the Blessed One then performed a miracle that caused the footprints to lead, one after another, into the garden of Prince Jeta. The sages saw the emanated footprints, one after another, leading away from their ritual fire pūjās, and thought, “Mahādeva went this way!” They followed one footprint after another, making offerings as they went, until eventually they entered the garden of Prince Jeta, where the Blessed One was teaching

the Dharma amid a company of hundreds.

7.32 The five hundred sages saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When they saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled them with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

7.33 After they saw him they approached the Blessed One, touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. When they heard it they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of non-return right where they sat.

7.34 After seeing the truths they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, "Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life."

7.35 With the words "Come, join me, monks!" the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments

of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

7.36 "Lord," the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, "tell us why, by showing the sages the footprints, the Blessed One led them to go forth and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa."

"Not only now," the Blessed One explained, "but in times past as well, with footprints I led these five hundred sages to go forth, whereupon they practiced pure conduct all their lives. Listen well!"

7.37 "Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa put on a great display of miracles. Out of compassion for people in times to come, and so that he might lead the five hundred sages, he performed a miracle that caused them to take the appearance of the Buddha's footprints as a sign.

7.38 "At that time in the south, there were some five hundred sages living in a certain forest for practicing austerities. As they traveled through the heavens above the footprints of the Blessed Buddha to Gandhamādana Mountain, they were amazed to find themselves unable to go any farther, as if obstructed by Mount Sumeru itself. 'Our

miraculous powers have not waned,’ they thought. ‘How can it be we are obstructed in the sky?’

7.39 “A god who was fond of them explained, ‘Though your miraculous powers have not waned, far below you are footprints of the Buddha. Beyond them even Śakra and Brahmā cannot pass.’ The sages took great delight in the footprints. In their joy they descended to the earth and began to venerate the footprints. To lead them, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa performed a miracle that caused the footprints to float up one by one to where the sages were hovering, and the sages thought, ‘These footprints belong to Mahādeva. He went this way!’ Thinking this, the sages began following the footprints, and then all five hundred sages saw the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa from a distance.

7.40 “At the sight of him, they experienced a surge of joy toward the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. In their joy they approached the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward him with palms pressed together, and requested, ‘Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.’

7.41 “After the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them, they practiced pure conduct all their lives. Though they did not achieve any great virtues, at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘While we may not have attained any great virtues, still we have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all our lives. Therefore,

may we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

7.42 “O monks, what do you think? Those five hundred sages then are none other than these five hundred sages now. At that time they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths, they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

7.43 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Blind Man*



Part Seven (3)

The
Blind Man

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Blind Man

7.44 When the Blessed One was in Mahādeva Mango Grove in Mithilā, there lived in Mithilā a certain householder named Variegated. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

7.45 When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was deformed and blind. When the householders saw their child, both parents were devastated. “It is a rare thing to give birth to a son, but one who turns out like this, deformed and blind, is of no use to us,” they said. “When night falls, we’ll toss him out to the dogs.” So his parents brought him outside, set him down on the main road, and left him for the dogs.

7.46 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their

buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

7.47 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

7.48 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

7.49 The Blessed One thought, “The time has come for me to make a revelation about this child. He will be instrumental in guiding a great many disciples.” With this in mind, the Blessed One performed a miracle that prevented the child from being eaten by dogs, come what may. Early in the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out for Mithilā surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks, until he arrived not far from where the young man was.

7.50 Many of the inhabitants of Mithilā saw the

Blessed Buddha and they were filled with wonder. Impelled by their previous roots of virtue they went to see the Blessed One, and when they arrived before him, the Blessed One thought, “The best thing would be for me to enter into a meditation such that this child remembers his former lives and can converse with me in words.”

7.51 So the Blessed One entered into a meditation such that the child remembered his former lives and could converse with him. Then the Blessed One asked him, “Child, are you an ugly person?”

“O Blessed One, I am an ugly person.”

7.52 “Child, are you an ugly person?”

“Sugata, I am an ugly person.”

7.53 The Blessed One then asked, “Are you now undergoing the hideous repercussions of your misconduct of body, speech, and mind?”

“Blessed One, I am indeed undergoing the hideous repercussions of my misconduct of body, speech, and mind,” he replied.

7.54 The Blessed One continued, “Who guided you to such nonvirtue?”

“My own mind,” he replied.

7.55 Hearing this, immediately the people gathered there wondered, “Who is this being who remembers his former lives and converses with the Blessed One?” The ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult to reach, and they were not able to put their question to the Blessed One. So they inquired of Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, who is this being who recalls his former lives and converses with the Blessed One?”

7.56 “Put your question to the Blessed One,” Venerable Ānanda replied.

“The ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult to reach,” they said, “and their presence is overwhelming. We cannot ask the Blessed Buddha ourselves.”

Ānanda said, “Though the ears of the blessed buddhas are difficult to reach for me as well, out of

compassion for you I shall ask.”

7.57 Venerable Ānanda drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, who is this being who remembers his former lives and converses with the Blessed One?”

“Ānanda,” the Blessed One explained, “this being is one who committed nonvirtuous actions over and over again. The nonvirtuous actions he committed were manifold.

7.58 “Ānanda, in times gone by, a certain king lived in Mithilā whose name was Virūpa. That king developed into a jealous person. When he was surrounded by his retinue of queens and wished to go somewhere—into the gardens or some other place—he cleared all the people off the road, even going so far as to cover their windows and doors with thick curtains. Should someone catch a glimpse of his retinue of queens, he would pluck out that person’s eyes. He rendered many beings blind in this way. One day, he entered the gardens attended by his retinue of queens.

7.59 “In times when a blessed one has not arisen in the world, in compassion for the destitute and suffering the solitary buddhas appear, taking up residence in remote places. Solitary as the rhinoceros, in all the world they alone are worthy of offerings. So it was that a solitary buddha was coming down the road. Without attracting the attention of the king’s attendants he stood before the retinue of queens. When the women noticed the elegance of his body and the elegance of his mind, they were filled with joy. In their joy they opened their veils, bowed down, and paid homage to him.

7.60 “As soon as the king heard about this, he bristled with fury on account of his jealousy. In anger he ordered his royal attendants, “All of you, go pluck out that renunciant’s eyes!” As soon as his royal attendants heard this, they seized the solitary

buddha and plucked out both his eyes. Faced as he was with this manifestation of his previous deeds, the solitary buddha did not think to so much as disguise himself, much less emanate.

7.61 “Then the solitary buddha thought, ‘It’s not right for this emotionally afflicted person, who has become so abased, to circle in saṃsāra and meet with great suffering.’ Reflecting in this way, he thought, ‘I have to help him.’ He rose up into the sky, making a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning.

7.62 “Ordinary people are quickly brought to faith through miracles. When the king saw all this, he bowed down at the solitary buddha’s feet like a tree felled by a saw and said, ‘Oh great fortunate one, please, please come down! I’m mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift me up!’

7.63 “Because he had sustained such injuries, however, the great being passed into parinirvāṇa. The king venerated his relics and prayed, ‘In this way may I not experience the results of the act of causing such a pure being to undergo such agony. By the root of virtue of having paid homage to him, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

7.64 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was King Virūpa then is none other than this blind man. The act of plucking out the solitary buddha’s eyes and rendering hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of beings sightless ripened such that for hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of years he was always blind, and was roasted by hell beings.

7.65 “After dying and transmigrating from there, he took rebirth as an anguished spirit for five hundred lifetimes. This also caused him to undergo great suffering, and he was always blind.

“After dying as an anguished spirit and

transmigrating, he took rebirth as an animal for five hundred lifetimes, where he was also always blind.

“When he died as an animal, he transmigrated and took rebirth as a human being for five hundred lifetimes, and in every birth he was blind.”

7.66 “Lord,” the monks inquired, “when will this being be liberated from his suffering?”

“Monks” the Blessed One replied, “in the future a totally and completely awakened buddha named Sumati, who will far surpass the listeners and the solitary buddhas, will emerge in the world. It is through his teaching that this being will obtain a human birth with all his faculties intact. Then he will go forth in Buddha Sumati’s teaching, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.

7.67 “Even after he has achieved arhatship, one day while he is sleeping crows will appear due to his past actions and pluck out both his eyes. After sustaining such injuries he will pass into parinirvāṇa. It is then that he will be liberated from his past actions.”

As soon as they heard this, the people gathered there welled up with grief, and they thought, “By the force of the afflictive emotions, spiraling through saṃsāra we are sure to meet with sufferings such as these.”

7.68 The Blessed One directly apprehended their grief, taught them the Dharma accordingly and among the assembled some generated heat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing right where they sat.

7.69 Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some

to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

THE END

Next: *The Story of Nirgrantha Kāśyapa*



The Blind Man

Yolanda Zhu / 9 years old

Part Seven (4)

The Story of
Nirgrantha
Kāśyapa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 The Story of Nirgrantha Kāśyapa

7.70 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, a certain poor brahmin who made his living as a farmer lived out in the mountains. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed she gave birth to a child. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” and they named him, saying, “This is a child of the Kāśyapa clan, so his name will likewise be Kāśyapa.”

7.71 They reared young Kāśyapa on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when he grew up he went with his parents to work in the fields. As he looked on he saw hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of living beings being killed. He asked his father, “Father, you are causing hundreds of thousands of living beings to suffer. Why must you make your living this way?”

7.72 “Son, this is the only way for us to make our living. There is no other choice,” his father replied.

The youth thought, “I will give up making a living this way and go live in the forest.” With this thought, he resolved to go forth.

7.73 The Blessed One had achieved unexcelled wisdom and began to act for the benefit of those to be tamed. In time he came to Rājagṛha, and the Blessed One’s fame spread far and wide. The Blessed One let fall a rain of nectar to satisfy living beings.

7.74 When young Kāśyapa heard that the ascetic Gautama was staying in Rājagṛha and had let

fall a rain of nectar to satisfy living beings, he immediately told his parents, “Mother, Father, I am going to practice the holy life in the presence of the ascetic Gautama,” and departed. He went to Rājagṛha as he had said, and there saw the naked saint Nirgrantha Jñātiputra.

7.75 He thought, “There he is—the ascetic Gautama!” and went forth in his presence. After he went forth and studied their system of telling signs, Nirgrantha Jñātiputra became the foremost of his teachers. From that point on he was no longer known as Kāśyapa, and he took the name Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas.

7.76 One day he saw the indications that he was near the end of his life, and he thought, “In seven days I shall be no more.” A deity who delighted in the doctrine of the Blessed One told him, “Don’t despair, Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas. The Blessed One teaches the path of definite escape from death. And he’s staying right here in Rājagṛha. Offer him your respect and service. If you do, things will go well for you.”

7.77 Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas left Rājagṛha as soon as he heard this and set out for Bamboo Grove. On the way he thought, “Monks are modest and shy. Since I am a naked ascetic, I would not dare go and meet them in person, so I won’t go to Bamboo Grove quite yet. Instead, I’ll remain here at the halfway point. Staying here, just halfway, I shall offer the ascetic Gautama my respect and service.”

7.78 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative

absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

7.79 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

7.80 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

7.81 When the Blessed One focused his mind, he realized that the time had come to tame Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas, so he left Bamboo Grove and went to see Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas. When Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance he approached the Blessed One, and when he arrived he made all manner of entertaining and jovial conversation with him and then took a seat at

one side.

7.82 Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas requested the Blessed One, “Gautama, should there be an opportunity for you to answer questions, I would like to ask you about a few matters.”

The Blessed One replied, “Kāśyapa, I have to go to Rājagṛha for a while for alms. This is not the time for me to answer your questions. Wait outside the grove and an opportunity will come for me to answer your questions.”

7.83 “Gautama,” he replied, “if it’s possible for me to change my mind, then perhaps it’s possible that Gautama may change his mind as well.” So Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas beseeched him a second and third time, “Should there be an opportunity for you to answer questions, I would like to ask you about a few matters.”

7.84 And the second and third time, the Blessed One told Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas, “Kāśyapa, I have to go to Rājagṛha for a while for alms. This is not a good time for me to answer your questions, but wait outside of the grove a bit and the opportunity for me to answer your questions will come.”

7.85 “Gautama,” he persisted, “should there be an opportunity for you to answer questions, I would like to ask you about a few matters.”

“Kāśyapa,” the Blessed One replied, “a second and a third time you have insisted on discussing this. Inquire about whatever you wish, Kāśyapa.”

7.86 “Tell me, Gautama, is suffering created by itself?” he asked.

“Kāśyapa, I have not proclaimed that suffering is created by itself,” the Blessed One replied.

7.87 “Tell me, Gautama, is suffering created by another?”

“Kāśyapa, I have not proclaimed that suffering is created by another.”

7.88 “Tell me, Gautama, is suffering created both by itself and by another?”

“Kāśyapa, I have not proclaimed that suffering is created both by itself and by another.”

7.89 “What then, Gautama? If suffering is not created by itself, nor created by another, does it then not arise from a cause?”

“Kāśyapa, this too I have not proclaimed.”

7.90 “What then, Gautama? Aren’t you proclaiming that suffering is neither created by itself, nor created by another, nor arisen from a cause?”

“Kāśyapa, if you are asking whether suffering is created by itself, created by another, or whether or not it arises from a cause, my answer is that I did not proclaim this.”

7.91 “What then, Gautama? Is there no such thing as suffering?”

“Kāśyapa, it’s not that there is no suffering. It merely is.”

7.92 “Tell me, Gautama—if in fact suffering is self-created, can the Blessed One please teach me the Dharma by which I can come to know and see suffering?”

“Kāśyapa, if sensation were self-existent, and experience were also self-existent, then suffering would be created by itself. But this is not what I proclaim, Kāśyapa.

7.93 “Kāśyapa, if sensation were other than itself, and experience also other than itself, then suffering would be created by another. But this is not what I proclaim, Kāśyapa.

“Kāśyapa, if sensation were self-existent, and experience also self-existent, and if at the same time sensation were other than itself, and experience likewise other than itself, then suffering would be created by itself and by another. But this is not what I proclaim, Kāśyapa.

7.94 “Kāśyapa, if there were no conditions for suffering, then suffering could not be created by itself, nor by another, nor would it arise from a cause. But this is not what I proclaim, Kāśyapa.

“The Tathāgata does not rely on the two extremes,

but shows the Dharma of the middle way. If this is, that will occur. This having arisen, that will arise.

7.95 “In this way, due to the condition of ignorance, there are formations. Due to the condition of formations, there is consciousness. Due to the condition of consciousness, there are name and form. Due to the conditions of name and form, there are the six sense bases. Due to the condition of the six sense bases, there is contact. Due to the condition of contact, there is sensation. Due to the condition of sensation, there is craving. Due to the condition of craving, there is appropriation. Due to the condition of appropriation, there is becoming. Due to the condition of becoming, there is birth. Due to the condition of birth, there is old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and strife. Thus does this entire great heap of suffering arise.

7.96 “So it is that without this, that will not occur. If this ceases, that will cease. In this way, due to the cessation of ignorance, formations cease. Due to the cessation of formations, consciousness will cease. Due to the cessation of consciousness, name and form will cease. Due to the cessation of name and form, the six sense bases will cease. Due to the cessation of the six sense bases, contact will cease. Due to the cessation of contact, sensation will cease. Due to the cessation of sensation, craving will cease. Due to the cessation of craving, appropriation will cease. Due to the cessation of appropriation, becoming will cease. Due to the cessation of becoming, birth will cease. Due to the cessation of birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and strife will cease. Thus does this entire great heap of suffering cease.”

7.97 When he had explained this Dharma teaching, Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas was able to see these things unobscured, with the Dharma vision that has no trace of dust or stain with respect to

phenomena. Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas perceived the truths, discovered the truths, realized the truths, and fathomed the truths to their very depths, until whatever doubts or hesitation he had he overcame.

7.98 Then, of his own accord, completely unprompted, and fearless on account of the truths his teacher had shown him, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and declared to the Blessed One, “Lord, I have truly become a noble one. I have truly gone forth. Lord, I take refuge in the Blessed One, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Saṅgha. Please accept me as a lay vow holder, for I have truly come to faith. From this day forth I take refuge with all my heart.” Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas rejoiced, praised all that the Blessed One had said, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took leave of him.

7.99 Not long after Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas had taken leave of the Blessed One, a milk cow kicked him and killed him. At the time of his death his senses were clear, his appearance pure, and his complexion alabaster.

7.100 A group of monks donned their lower garments and Dharma robes, and, carrying their alms bowls, they set out toward Rājagṛha for alms. Along the way they heard that at the halfway point of the path Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas had asked questions of the Blessed One, that not long after he had taken leave of the Blessed One a milk cow kicked him and killed him, and that at the time of his death his senses were clear, his appearance pure, and his complexion alabaster.

7.101 After they heard this the monks took alms in Rājagṛha and ate their meal. Later, after they had finished taking alms, they put away their alms bowls and Dharma robes, washed their feet, and went to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival

they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side.

7.102 Once they had taken a seat at one side, the group of monks said to the Blessed One, “Lord, we monks donned our lower garments and Dharma robes, and carrying our alms bowls set out toward Rājagṛha for alms. Along the way we monks who were making our way to Rājagṛha for alms heard, Lord, that at the halfway point Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas had asked questions of the Blessed One, that not long after he had taken leave of the Blessed One a milk cow kicked him and killed him, and that at the time of his death his senses were clear, his appearance pure, and his complexion alabaster. Lord, what then was his destination? Into what state did he take birth? In what state did he die?”

7.103 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “that noble child is a treasure. The Dharma he realized proceeded from my own. He did not harm me. Monks, that noble child, having performed a singular good for the Dharma, attained nirvāṇa. Therefore, you should perform a reliquary pūjā.” The Blessed One proclaimed Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas’ excellence, and in Rājagṛha the gods declared that Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas had passed into parinirvāṇa.

7.104 As soon as the extremists heard this they hoisted banners made of cotton, announcing on the highways, in the streets, at crossroads, and at forks in the road, “The ascetic Gautama claims that only his monastic discipline is comprehensive, that all others are not. Yet by practicing our code of conduct this man has passed into parinirvāṇa!” After they said this, they went to venerate his relics.

7.105 The monks also went with the intention of venerating his relics, but the extremist mendicants told them, “He was a fellow practitioner of our code of conduct. Therefore, it is we who should perform the reliquary pūjā.”

“He was a fellow practitioner of our code of conduct,” the monks replied. “Therefore, it is we who should perform his reliquary pūjā.”

7.106 “We have as our witnesses the gods who declared it in Rājagṛha,” said the extremist mendicants.

“Let us ask the gods whose code of conduct he practiced,” proposed the monks.

The extremist mendicants immediately began to supplicate the gods, petitioning them, “Devas, may you tell us whose code of conduct he practiced, and whose he did not.”

7.107 The gods accomplished in the Dharma replied, “He practiced the monks’ code of conduct. Through the Blessed One he realized the Dharma. Thus, in the intermediate state between death and rebirth he passed into parinirvāṇa.”

7.108 The extremist mendicants left the area in embarrassment as soon as they heard this. After the monks performed Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas’ reliquary pūjā, they went to Bamboo Grove and inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas take that ripened into his being kicked by a milk cow and killed?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that he committed and accumulated: ...”

7.109 *At this point his backstory should be told in detail according to the tale of Puṣkarasārin, up to the killing of the four sisters at the hands of their four brothers.*

7.110 “What action did Nirgrantha Kinsman of the Kāśyapas take that ripened such that he pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?” they asked.

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

7.111 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as

long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, his fame spread far and wide.

7.112 “As the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa dwelt in Vārāṇasī, he let fall a rain of nectar to satisfy living beings. At that time there was a certain young brahmin also living in that region, and he heard that in Vārāṇasī the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa was letting fall a rain of nectar to satisfy living beings. When he heard this he traveled to Rṣivadana and approached the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Upon his arrival he touched his head to the feet of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

7.113 “Then the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him. Having heard the Dharma from the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, he went for refuge, took the fundamental precepts, and then departed.

7.114 “After that he gave gifts, made merit, went for refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life. At the time of his death, he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

7.115 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that brahmin then is none other than Nirgrantha

Kinsman of the Kāśyapas. At that time he gave gifts, made merit, went for refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life. At the time of his death, he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

7.116 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, and not displeased me.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Foremost Kāśyapa*



Part Seven (5)

The Story of
Foremost
Kāśyapa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 The Story of Foremost Kāśyapa

7.117 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, on a ridge among the mountains there lived a certain sage who had twelve thousand disciples. The sage was a master of all the scriptures, a person of great miracles and great power, who had placed all twelve thousand of his disciples in the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

7.118 The Blessed One, having given a definitive teaching on the ripening of karma beneath the waters of Lake Anavatapta, flew up out of Lake Anavatapta with a suite of five hundred attendants and traveled through the sky to the garden of Prince Jeta. The sage and his retinue saw the Blessed One traveling through the sky with his suite of attendants, and no sooner had they seen the Blessed One than they felt a surge of joy toward him and left everything behind to become his followers. When they arrived at the garden of Prince Jeta they entered and went to see the Blessed One, touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

7.119 The Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature of the twelve thousand sages, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and all twelve thousand sages, realizing the truths, instantly manifested the resultant state of non-return right where they sat. But due to his arrogance and pride about his learning, the head sage attained nothing at all.

7.120 The twelve thousand sages rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, "Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life."

7.121 With the words "Come, join me, monks!" the Blessed One led all twelve thousand sages to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. The head sage went forth along with them, but once again he attained nothing at all.

7.122 Hearing of their accomplishment, he studied and began to make effort such that before long he had mastered the Tripiṭaka, and become a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of wisdom and freedom. One day the thought came to him, "I've taught the Dharma to thousands upon thousands of beings, but I am not considered a Dharma teacher. Since hearing that all my friends achieved arhatship I'm not sure what to do. I haven't achieved anything of significance. I will put aside study and meditation for a while, and just concentrate on this."

7.123 He reflected on all that he had learned, pondered it, thought it through, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the

other gods.

7.124 Then the monks requested the Blessed One, “Lord, tell us why, due to his arrogance and pride about his learning, the head sage did not achieve anything, and then by reflecting on all he had learned, pondering it, and thinking it through, he cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, he reflected, pondered, and thought until he generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Listen well!

7.125 “Monks, in times gone by, a certain brahmin named Foremost Kāśyapa was living in the wilderness. One day, in search of roots and fruit, he went out onto the mountainside, where he saw twelve thousand sages. Elated at the sight of them, he thought, ‘While I have been leading the life of a householder, they have gone forth from household life, and consequently will be liberated from saṃsāra. I too shall go forth in their very presence!’ With this thought he left everything behind to go forth in the sages’ presence, and after joining them he gained perfect comprehension of all fields of knowledge.

7.126 “One day the chief sage died, and the twelve thousand young brahmins began to grieve, wailing in misery and lamenting the sage’s death. Foremost Kāśyapa said to them, ‘Young brahmins, do not mourn so. Do not suffer so. Do not lament. I shall provide for all your needs.’ He called together all twelve thousand young brahmins, and, after giving them instructions to ponder, they too generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

7.127 “Some time later, Foremost Kāśyapa thought, ‘My disciples have realized all the instructions that I myself have pondered, but what use are my studies to me if, because of arrogance and pride about them, I have not achieved anything?’ Then,

by reflecting on all he had learned, pondering it, and thinking it through, he generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

7.128 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was Foremost Kāśyapa then is none other than this sage. At that time, because of his arrogance and pride, he did not achieve anything, and then, by reflecting on all he had learned, pondering it, and thinking it through, he generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now, as well, because of his arrogance and pride he did not achieve anything, and then, by reflecting on all he had learned, pondering it, and thinking it through, he cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship.”

7.129 The monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “What action did the sage and his disciples take that ripened such that they pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

7.130 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as forty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Krakucchanda was in the world, Krakucchanda carried out all the activities of a buddha and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. King Śobha performed a pūjā for his remains. He built a stūpa for his remains, made extensive offerings to the stūpa, and inaugurated the traditional festival of the stūpa.

7.131 “When the time came for the traditional festival

of the stūpa, in the realm of King Śobha there was a certain ruler from the wilderness who had twelve thousand attendants, and he likewise put great effort into making offerings to the stūpa, and prayed, ‘By the root of this virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. Going forth in the doctrine of a teacher just like this one may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

7.132 “When they saw this his attendants asked, ‘Your Majesty, what did you pray?’ and the king told them in detail. Then his attendants themselves prayed, ‘May we also, by entrusting ourselves to His Majesty, please and not displease a teacher just like this one. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

7.133 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that ruler from the wilderness then is none other than this sage. Those who were his twelve thousand attendants are now none other than these twelve thousand brahmins. At that time the actions of venerating the stūpa and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever they were born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and such that they pleased me, did not displease me, went forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

7.134 “So too all twelve thousand sages, by entrusting themselves to me, have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

7.135 “They also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all their lives then, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Mounted on an Elephant*



Part Seven (6)

The Story of
Mounted on
an Elephant

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Story of Mounted on an Elephant

7.136 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, there lived in Rājagṛha a certain elephant trainer of King Bimbisāra's whose name was Elephant Heart. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's.

7.137 When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. One day his wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, "What name should we give this child?" and they named him, saying, "Since this child was born to Elephant Heart, the elephant trainer, under the constellation Citra, his name will be Citra Mounted on an Elephant."

7.138 They reared young Citra Mounted on an Elephant on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids. As the young man grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield

a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one's head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

7.139 One day his parents died, and King Bimbisāra appointed him as elephant trainer, passing on to him the work of his father. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled.

Some time later, he found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, went for refuge and took the fundamental precepts, gave gifts and made merit, and went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One. Once he had gone forth, he studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of his wisdom and freedom.

7.140 One day he thought, "I have completed whatever duties were before me in terms of my education. From now on I will put my efforts into contemplation." So he took up contemplation, and by foregoing sleep from dusk to dawn, he progressed as far as the meditation known as the absorption of neither discrimination nor non-discrimination. He gathered five hundred disciples and they became his attendants. He left and wandered the countryside with his disciples. Eventually he returned from wandering the countryside, and the ministers informed King Bimbisāra that he had gone forth.

7.141 "Your Majesty, Citra Mounted on an Elephant has gone forth, and has no children. Since he has no children, everything he owns is Your Majesty's to command."

"I only have authority over the wealth of the dead," the king replied. "I have no authority over

the wealth of the living. But this noble child yet lives, and it's always possible for sages to reverse course and become householders once again." So the king would not take anything from his house.

7.142 Citra Mounted on an Elephant's wife heard that he had arrived in Rājagṛha with his five hundred attendants, and when she heard this she invited him and his five hundred disciples to the house and offered them food. His wife wondered, "Has he done what was before him, or is he just an ordinary person? If he is an ordinary person, I shall devise a means of bringing him back."

7.143 As he was eating his food she dropped in front of him a copper pot from the roof of the house, and he was startled by the sound. He began to poke idly at the copper pot with his knife as he ate his food. Seeing all this, the wife thought, "He's no arhat. Since he's just an ordinary person, I'll be able to bring him back."

7.144 She bowed at his feet and said, "My lord, our wealth has been dwindling on account of your absence. So, lord, please permit me to request you and your five hundred disciples to come here for your meal again tomorrow." Citra Mounted on an Elephant assented to his wife by his silence.

7.145 The next day she offered food to one hundred and fifty of his attendants, and on the following day she only invited one hundred. In this way the woman gradually reduced the number of his attendants, until on the last day he was the only one to whom she offered food. Once she had offered him food, to bring him back again she began to talk about being destitute. "My lord, since you have been absent, even the servants insult me," she said.

7.146 Now, earlier she had instructed one of the young servants, "As I'm sitting there listening to the Dharma you are to summon me three times—say, 'Get over here!' When I come to you, grab me by the hair and beat me in sight of our lord." So the young servant did just that.

"You see, my lord?" the woman said. "They treat me this way even in your sight."

7.147 Hearing this, in an instant Citra Mounted on an Elephant was consumed with fury. In his rage he took up a sword that his wife had earlier placed on the bed, drew it from its sheath, and charged at the young servant. His wife threw herself at his feet.

"Wait, lord—don't be rash!" she pleaded. "You can punish him after you've given up your precepts."

7.148 So Citra Mounted on an Elephant gave back the fundamental precepts there before his wife. He cast aside the colorful robes of the holy, donned householder's clothing, and his wife said, "I did this, lord, as a means of bringing you back. Lord, I ask therefore that you not harbor resentment against him. Lord, the household's wealth is vast. From this day forth, lord, may you stay here and make use of it as you please, giving gifts and making merit."

7.149 When King Bimbisāra heard that Citra Mounted on an Elephant had given back his precepts and was in decline, the king summoned him and offered him his previous position. In the morning a group of monks donned their lower garments and Dharma robes, and, carrying their begging bowls, went for alms in Rājagṛha. On their way for alms in Rājagṛha the group of monks heard that Citra Mounted on an Elephant had given back his precepts and was in decline. Upon hearing this, they took alms in Rājagṛha, ate their meal and wiped their hands. Then they set aside taking alms, put away their alms bowls and Dharma robes, washed their feet, and went to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet and took a seat at one side.

7.150 Once they had taken a seat at one side, the group of monks informed the Blessed One, "Lord, in the morning we monks donned our lower garments and Dharma robes, and, carrying our alms bowls, set out toward Rājagṛha for alms, when we monks

who were making our way to Rājagṛha for alms heard, Lord, that Citra Mounted on an Elephant had given back his precepts, and was in decline.”

“Monks,” the Blessed One Replied, “that noble child will not be at home for long. He will go forth in my very doctrine once again, and then cast away all afflictive emotions and manifest arhatship.”

7.151 One day the Blessed One saw that the time had come to tame Citra Mounted on an Elephant. In the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went for alms in Rājagṛha. In going for alms he eventually came to the house where Citra Mounted on an Elephant was staying and stood at the door of the house. In order to bring Citra Mounted on an Elephant back, he bathed the entire house in rays of light that gave it the appearance of refined gold, whereupon Citra Mounted on an Elephant thought, “To whom could this light belong? There’s no doubt—it can only be the Blessed One. Wherever the Blessed One may be, may he think of me.”

7.152 At that moment a messenger arrived to inform Citra Mounted on an Elephant that the Blessed One was at his door. With the greatest respect he went to see the Blessed One, and upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and inquired of him, “Blessed One, what word can you grant us?”

7.153 The Blessed One said to him, “Give up living at home. Come with me, and go forth in my presence once again.”

From life to life the Blessed One had never contravened the words of his guru nor the words of those who were like gurus to him. For this reason no one can contravene the words of the Blessed One.

7.154 Citra Mounted on an Elephant replied, “I shall do as the Blessed One has instructed,” and followed the Blessed One. The Blessed One brought him

to Bamboo Grove, led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions with diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

7.155 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed One, “what action did Citra Mounted on an Elephant take that ripened such that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

7.156 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times gone by, in a certain mountain village there lived a householder named Citra. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

“One day in spring the tree branches in the garden had thickened and the flowers were in bloom.

7.157 Now in times when a blessed one has not arisen in the world, in compassion for the destitute and suffering the solitary buddhas appear, taking up residence in remote places. Solitary as the rhinoceros, in all the world they alone are worthy of offerings. So it was that there was a certain solitary buddha who, wishing to go for alms on that mountainside, heard the sounds of music coming from the park and thought, ‘What need is there to go out onto the mountainside for the sake of this stomach, so difficult to fill? I will go into the garden. My alms can come from there as well.’

7.158 “The solitary buddha entered the garden, where the householder saw him, elegant in body and elegant in mind. When he saw the solitary buddha, the householder experienced a surge of joy toward him. In his joy he offered him food, and said, ‘Noble

one, where are you staying? Let me offer you my respectful service.’

“The solitary buddha replied, ‘I am staying at such-and-such a place, deep in the forest,’ and departed.

7.159 “After that, from time to time the householder would offer him a meal and his respectful service. One day the householder went to see him and found the solitary buddha sitting beneath a tree as if asleep, legs crossed, his body drawn up like a nāga king. Upon seeing the solitary buddha living in such solitude, he felt a strong desire to go forth, so he approached the solitary buddha, touched his head to his feet, and said, ‘Noble one, please lead me to go forth. In your presence I too wish to practice the holy life.’

7.160 “ ‘I don’t lead people to go forth,’ the solitary buddha told him. ‘The sages lead people to go forth. Therefore, take yourself to the sages.’

“When he heard this the householder immediately gave up household affairs, gave gifts and made merit, and went forth to join the sages. Having thus gone forth he generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. After he had gone forth, the solitary buddha passed into parinirvāṇa.

7.161 “Then the thought came to one of the sages, ‘I will go to this spiritual teacher, so supremely worthy of offerings, and offer him my respect and service. Through him I shall understand the distinctions between the higher states.’ He went to the forest but he could not find the solitary buddha. Spotting another solitary buddha there in the forest, he asked after him.

7.162 “ ‘O noble one, there was a monk with such-and-such a build and bearing staying in this forest. Do you know where he went?’

“ ‘He passed into parinirvāṇa,’ the solitary buddha told him.

7.163 “ ‘Where was he when he passed into parinirvāṇa?’

he asked, whereupon the solitary buddha showed him his remains. He built a reliquary stūpa for the remains and venerated it with burning sticks of incense, incense powder, incense cones, and flowers, praying, ‘Oh, by this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues.’ Having prayed thus, he departed from the region. Some time after that he died, transmigrated, and took rebirth in Brahmāloka.

7.164 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that householder then is none other than Citra Mounted on an Elephant. The act of respectfully serving the solitary buddha and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. I am more exalted than even one hundred billion solitary buddhas, and he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

7.165 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why Citra Mounted on an Elephant’s wife found a means by which to indulge her desires with him.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, his wife found a means by which to indulge her desires with him. Listen well!

7.166 “Monks, in times gone by, during King Brahmadata’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī, one of King Brahmadata’s magistrates was a certain brahmin named Agnidatta. One day his wife conceived, and later she gave birth to twins. At the elaborate feast celebrating their birth they asked, ‘What names should we give these children?’ and they named them, saying, ‘Since these are Agnidatta’s children, one’s name will be Son of

Fire, and the other's will be Tongue of Fire.'

7.167 "They reared young Son of Fire and Tongue of Fire on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as they grew up they studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Rg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, they became masters of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time they mastered the eighteen sciences.

7.168 "At a certain point the two came to see that their father administrated the affairs of the kingdom both righteously and unrighteously, and an idea came to them. They thought, 'When our father is no longer with us, we will be appointed to take over the work of our father. Therefore, we should give up living at home.' They thus told their parents, 'For those who fear for their next life, it is better to live deep in the forest among the wild animals, wearing tree bark for clothing and eating fruit, than to kill, bind, and torture for the sake of a kingdom.'

" 'Mother, Father,' they continued, 'we are going to live in a forest devoted to austerities.'

7.169 "Their parents asked them, 'Children, why are you going to take up the austere practices of the sages, when after our deaths you could come and share the crown?'

" 'This is exactly what we are afraid of!' the two children replied. 'That's why we want to go live deep in the forest. We are not capable of indulging in desire.'

7.170 "Their parents tried many times, but they were not able to stop them, so they said, 'Go forth, then. And should you achieve any special attainments, please come see us.'

" 'As you wish,' the two children replied.

7.171 "The children bid a final farewell to their parents and traveled deep into the forest. After they had gone forth, they generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges. One day they remembered their promise to their parents that they would return to them if they achieved any special attainments. 'Let us go, then,' they said. They traveled through the sky and arrived before their parents. Seeing this, their parents felt a surge of joy toward them. In their joy they said, 'The two of you desire alms. The two of us desire merit. Stay here in our garden, then, and we will offer you food.'

" 'As you wish,' the two replied.

7.172 "They fashioned a hut of branches and leaves and stayed there in the garden. They came to be held in high esteem and were revered, honored, and venerated. King Brahmadata's magistrate heard that the two children had become persons of great miracles and great power, and this immediately filled him with awe. He extended them an invitation and offered them food. After offering them food he bowed down at their feet and said, 'Please come and see me from time to time.'

" 'As you wish, Deva,' they replied.

7.173 "So from time to time the two of them would travel through the sky to the royal palace and go to see King Brahmadata. Upon their arrival King Brahmadata would take them from the sky into his lap and place them in their seats, and after contenting them with many good, wholesome foods he would sit before them to listen to the Dharma.

7.174 "One day King Brahmadata's subjects who lived out in the mountains began to revolt. He arrayed the four divisions of his army and set out, telling his daughter, 'When the two sages come you should serve and respect them in just the same way that I do.' Having spoken thus the king departed.

7.175 "Soon after, the sage Son of Fire sent the sage

Tongue of Fire on an errand to the royal palace. He traveled through the sky to the royal palace, and upon the sage's arrival the young woman received him, taking him from the sky into her lap, embracing him, and placing him in his seat.

7.176 "A woman's touch is a dangerous thing. No sooner had the woman touched the sage Tongue of Fire than his miraculous powers began to dwindle. The young woman, noting that the sage was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, became very attached to him, and the two went off to an isolated place and slept together. When the retinue of queens heard of this, they thought, 'If we say even a word to the sage, it's possible the sage would use his great miracles and great power to curse us.' Afraid, they were unable to say anything. The sage remained at the royal palace, not daring to travel by foot out of embarrassment.

7.177 "Eventually King Brahmadata returned from his victory over the mountain folk, arrived at the royal palace, and he heard that the sage Tongue of Fire had come there. The king hurried to see him and offered him many good, wholesome foods. His daughter came along, also bearing food and drink for the sage. As soon as the sage saw her he was overcome with desire. His desire for her intoxicated him, and before the king's very eyes he reached out, saying, 'Take me into your arms.' When the king saw this, he immediately took up a sharp sword to slay the sage.

7.178 "Seeing this, the young woman said to the sage, 'Preceptor, what is this? Perhaps you are confused because of some secret, pressing need, and now you are reaching your arms out?'

"King Brahmadata thought, 'I believe that is the case. This sage must be confused,' and quickly offered him something to drink. Then they offered him food and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

7.179 "Now the sage Son of Fire, who was living in a forest devoted to austerities, wondered, 'Why has

the sage Tongue of Fire still not returned?' He looked out and saw that he was spending his time indulging his desires. 'He may now lose his life,' he thought, so he traveled through the sky to the royal palace.

7.180 "King Brahmadata took the sage from the sky into his lap and placed him on his seat, then sat before him to listen to the Dharma. After he had explained just a little Dharma, he brought his younger brother back with him through the sky and returned him to the forest devoted to austerities. There he gave him instructions for contemplation such that he was again able to generate the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

7.181 "King Brahmadata's retinue of queens thought, 'This young woman has committed such unfortunate deeds. If we do not apprise him, we too will come to regret this.' With this in mind they told the king. When he heard what they had to say King Brahmadata was immediately overcome with great hatred. He arrayed the four divisions of his army and set out to where the sages lived.

7.182 "The sage Tongue of Fire saw that King Brahmadata had set out with the four divisions of his army and that they were on their way. 'Why would he come here?' he wondered, and looking out, he thought, 'He wants to kill me!' Knowing this to be the case, he rose up into the sky and sat there to instill faith in the king. King Brahmadata saw that the sage Tongue of Fire had risen up into the sky and was just sitting there, and at the sight of him his fury disappeared, and he became uncertain as to whether or not the man had done as he had heard.

7.183 " 'Well then,' he thought, and he said in verse:

" 'I heard, brahmin Tongue of Fire,
You indulged your desires. Tell me—
Were these words true? Or is this
Something you did not do?'

7.184 “He answered in verse:

“ ‘Great King, all that you have heard
Others say of me is true.
I staggered down an awful path,
Drunk on a swig of lust.’

7.185 “At that, King Brahmadata began to feel doubt. He approached the sage Son of Fire and asked him, ‘Sage, tell me, why would I hear such things?’

“ ‘Great King,’ the sage replied, ‘it may indeed be true in exactly the way you heard, for the afflictive emotions are overpowering.’

“ ‘But how can it be that he indulged his desires in this way and yet is still possessed of these miraculous powers?’ the king asked.

7.186 “ ‘Great King,’ the sage replied, ‘when he indulged his desires his miraculous powers dwindled. I brought him away from that place and gave him instructions, teaching him a method of contemplation. Later he began to perform miracles again.’

“Hearing this the king felt a surge of joy toward him. He bowed down at the sage’s feet, asked his forgiveness, and departed.

7.187 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was my younger brother then is none other than Citra Mounted on an Elephant. The one who was the young woman then is none other than his wife. At that time he fell from the celibate state and began to indulge his desires until I lifted him up again and placed him in the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Now as well he has fallen from the celibate state and indulged his desires, and I have lifted him up and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

7.188 “He also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

After practicing pure conduct all his life then, his faculties ripened, and now he has been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Saraṇa*



The Story of Mounted on an Elephant

Inokae Thierry / 16 years old

Part Seven (7)

The Story of
Saraṇa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བྲལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Story of Saraṇa

7.189 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, King Pradyota reigned in Ujjayinī, and King Udayana reigned in Vatsa. The two did not agree with one another, and from time to time a great many people were killed.

7.190 When Venerable Kātyāyanaputra cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship, he thought, “The Blessed One has dispelled so many kinds of suffering and anguish, brought me so many kinds of happiness and bliss, cleared away so many of my sins and nonvirtues, and secured for me such virtues. After I entrusted myself to the Blessed Buddha as my spiritual friend, he led me over the mountain pass of bones and dried up an ocean of blood and tears. How could I repay the Blessed One’s kindness?”

7.191 And then he thought, “Anytime a blessed buddha arises in the world, it is only to benefit beings. Surely then I should also act for the benefit of beings!” Reflecting in this way, he began to wonder, “Whom might I tame?” Then he looked out, and he saw that he could tame many in Vatsa.

7.192 He went to see the Blessed One, and upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward him with palms pressed together, and implored him, “Lord, I wish to go out into the countryside.”

7.193 The Blessed One replied, “Go, Kātyāyanaputra. Deliver others just as you yourself have crossed

over. Liberate others just as you yourself have been liberated. Relieve others just as you yourself have found relief. Lead others to pass beyond all sorrow just as you yourself have completely passed beyond all sorrow.”

7.194 Venerable Kātyāyanaputra touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and departed to travel through the countryside with a company of five hundred. They made their way, traveling and traveling, until they eventually arrived in the land of Ujjayinī. There he led King Caṇḍapradya to take up the doctrine of the Buddha. Then he traveled to Vatsa and led King Udayana to dwell in sublime faith. He brought many to faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One.

7.195 One day King Udayana of Vatsa’s queen conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him Saraṇa. They reared young Saraṇa on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

7.196 As he grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one’s head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

7.197 One day young Saraṇa entrusted himself to Venerable Kātyāyanaputra, found faith in the

teaching of the Blessed One, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts. Then he came to see that his father administrated the affairs of the kingdom both righteously and unrighteously, and he thought, “After my father’s death the throne will be ceded to me. I have no need for a kingdom. Instead, I will go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort.” With this thought he asked for his parents’ permission, went forth as a novice in the presence of Venerable Kātyāyanaputra, and received full ordination.

Venerable Kātyāyanaputra thought, “He should leave this country,” and led him to settle down in Ujjayinī.

7.198 One morning, Venerable Saraṇa donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in the city of Ujjayinī. He did not know his way around the area, nor was he very familiar with the streets and thoroughfares. As he went for alms he eventually came to the main gate of King Caṇḍapradyaota’s palace, and it so happened that the gatekeeper was not there.

7.199 He entered the palace, and the royal queens saw his fine form, elegant and muscular. At the sight of him they experienced a surge of joy and thought, “What a finely formed, elegant, muscular young monk, upholding the holy life!” In their joy they prepared a seat, invited him to sit there, and contented him with many good, wholesome foods. Then they gathered around Venerable Saraṇa and placed him in the middle to listen to the Dharma.

7.200 As he was sitting there, King Caṇḍapradyaota came to see his retinue of queens. Now when the king enters their midst it is customary for his queens to rise to receive him, but because they so much enjoyed listening to the Dharma, they neither rose nor greeted him. At this King Caṇḍapradyaota wondered, “What is this? Why do my queens

not receive me?” The king became suspicious and approached his retinue of queens in anger. He looked about, saw Venerable Saraṇa there, surrounded by the queens, and bristled with rage. In his anger he thought, “This monk is ogling my wives, that’s why they’re not receiving me!” Then he thought, “I will watch a while and see whether he is he rid of lust.”

7.201 Thereupon he inquired of Venerable Saraṇa, “Tell me, are you an arhat?”

“No, Great King, I am not,” he replied.

“Tell me,” the king continued, “have you attained the resultant state of non-return, or once-return, or stream entry? Have you attained the sphere of absorption of neither discrimination nor non-discrimination, the sphere of absorption of nothingness, the sphere of absorption of infinite consciousness, and the sphere of absorption of infinite space? Have you attained the fourth absorption? The third? The second? Or the first?”

“No, Great King, I have not,” he replied.

7.202 The king thought, “This monk is not rid of lust. He has not trained under a preceptor nor under a spiritual master. I shall train him, then!” And he summoned his personal attendants, who lashed the monk viciously before letting him go.

His skin lacerated from the lashing, Venerable Saraṇa angrily thought, “I have been wrongly accused, and now this cruel king of this wicked age has thrashed me. I must go now and stay in my father’s country. There I shall array the four divisions of his army to rout this cruel king of this wicked age and trample him to dust.”

7.203 He went to see Venerable Kātyāyanaputra. Upon his arrival he bowed down at Venerable Kātyāyanaputra’s feet and told him, “My preceptor, I have been wrongly accused and thrashed by a cruel king of this wicked age. I shall now go to my parents, and when I get there I will array the four divisions of my father’s army to rout this

cruel king of this wicked age and trample him to dust. Therefore, I am requesting to give back my precepts.”

7.204 “Child,” replied the elder monk, “don’t fall under the sway of anger. Did the Blessed One not state that renunciants should meet with forbearance these eight worldly concerns: gain and loss, fame and obscurity, praise and blame, and happiness and suffering?” Three times the elder monk tried to stop him, but he was unable to do so. So Venerable Kātyāyanaputra told him, “If that’s the case, my boy, and you want to go, since it’s almost dark now and there is danger of lions, tigers, leopards, and bears on the path, stay here for the night. In the morning you can go.”

“As you wish, preceptor,” he replied.

7.205 As he was sleeping in the same dwelling as the elder monk, to stop him Venerable Kātyāyanaputra performed a miracle that caused him, as he slept, to dream he gave back his precepts, then went to his father’s country and bid his father to let him rule the kingdom. His father offered him the four divisions of his army and told him, “First exterminate your enemy.” After hearing this, he immediately arrayed the four divisions of the army and led the soldiers into King Caṇḍapradyaota’s country.

7.206 But King Caṇḍapradyaota defeated him in battle, overcame him and put him to flight, and then captured him alive and sent him to be executed. The executioners led him away, and as they neared the spot where he was to be executed, in the dream he looked about him, saw Venerable Kātyāyanaputra going for alms in the city of Ujjayinī, and shouted, “Preceptor, please protect me! Please take on the difficult task of saving my precious life!”

7.207 He awoke still terrified and sprang up, believing that what he dreamt had really taken place. Venerable Kātyāyanaputra said to him, “Son, what you saw was just a dream. Don’t be afraid.”

Saraṇa was immediately relieved to hear this,

and he started to think, “It’s the ‘me’ that is here that is Saraṇa. I haven’t harmed a single being. Under the sway of anger I would kill many, even in my dreams. I will give up all such ambitions.” Then the elder monk, recognizing his disillusionment, taught him the Dharma accordingly. Saraṇa thus cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship right where he sat.

7.208 King Caṇḍapradyaota heard that the monk he had lashed was King Udayana’s son and came to see him. He bowed down at his feet, and begged his forgiveness. He entrusted himself to him, and invited Kātyāyanaputra to take his meal with him for seven days.

7.209 One day Venerable Kātyāyanaputra thought, “I must rid myself of this worldly profit and acclaim,” so he went with Venerable Saraṇa to Rājagṛha. The monks heard what had happened to Venerable Saraṇa and asked the Blessed One, “Lord, what action did Saraṇa take that ripened into his taking birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth? What action did he take that ripened into his being lashed by King Caṇḍapradyaota, and that after that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

7.210 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “such are the actions that he committed and accumulated:

“Monks, in times gone by, King Brahmadaṭṭa reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. One day, attended by his retinue of queens, he went into the gardens, where he fell asleep. The women wandered here and there in the garden, their hearts set on finding flowers and fruit.

7.211 “Now in times when a blessed one has not arisen in the world, the solitary buddhas appear. So it was that a solitary buddha had bedded down in that garden for the night. The women saw him there, elegant in body and elegant in mind, and felt a

surge of joy at the sight of him. In their joy they bowed down at his feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

7.212 “When the king awoke and his retinue of queens did not appear, he seethed with rage. The king took up a sharp sword and went to track them down. He saw the solitary buddha expounding the Dharma to his retinue of queens and thought, ‘This monk is ogling my wives!’ and became even more enraged. He gave orders to his personal attendants, who lashed the solitary buddha viciously before letting him go.

7.213 “The solitary buddha thought, ‘It’s not right for this emotionally afflicted person, who has become so abased, to go on roaming forever. I have to help him.’ So he rose up into the sky, making a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning.

7.214 “Ordinary people are quickly brought to faith by miracles. The king thus felt a surge of joy at the sight of this, and in his joy he bowed down at the solitary buddha’s feet like a tree felled by a saw, saying, ‘Oh great fortunate one, please, please come down. I am mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift me up!’

7.215 “Out of compassion for him, the solitary buddha descended, whereupon the king bowed down at his feet, asked his forgiveness, and provided for his every need for as long as he lived. There in the park he fashioned a hut of branches and leaves, and respectfully provided for his every need.

7.216 “One day the solitary buddha thought, ‘What’s left to be done with this body? I will enter the realm of nirvāṇa.’ After reflecting in this way, he made a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning, and passed into parinirvāṇa.

7.217 “After that the king venerated his remains. He built a reliquary stūpa for the remains, made a large offering to the stūpa, and prayed, ‘May I not experience the results of the act of doing harm to

such a pure being. By the root of virtue of having paid homage to him, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

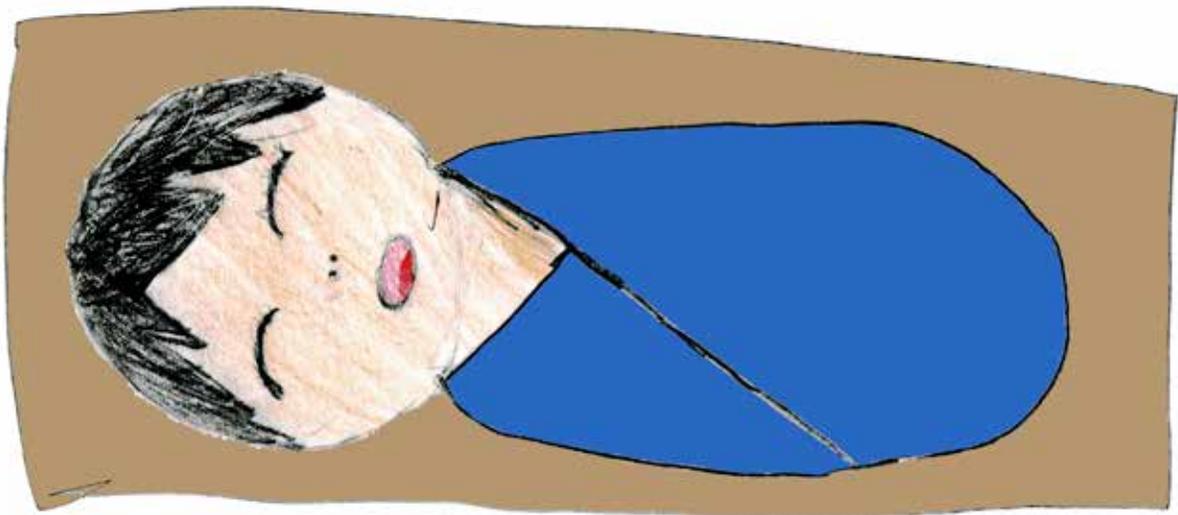
7.218 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was King Brahmadatta then is none other than Saraṇa. The act of harming the solitary buddha ripened such that wherever he was born, his body was lashed until he died.

“I am more exalted than even one hundred billion solitary buddhas, and now he has pleased me, and not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

7.219 “He also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all his life then, his faculties ripened, and now he has been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Mrgavratins*



7.-195



7.-205 & 7.-206

Part Seven (8)

The
Mṛgavratins

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བུ་སྟེན་པ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Mṛgavratins

7.220 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, the Mṛgavratins of the province of Videha, a group of ascetics who took vows to live as deer, were living in the company of some five hundred deer, draped in deerskin and wearing horns, eating grass, and drinking water.

7.221 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

7.222 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds,

shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

7.223 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

7.224 The Blessed One thought, “The time has come to tame these five hundred Mṛgavratins.” So the Blessed One performed a miracle that caused the Mṛgavratins to see the deer headed to Rājagṛha, and having seen the deer, to travel with them to Rājagṛha. After they had done so, the deer that the Blessed One had emanated disappeared.

7.225 A great crowd of people caught sight of them and began to mock them, and since they were being mocked, they left Rājagṛha and traveled to Bamboo Grove. Out of compassion for them, the Blessed One then took a seat facing them. The Mṛgavratins saw the Blessed One from a distance, and at the sight of the Blessed One, they felt joy toward him. In their joy they approached the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

7.226 The Blessed One directly apprehended the thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature of the five hundred Mṛgavratins and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and

manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

7.227 After they saw the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship.

7.228 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “what action did these five hundred monks take that ripened into them adopting the mannerisms of deer, eating grass and drinking water with the deer, and that they pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

7.229 “These monks committed and accumulated the following actions,” the Blessed One replied.

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, he traveled through the countryside with a great saṅgha of monks and came to Rājagṛha.

7.230 “At that time in Rājagṛha there was a certain brahmin with five hundred disciples living in a forest devoted to austerities. He saw the Blessed Kāśyapa and his disciples, and upon seeing them

he said to the young brahmins, ‘Boys, look at Kāśyapa’s monks—roaming about like deer, no place to stay, just wandering off wherever they please!’ One day the brahmin and his five hundred disciples found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, and he and his five hundred disciples went forth in the presence of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

7.231 “Having gone forth, they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and while they may not have attained any great virtues, at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘While we may not have attained any great virtues, still we have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced the holy life all our lives. Therefore, may we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

7.232 “O monks, what do you think? Those who were the five hundred monks then are none other than these Mrgavratins. The act of speaking harshly to the monks and calling them a bunch of deer ripened such that for five hundred lifetimes they took rebirth as deer. Now they are in their final existence, and until reaching this final state they continued to adopt the mannerisms of deer.

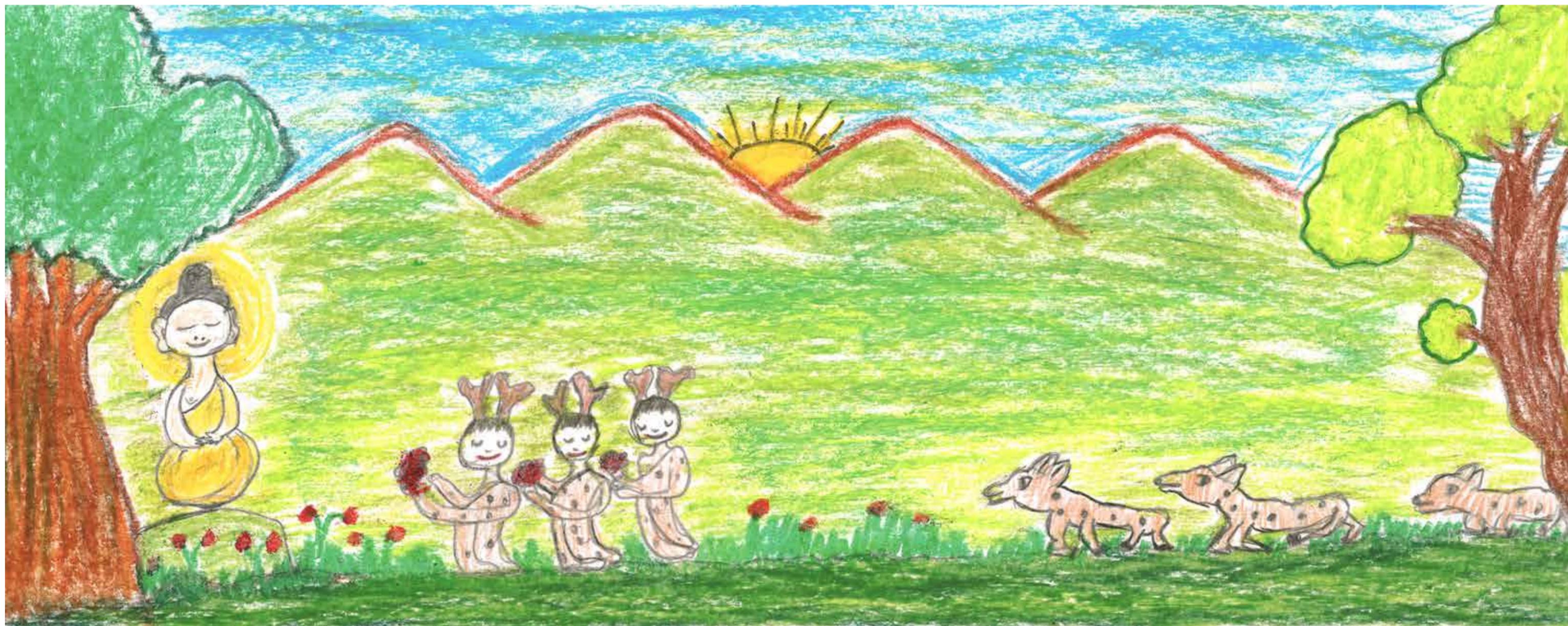
7.233 “At that time they practiced pure conduct all their lives, and at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘May we please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. May we go forth in his doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

7.234 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that

they have pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Candrā*



The Mrgavratins

Tashi Menmo / 9 years old

Part Seven (9)

The Story of
Candrā

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 The Story of Candrā

7.235 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain great, high brahmin named Candrasukha. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife. As they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived, and the impulse arose in her, “Wouldn’t it be nice if I could debate the advocates of the different philosophical schools!” She told her husband, “Lord, I’m having certain impulses—thinking things like, ‘Wouldn’t it be nice if I could debate the advocates of the different philosophical schools!’ ” The brahmin was skilled in the interpretation of signs, and the idea came to him that it was on account of the being in her womb that she had such impulses.

7.236 After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating her birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” and they named her, saying, “Since this is Candrasukha’s child, her name will be Candrā.”

7.237 They reared young Candrā on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and she flourished like a lotus in a lake. As she grew up, they educated her in letters there at home. Before long she mastered her letters, and there in the house she learned all of the scriptures from her father. She went on to defeat the advocates of the different philosophical schools

and to master all the verses that she studied.

One day she heard that there was a certain ascetic in Śrāvastī named Gautama who claimed to be omniscient and all-seeing. When she heard this, she was immediately filled with wonder, and thought, “I will go and see what the ascetic Gautama is really like.”

7.238 She asked for her parents’ permission and traveled to the garden of Prince Jeta, where she saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When she saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled her with supreme joy, for beings who have gathered the roots of virtue to see a buddha for the first time experience such rapture as is not to be had even by those who practice calm abiding meditation for twelve years.

7.239 Full of such joy she approached the Blessed One, and upon her arrival she touched her head to the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly apprehended her thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, taught her the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the woman destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where she sat.

7.240 After she saw the truths, she rose from her seat, drew down the right shoulder of her upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested, “Blessed One, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

7.241 The Blessed One presented her to Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, and Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī led her to go forth as a novice, conferred on her full ordination, and instructed her. She cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

7.242 At that time the Blessed One spoke to the monks, saying, “The nuns should meet separately for their formal acts.” Since Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī was unable to recite the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra*, she went to see the Blessed One. Upon her arrival she touched her head to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side.

7.243 Once she had taken a seat at one side, Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī beseeched the Blessed One, “The Blessed One has stated that the monks should meet separately for their formal acts, and that the nuns should also meet separately for their formal acts. Having said this, the Blessed One has taught the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra* to the monks, but has not taught it to the nuns. If the Blessed One teaches the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra* to the nuns, Blessed One, I shall seek to grasp it. It is impossible for the blessed buddhas to explain each word as they teach the Dharma, for there’s not enough time.”

The Blessed One replied to Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, “Gautamī, if it can be grasped after I have spoken it just one time, then I shall teach it.”

7.244 At that time the nun Candrā was there in the assembly. She drew down the right shoulder of her upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and beseeched the Blessed One, “Blessed One, please teach the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra*. If it is spoken but one time I can grasp it.”

7.245 Thereupon the Blessed One taught the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra* to the nuns. Though it was spoken only once, the nun Candrā mastered it and thereupon she also mastered the Tripiṭaka. Because she had learned all the verses immediately upon hearing them, she

was commended by the Blessed One as foremost among keepers of the teachings.

7.246 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “what action did the nun Candrā take that ripened into her birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that having learned all the scriptures and defeated in debate the advocates of all the different philosophical schools, she pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, manifested arhatship, and was able to grasp all the teachings such that the Blessed One commended her as foremost among keepers of the teachings?”

“It came about by the power of her prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

7.247 “When did she make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there was a certain woman who went forth in his teaching. The totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa had commended the preceptor who led her to go forth as foremost among keepers of the teachings.

7.248 “After practicing pure conduct all her life, at the time of her death she prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all

afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. Just as the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa commended my preceptor as foremost among keepers of the teachings, may the peerless Śākyamuni, King of the Śākyas, commend me as foremost among keepers of the teachings as well.’

7.249 “O monks, what do you think? The one who went forth as a nun in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa then is none other than the nun Candrā. At that time she went forth, practiced pure conduct all her life, and prayed thus at the time of her death.

7.250 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that she has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship, and that I have commended her as foremost among keepers of the teachings.”

THE END

Next: *The Kinnara Spirits: Two Stories*



The Story of Candrā

Tashi Cheodren / 11 years old

Part Seven (10)

The Kinnara Spirits:
Two Stories

- 10. i The First “Kinnara” Story
- 10. ii The Second “Kinnara” Story

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲིས།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 The Kinnara Spirits: Two Stories

10. i The First “Kinnara” Story

7.251 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” and they named him, saying, “Since this boy is extremely beautiful, and his appearance just like that of a kinnara spirit, his name will be Kinnara.”

7.252 They reared young Kinnara on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive,

and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

7.253 Soon word spread throughout the six cities that in Śrāvastī such-and-such a householder’s child had an appearance just like that of a kinnara spirit. When the people heard this they were amazed, so they rushed to see him. Soon he became arrogant about his appearance and would not bow or stand out of respect for anyone. “No one strikes as fine a figure as I,” he thought.

“We must dispel his pride,” his parents thought. “We shall show him the Blessed One.”

7.254 “Oh child,” they said, “do not think that no one strikes as fine a figure as you. Child, you have not seen the Blessed One. Your appearance is not even a hundredth, not even a thousandth, not even a hundred thousandth as fine as his.”

Upon hearing this he immediately began thinking, “We shall see whether the ascetic Gautama is really more handsome and well proportioned than I.” He went to see the Blessed One accompanied by a great crowd.

7.255 The boy saw the Blessed One from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When he saw the Blessed One, all his arrogance about his own appearance vanished, and he experienced a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

7.256 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, young Kinnara destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory

collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. After seeing the truths, he asked for his parents' permission, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

7.257 “Lord,” the monks requested of the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why the Blessed One dispelled this youth’s arrogance about his appearance and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I dispelled his arrogance about his appearance and placed him in the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Listen well!

7.258 “Monks, in times gone by, there lived a certain brahmin in the city of Vārāṇasī. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.

7.259 “They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when he grew up he became arrogant about his appearance. He would not speak sincerely to anyone, or bow, or stand out of respect. Soon his parents thought, ‘We must dispel his arrogance about his appearance, for if we don’t, it will never subside.’

7.260 “At that time there lived a certain sage in one area of Vārāṇasī who had all the five superknowledges, a person of great miracles and great power. The brahmin said to the sage, ‘Our son is arrogant about his appearance—he will not speak sincerely to anyone and will neither bow nor stand. Please, dispel his arrogance about his appearance.’ The sage assented to the brahmin by his silence, and the brahmin took leave of the sage.

7.261 “‘Child,’ the brahmin said, ‘Do not be so arrogant

as to think that no one is your equal in appearance. In such-and-such a place devoted to austerities there lives a sage, and your appearance is not even a hundredth, not even a thousandth, not even a hundred thousandth as fine as his.’

7.262 “The young man was astonished, and in his astonishment he went to see the sage. Upon seeing the young man, the sage emanated himself so that his appearance was superior to the youth’s own. From a distance the young man saw the sage, who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. He lost his arrogance about his own appearance, and felt joy toward the sage. In his joy he approached the sage, and upon his arrival he touched his head to his feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. Then the sage taught the young man the Dharma particularly suited to him, and the young man went forth in that very sage’s presence. As a renunciant he generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

7.263 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then. The one who was that young man then is none other than this young man. At that time I dispelled his arrogance about his appearance and placed him in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well I have dispelled his arrogance about his appearance and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

7.264 “He also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all his life then, his faculties ripened, and now he has been liberated.”



《百业经》人非人

赵公硕 8岁画

2020年2月

秋天,树的叶子虽然掉光了,但,叶子掉进泥土里,下一年春天还会长出更多的树,就这样,一棵棵树无穷尽,永远都不会被砍光,永远都不会灭绝,永远跟愚公移山一样子子孙孙无穷无尽总有一天山会被挖光总有一天,交通会恢复正常。还有妈妈给我讲的故事让我感觉到环境jiaoqiao,这个地球这么大肯定有比你好的人,

10. ii The Second “Kinnara” Story

7.265 When the Blessed One was in Kapilavastu visiting his father and his son, one day King Śuddhodana invited the Blessed One for a meal, so the next day the Blessed One took his meal with the king’s retinue of queens. After the Blessed One had taken his meal with the retinue of queens and was on his way back, Yaśodharā climbed to the roof of the house and stood there gazing after the Blessed One. When she could not see him anymore, she leapt from the roof, and as she did so, by the power of the Buddha the ground became like a cotton cushion stuffed with wool, such that she was not harmed in the least.

7.266 When the monks heard about these events, they requested the Blessed Buddha, “Lord, tell us why on the Blessed One’s account Yaśodharā sought to give up her life.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, on my account she gave up her life. Listen well!

7.267 “Monks, in times gone by, King Brahmadata reigned in the city of Vārāṇasī. One day King Brahmadata arrayed the four divisions of his army and set out to hunt deer, but he could not rein in his horse, so the king lost the divisions of his army and ended up somewhere else. Separated from his army, his body tired and aching, he entered the forest and sat down.

7.268 “In that forest a certain kinnara and kinnarī were playing the lute, enjoying themselves, and coupling. When he saw them the king immediately fixated on the kinnarī. Under the sway of lust he impaled the kinnara with a poisonous arrow, and the kinnara died on the spot. Having slain the kinnara, the king approached the kinnarī and said, ‘Come with me, my dear. Let the two of us enjoy ourselves.’

7.269 “The kinnarī said, ‘How can I enjoy myself

with you when the dead body of my husband lies impaled before me? Let me venerate his relics for some time first. After that I’ll do as you wish.’ She gathered wood, placed the relics of the kinnara on the pile, lit the fire, and took a seat at one side. As the wood for the funeral pyre began to blaze, the kinnarī leapt into the fire and died.

7.270 “Thereupon the king recited the following verse out of despair:

“ ‘While I focused on another task
Things went wrong, so now she’s gone.
I fantasized about the kinnarī,
And now I’ve killed two beings.’

7.271 “O monks, what do you think? I was that kinnara then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was the kinnarī then is none other than Yaśodharā. At that time she sacrificed her life for me, and now she has tried to cast away her life for me as well.”

7.272 *This concludes Part Seven of The Hundred Deeds.*

THE END

Next: *Part Eight: The Story of Pūrṇa*





The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་པ།
Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Part Eight

1. The Story of Pūrṇa
 2. The Sacrifice
 3. The Lazy Man
 4. A Story about
Anāthapiṇḍada
 5. The Humble One
 6. Padmottama: Two Stories
 6. i The First “Padmottama” Story
 6. ii The Second “Padmottama” Story
 7. The Story of Sudarśana
 8. The Story of Ratnaśikhin
 9. Wealth
 10. The Story of Vijaya
-

Part Eight (1)

The Story of
Pūrṇa

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Story of Pūrṇa

8.2 When the Blessed One was in in Rājagṛha, in a remote mountain village in a valley to the south there lived a certain great, high brahmin. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. He had a loving nature, was compassionate, loved beings like a parent loves their child, and cared deeply for all beings. His name was Pūrṇa.

8.3 He would assemble all the householders, renunciants, and beggars, and give gifts to them. From time to time he would set up a site for a sacrifice and perform a sacrifice. When the time came to perform the sacrifice, he would examine the doctrines of all the treatises and ponder what kind of view this and that one contained. Once he had them all in his mind, he would reflect on them and consider them deeply until he understood them perfectly.

8.4 One day, as the brahmin began to perform his sacrifice, all the teachers gathered at the site of the sacrifice. The brahmin had memorized all these teachers’ scriptures, and as he began to reflect on them, he found his mind was ill at ease with different aspects of their views.

8.5 One day the lay vow holders of Rājagṛha extolled the virtues of the Buddha in the brahmin’s presence. Now as soon as the brahmin heard them, he wished to see the Blessed One. Soon after that the thought came to him, “Though thousands upon thousands

of ascetics and brahmins come and partake of the sacrifice, the Blessed Gautama still has not come. Wouldn’t it be nice if he came and partook of my sacrifice!”

8.6 The Blessed One directly apprehended what was in his mind and thought, “This brahmin will pursue unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment with single-minded resolve. He will be instrumental in my acting for the benefit of many.”

8.7 So out of compassion for that brahmin, he set out for the remote mountain village, surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. As the Blessed One was traveling, he thought, “It should appear to the sacrifice master and the others at the sacrifice site as if I am alone,” and he performed a miracle that caused them not to see the rest of the saṅgha of monks. Having performed this miracle, he proceeded to the site of the sacrifice.

8.8 The brahmin saw the Blessed One from a distance, and when he saw the Blessed One, he called to him, “Blessed One, welcome! This way, Blessed One—if you please. Blessed One, please partake of the sacrifice I have made here at the sacrifice site.”

“Pūrṇa,” the Blessed One replied, “I shall not partake of it until you have filled up my alms bowl with food.”

“As you wish, Blessed Gautama,” said the brahmin.

8.9 The brahmin took the many good wholesome foods that he had prepared, and began to fill the Blessed One’s alms bowl, but he was unable to fill it completely. In his hubris he thought, “I won’t give back this alms bowl until it is full.” He and his servants continued trying to fill up the Blessed One’s alms bowl with food.

8.10 The Blessed One thought, “This is food enough now for a thousand monks,” so he declared that his alms bowl was full. The brahmin was delighted to see that the Blessed One’s alms bowl had been

filled and said, “Now that the Blessed One’s alms bowl has been filled, may the Blessed Gautama partake of it happily.”

8.11 Out of compassion for the brahmin the Blessed One emanated a thousand monks right there at the sacrifice site. After the water vessels had been filled, the Blessed One took his place at the head of the row and the other monks seated themselves according to their ages. Once the saṅgha of monks was comfortably seated, the servers made their rounds. The brahmin saw all this, and seeing it he felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One, and said, “The ascetic Gautama is a person of great miracles and great power.”

8.12 In his joy he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and beseeched him, “Blessed Gautama, please permit me to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick for three months.” The Blessed One assented to him by his silence.

8.13 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the brahmin then provided all their necessities there in the garden of Prince Jeta. After he had respectfully provided the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with all their necessities for three months, on the last day he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks food of a hundred flavors and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe.

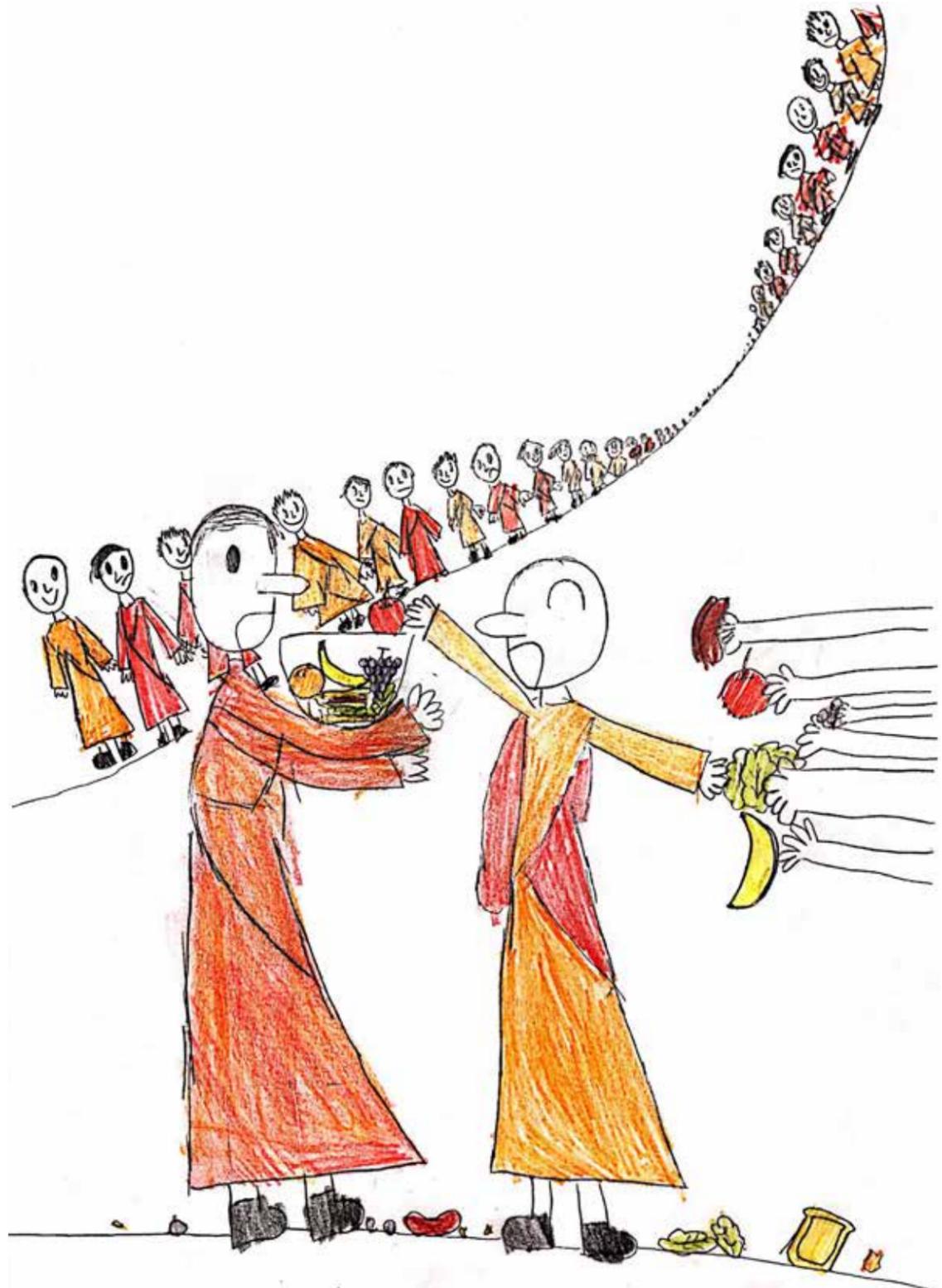
8.14 He also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton, and he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.15 Then the Blessed One said to the brahmin, “Very good, brahmin, very good. Brahmin, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Pūrṇa.”

8.16 After the Blessed One prophesied that the brahmin would attain unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, he disappeared from the sacrifice site and returned to Bamboo Grove.

THE END

Next: *The Sacrifice*



The Story of Pūrṇa



Merrick / 10 years old

Part Eight (2)

The
Sacrifice

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་སྒྲིབ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Sacrifice

8.17 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain brahmin. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

8.18 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up, he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences. He gained perfect comprehension of all the scriptures and defeated all in scriptural debate.

8.19 One day both of his parents died and he thought, “In both appearance and learning no one is my equal—where is there anyone better?” Since his parents had performed the sacrifice from time to time, the brahmins said to him, “Child, your parents performed the sacrifice from time to time. You should follow the custom of your father.”

8.20 “In both appearance and learning no one is my

equal,” the young man replied. “Why then should I give gifts to others?”

As soon as the brahmins heard this they all became very unhappy with him, and they made an agreement among themselves not to associate further with him. He was similarly unhappy with them. “What need do I have to act as patron to such people?” he thought.

8.21 One day the Blessed One thought, “This young brahmin will pursue unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment with single-minded resolve.” With this thought the Blessed One disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and, bursting forth from the floor of the young brahmin’s house, the Blessed One rose into the air, sending forth rays of light that gave the house an appearance the color of refined gold.

8.22 As soon as the young brahmin saw this he felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he prepared a seat for the Blessed One and requested him, “Blessed One, please have a seat on this cushion I have prepared for you!” The Blessed One seated himself upon the cushion, and after taking his seat, the Blessed One taught the young brahmin a teaching about generosity. After that, the young brahmin felt a strong impulse to perform acts of charity and explained to the Blessed One, “Lord, I wish to give gifts and make merit, but I’m not capable of doing such things.”

8.23 The Blessed One uncovered treasures for him, and at the sight of them he was again especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he bowed down at the Blessed One’s feet and beseeched him, “Blessed One, please permit me to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick for three months.” The Blessed One assented to him by his silence.

8.24 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed

One had given his assent, the young brahmin then set up a site for a sacrifice that reached Śrāvastī and the garden of Prince Jeta. He announced, “I shall perform a sacrifice for all the renunciants of heterodox views. Whoever wishes to do so may partake of the festival and the offerings. Please come to the sacrifice site and partake!”

8.25 The brahmins replied, “We shall not partake of a sacrifice for someone who hates the brahmins.”

“If you won’t partake,” said the young brahmin, “then I shall offer the portion allotted to you to the ascetic Gautama and his disciples on your behalf, and it is his doctrine’s code of conduct I shall practice.”

8.26 Then the brahmins thought, “Since this young brahmin always does as he says, it’s possible he will do just that. If that’s the case our offerings will be forfeited.” So they dissolved the agreement they had made among themselves, went to the site of the sacrifice, and partook.

8.27 Then for three months the young brahmin offered many good, wholesome foods to the renunciants of heterodox views, making offerings to them all. On the last day he contented the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with food of a hundred flavors and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe. After that he also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton.

8.28 When he noted the major marks of perfection adorning the Blessed One, such as his golden complexion, he prayed to achieve unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.29 Then the Blessed One said to the young brahmin, “Very good, young brahmin, very good. Young brahmin, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Arthadarśin.” Having spoken thus, the Blessed One returned to the monastery.

THE END

Next: *The Lazy Man*



The Sacrifice

Kavin Wang / 9 years old

Part Eight (3)

The
Lazy Man

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟོ་བྱ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Lazy Man

8.30 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

8.31 The young man was lazier than lazy—once he lay down in bed and couldn't get back up again. When his parents asked him, "Child, do you have a physical illness, or perhaps some kind of depression?" out of laziness he couldn't even respond, so his parents took him to a healer.

8.32 The healer told them, "He's not physically ill, nor does he have some kind of depression. He just can't get up because he's lazy."

After that his parents told him over and over again, "Child, don't be like this. You'll never find happiness if you stay like this. Human life is sustained by the fruits of one's abilities." Though they urged him many times to do so, still they could not get him up.

8.33 One day the thought came to his parents, "Let us invite some persons over who are worthy of

offerings. Perhaps he will stand when he sees them." So they invited the six teachers and offered them food. Though the boy saw them, he did not stand.

8.34 Then the householder thought, "It's well known that the ascetic Gautama is a person of merit, and very compelling. If our son sees him, maybe he will decide to stand." So the next day they extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks. After preparing many good, wholesome foods that night, in the morning they rose, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then they sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was time for the midday meal: "Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested."

8.35 In the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks, until they arrived at the householder's reception room. There he took his place on the seat prepared for him amid the saṅgha of monks.

8.36 The young man saw the Blessed Buddha, resplendent and agreeable, in the distance. His senses were at peace and his mind perfectly tame. He was graced with tranquility, shining and brilliant like a golden pillar. At the sight of him, the young man mustered his strength, stood in respect, and approached the Blessed One. He touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and once he and his parents knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by their own hands they contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished.

8.37 When they knew that the Blessed One had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, they brought in very

low seats and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One spoke in praise of diligence to the young man, saying, “Young man, through diligence one can achieve unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment.” And the young man thought, “This advice the Blessed One has given is good indeed. I will not be able to attain the special qualities of the guru with such feeble efforts. I will prepare to set out upon the ocean, and I shall serve the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha with respect.”

8.38 So he loaded up his wares and set out on the great ocean. Having set out on the great ocean, he successfully completed a voyage to Ratnadvīpa and returned to Śrāvastī, where he extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks and provided for all their needs for three months.

8.39 On the last day he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks food of a hundred flavors, and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe. After that he also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton.

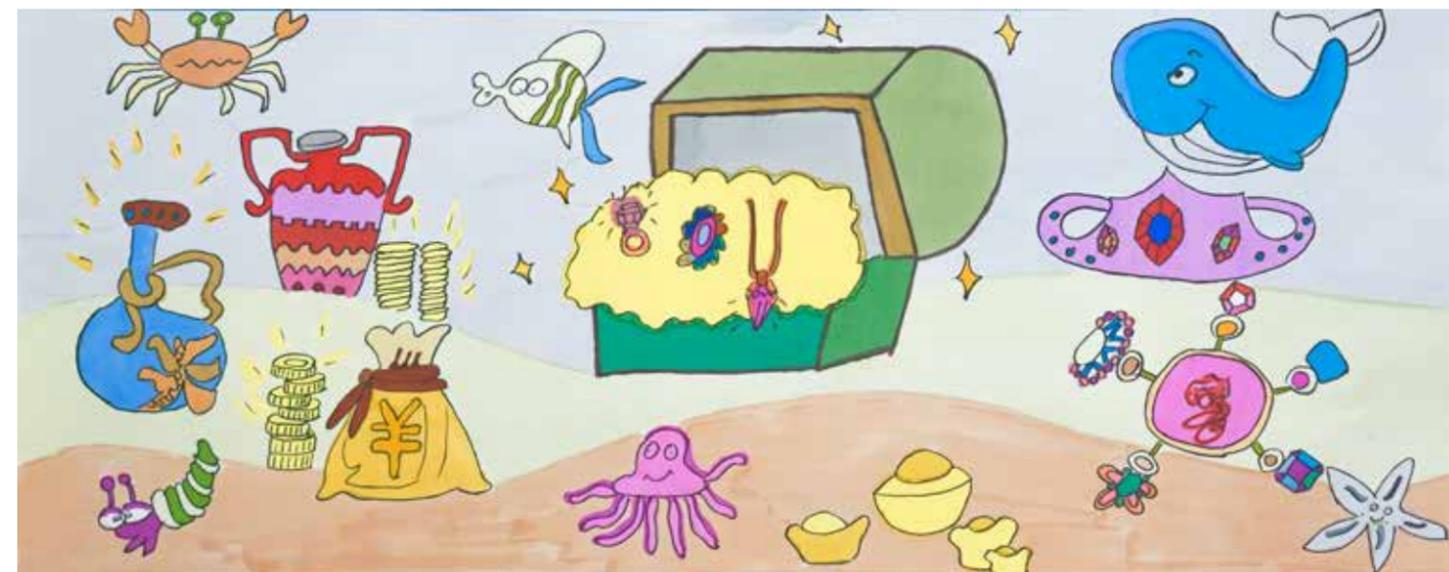
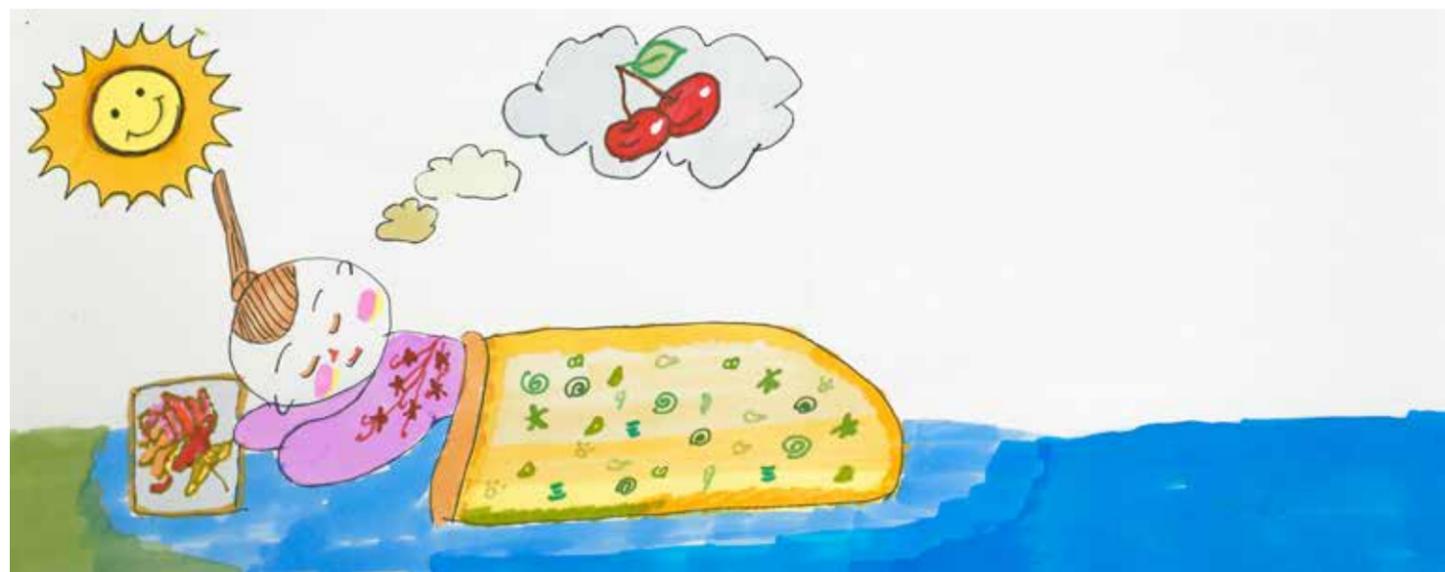
8.40 Then he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to show them the way—a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.41 “Very good, brahmin, very good,” the Blessed One said to the young man. “Brahmin, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to show them the way—a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a

teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Possessor of the Valor of Strength and Effort.”

THE END

Next: *A Story about Anāthapiṇḍada*



The Lazy Man

Richard / 6 years old

Part Eight (4)

A Story about
Anāthapiṇḍada

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 A Story about Anāthapiṇḍada

8.42 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain poor brahmin who had to provide for many and had many servants. He thought, “I will entrust myself to some rich person for my livelihood.” Then he thought, “The householder Anāthapiṇḍada is compassionate, and wants so deeply to perform acts of charity. He will be able to collect for me the things I need.” So he began to follow him about like a shadow, never separating from him.

8.43 The householder Anāthapiṇḍada became suspicious and asked him, “Brahmin, why have you attached yourself to me?”

“Householder, I have attached myself to you because I wish to entrust myself to you for my livelihood,” the brahmin replied. When he heard this, the householder Anāthapiṇḍada immediately began to provide for all his needs.

8.44 It was the householder Anāthapiṇḍada’s custom to go to the garden of Prince Jeta and sweep every day with a suite of five hundred attendants. So it was that one day the brahmin went with the householder Anāthapiṇḍada to the garden of Prince Jeta. The householder Anāthapiṇḍada had something to do, so he commissioned the brahmin to sweep the garden of Prince Jeta. With that the householder departed, and the brahmin began to sweep the garden of Prince Jeta.

8.45 Now the Blessed One thought, “This brahmin

will pursue unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment with single-minded resolve.” With this thought the Blessed One performed a miracle by which, however much sweeping the brahmin did, not even the tiniest results would be evident. The brahmin was distracted by his task and as a result was happy all day. Afterward he thought, “I should not go back to Śrāvastī now,” and that night he went to bed down in the garden of Prince Jeta.

8.46 The Blessed One told Ānanda, “Ānanda, make a place for the brahmin to sleep in the garden of Prince Jeta. Sit with him and answer whatever questions he asks you.” And he further instructed the monks, “Monks, though I have taught that monks should live with their virtues hidden and their sins disclosed, out of compassion for this brahmin whoever has achieved some miraculous powers should display them openly.”

8.47 Venerable Ānanda replied, “I shall, Lord.” And Venerable Ānanda then instructed the monks, “Make a place for the brahmin sitting in the garden of Prince Jeta to sleep, then sit with him a while.”

As the brahmin sat there in the garden, different monks began to display their various miraculous powers. Seeing them, the brahmin asked Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, who are these people who have such great miracles and great power? What kind of people are they?”

8.48 “These are the disciples of the Blessed One,” said Venerable Ānanda.

“If even his disciples are sublime,” the brahmin thought, “what need to speak of what the ascetic Gautama himself must be like.”

8.49 Then the Blessed One had a thought about the world: “It would be good for the four great kings to come see me this evening, for Śakra, King of the Gods, to come see me in the middle of the night, and for Sahāṃpati Brahmā to come to see me early in the morning.”

8.50 Once the Buddha had this thought the four great

kings, Śakra, King of the Gods, and Sahāṃpati Brahmā came to see the Blessed One, accordingly. When he saw them the brahmin asked Venerable Ānanda, “Lord Ānanda, who are these beings?”

“These are the four great kings, Śakra, King of the Gods, and Sahāṃpati Brahmā, who have all come to see the Blessed One,” Venerable Ānanda replied.

8.51 When he heard this the brahmin experienced a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. He thought, “If there are those who are capable of achieving such a state even as human beings, then I will also become a buddha and appear in the world!” And he thought, “Such a state cannot be attained simply by wishing for it, so I will give gifts, make merit, and pray for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment.” When morning came, he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and departed for Śrāvastī.

8.52 The householder Anāthapiṇḍada was on his way to the garden of Prince Jeta with a company of five hundred servants when he saw the brahmin from a distance. When he saw him he called to the brahmin, “Brahmin, did you see anything amazing or wondrous in the garden of Prince Jeta?” The brahmin then related everything to the householder Anāthapiṇḍada.

8.53 “Brahmin,” the householder Anāthapiṇḍada asked, “what is your wish, now that you have seen such amazing and wondrous things?”

The brahmin replied, “Though I wish for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, householder, I shall not attain such a state simply by wishing for it. Therefore, I want to give gifts to those who beg, and to make merit.”

8.54 Upon hearing this, the householder Anāthapiṇḍada immediately gave a heap of jewels to the brahmin. The brahmin extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks, and for three months provided for all

their needs. After he had respectfully served all the needs of the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months, on the last day he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks food of a hundred flavors and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe. He also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton.

8.55 Then he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment: “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to show them the way—a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.56 Then the Blessed One said to the brahmin, “Very good, brahmin, very good. Brahmin, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to show them the way—a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Aśoka.”

THE END

Next: *The Humble One*



Part Eight (5)

The
Humble One

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 The Humble One

8.57 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, the householder Anāthapiṇḍada had seven sons in total, each of them named according to their clan. They were reared on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and they flourished like lotuses in a lake.

8.58 One day the householder Anāthapiṇḍada thought, “I should introduce these children to a social club, but I should introduce them to one that has faith, not one that has no faith. If I introduce them to one that has no faith, it may influence them to not believe in the Buddha’s doctrine.” So he introduced them to a Buddhist social club.

8.59 The faithless went about seeking entertainment, roaming the village, and frequenting prostitutes. But the sons of the householder Anāthapiṇḍada rendered special service to their group of lay vow holders and to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha, and occupied themselves with single-day fasting vows and listening to the Dharma.

8.60 There also lived in Śrāvastī a certain young brahmin who was poor and destitute of means, and he thought, “I will join this social club and entrust myself to them for my livelihood.” Wishing to join the group of lay vow holders, he asked them, “How much money do I need to join your group?”

“You may join us for five hundred gold coins,” they said.

8.61 “How could I have five hundred gold coins?” said the young brahmin. “Even if I wanted to give you

the money you require, I am destitute of means, so I don’t have any such money to offer you.”

The sons of the householder Anāthapiṇḍada replied, “If you have faith in the doctrine of the Blessed Buddha, we’ll give you five hundred gold coins.”

8.62 “I know nothing of the ascetic Gautama’s great virtues,” said the young brahmin. “What are the ascetic Gautama’s great virtues?”

The sons of householder Anāthapiṇḍada then extolled the virtues of the Buddha to the young brahmin, and when he heard about them, the young brahmin experienced a surge of joy toward the Buddha. In his joy he said, “I will join your group, and I will take refuge in the Blessed Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.” The sons of the householder Anāthapiṇḍada heard what he said, and gave him hundreds upon hundreds of gold coins.

8.63 In this way the young brahmin joined the group. One day the social club decided, “Let’s invite the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks and respectfully serve all their needs for three months.”

Some replied, “We won’t all be able to do just that continuously for three months. So let’s take turns offering them food each day.”

8.64 “I am destitute of means,” the brahmin said. “I won’t be able to do that for even a day.”

“Those who aren’t able to offer food to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks should part company with us,” the others replied.

8.65 The young brahmin thought, “Whether or not I remain a member later, it would not be right for me to part ways with them right now.” He said, “I will take my turn on the final day. In the meantime, please give to me all your leftovers.”

“As you wish,” the social club members replied.

8.66 They extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months, and for three months each of them took turns respectfully serving the Buddha and the

rest of the saṅgha of monks with everything they needed. Whatever was left over they gave to the young brahmin. The young brahmin gathered it all together and led others to offer some gold coins, until on the last day he invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to his house, along with King Prasenajit and the householder Anāthapiṇḍada.

8.67 That night, after beautifying the streets and beautifying the city, he prepared many good, wholesome foods, and in the morning he rose, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then he sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was time for the midday meal: “Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested.”

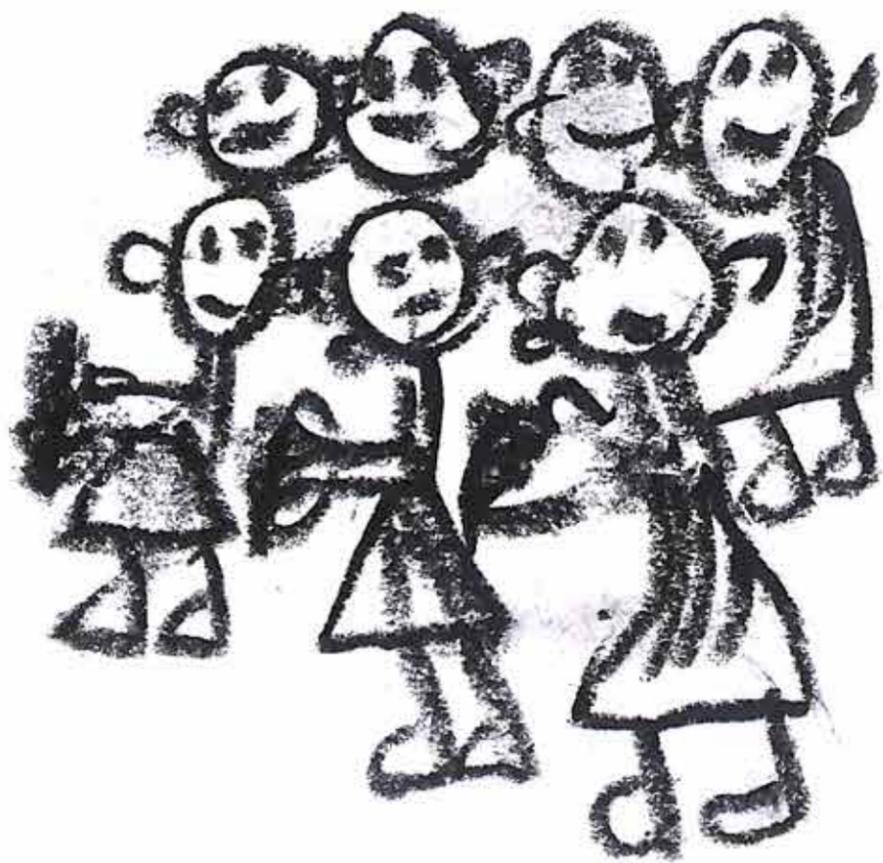
8.68 In the morning, the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, set out surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. When he arrived at the young brahmins’ reception room, he took his place on the seat prepared for him amid the saṅgha of monks. Once the young brahmin knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished, and offered the finest clothing to the Blessed One.

8.69 After that he also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton, and he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to lead them, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.70 The Blessed One said to the brahmin, “Very good, brahmin, very good. Brahmin, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to lead them, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Conciliator.”

THE END

Next: *Padmottama: Two Stories*



The Humble One



Ethan / 7 years old

Part Eight (6)

Padmottama:
Two Stories

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 Padmottama: Two Stories

6. i The First “Padmottama” Story

8.71 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, it was King Prasenajit’s custom to go to see the Blessed One three times a day. He would worship him with flowers, burning sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones, then sit before him to listen to the Dharma.

8.72 At that time a lotus bloomed out of season on a pond at a groundskeeper’s residence. The groundskeeper thought, “Three times a day King Prasenajit offers flowers, burning sticks of incense, incense powders, and incense cones to the ascetic Gautama, so I will give this lotus to him,” and he brought the lotus to Śrāvastī.

8.73 At that time there was a devotee of Nārāyaṇa performing a sacrifice for all the renunciants of heterodox views, and he saw the man carrying the out-of-season lotus. When he saw him approaching, he called out, “Sir! Please give your lotus to me! I shall use it to make offerings to the blessed deity Nārāyaṇa, and I shall also give five hundred gold coins to you.”

8.74 At that time the householder Anāthapiṇḍada was going to see the Blessed One with his five hundred servants. The householder Anāthapiṇḍada heard what the man said, and thought, “This man errs in

his judgment. If he wishes to pay such a large sum to offer this to Nārāyaṇa, why don’t I produce a still greater sum and buy it to offer to the Blessed One?” So he said to the groundskeeper, “I’ll give you a thousand gold coins to give the lotus to me.”

When the devotee of Nārāyaṇa heard this, with a feeling of superiority he said, “I shall give you two thousand gold coins!”

8.75 Continuing in that way, the two increased their bids up to a hundred thousand gold coins. Then the groundskeeper thought, “If the householder Anāthapiṇḍada would give a hundred thousand gold coins like this for his sake, the ascetic Gautama must be truly great. Why don’t I go and make an offering to the Blessed One myself?” So the gardener told the householder Anāthapiṇḍada, “Householder, I have no need for wealth. I will go and offer it to the Blessed One myself.”

8.76 As he was carrying the lotus to the garden of Prince Jeta, he caught sight of the Blessed Buddha from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When he saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled him with supreme joy. In joy he approached the Blessed One, and upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and cast the lotus toward him in worship. Then, by the power of the Blessed One, the lotus became like the wheel of a chariot above him, moving when the Blessed One moved, and remaining still when he sat still.

8.77 When he witnessed this miracle, the groundskeeper was especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One, and he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without

anyone to lead them, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.78 The Blessed One said to the groundskeeper, “Very good, my friend, very good. In the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Padmottama.”



6. ii The Second “Padmottama” Story

8.79 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain groundskeeper who saw a lotus growing out of season in a lake. The thought came to him, “Let me offer this to King Prasenajit, that it might become a source of wealth for me,” so he bore it off to the royal palace.

8.80 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

8.81 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of

virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

8.82 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

8.83 The Blessed One thought, “This groundskeeper will pursue unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment with single-minded resolve.” With this in mind, in the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went for alms in Śrāvastī.

8.84 The groundskeeper saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance, and he was overcome with joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he thought, “Forget about King Prasenajit, I’m going to offer worship to the Blessed One myself.” So he tossed the lotus into the sky above the Blessed One, and by the power of the Blessed One the lotus became like the wheel of a chariot above him, moving when the Blessed One moved, and remaining still when he sat still.

8.85 Upon witnessing such a miracle the groundskeeper was especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One, and he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to lead them, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha one possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.86 The Blessed One said to the groundskeeper, “Very good, my friend, very good. In the future

you will be a protector for the world's blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Uttama.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Sudarśana*



Part Eight (7)

The Story of
Sudarśana

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Story of Sudarśana

8.87 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa's. The householder was of a loving nature, quite compassionate, and equitable in charity. He cared for beings, wanted deeply to perform acts of charity, and regarded persons of any and every type of view equally.

8.88 From time to time he performed a great sacrifice and engaged in textual studies of the treatises. When he looked out, he saw that he was getting all of the praise while others were being disparaged, and they were unhappy with him.

8.89 One day the householder heard the Blessed One being praised, and he thought, "Since the Blessed One has realized all dharmas, it's certain he's omniscient." And when he heard him being praised, he thought, "How good it would be for the Blessed One to come to the site of my sacrifice!"

8.90 Thereupon the Blessed One thought, "I will generate the root of virtue in this householder. He will be instrumental in guiding a great many disciples." With that thought he disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and approached the householder's site of sacrifice.

8.91 The householder saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance, and at the sight of him he was filled with

joy. Full of such joy, he approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and beseeched him, "Please come to the site of my sacrifice. I ask that you please partake," whereupon the Blessed One assented by his silence. Once the householder knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished, and sat before them to listen to the Dharma.

8.92 The Blessed One spurred him on to achieve unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, and so the householder felt a strong desire for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. He extended an invitation to the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months, and provided everything they needed. On the last day he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks food of a hundred flavors, and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe.

8.93 Then he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, "By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world's blind who are without a guide, without anyone to lead them, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha."

8.94 The Blessed One said to the householder, "Very good, householder, very good. Householder, in the future you will be a protector for the world's blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Sudarśana."

THE END

Next: *The Story of Ratnaśikhin*



Part Eight (8)

The Story of
Ratnaśikhin

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བྲལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Story of Ratnaśikhin

8.95 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain caravan leader who loaded up his wares to set out on the great ocean. Having loaded his wares onto camels, donkeys, and other animals, the trader exited the gates of Śrāvastī out onto the main road. Being a person who put a lot of stock in prognostications, he thought, “If I return happily from the great ocean without mishap, then upon my return after I have successfully completed my voyage, I shall hold a great festival at this gate. All along this highway too I shall hold a great festival.” With that he set out on the great ocean.

8.96 After he had completed his journey to Ratnadvīpa, he came ashore from the great ocean and thought, “I set out on the great ocean aboard a great vessel and attained great wealth, so I will perform an exalted veneration of the gods of these shores, and of the deities who dwell upon the ships.” He performed a large sacrifice to the gods of the shore, and then traveled toward Śrāvastī. He made his way through the countryside, and unloaded his wares when he arrived in Śrāvastī. After performing a great sacrifice to the deities of the city gates and of the main road, he began to give gifts and make merit. He heaped up jewels and gave them as gifts to the ascetics, brahmins, carakas, parivrājakas, the bereft, and the hungry.

8.97 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path

to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

8.98 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

8.99 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

8.100 The Blessed One thought, “This trader will pursue

unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment with single-minded resolve.” With this in mind, in the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he entered Śrāvastī for alms through that very same gate.

8.101 The trader saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance, his body graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of great persons. When he saw him he felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he scooped up jewels in his hands and scattered them over the Blessed One, and by the power of the Buddha they became like a canopy above the Blessed One, moving when he moved and remaining still when he sat still.

8.102 After witnessing such a miracle the trader was especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One. In such joy he bowed down at the feet of the Blessed One and implored him, “Blessed One, please permit me to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick for three months.” The Blessed One assented to the trader by his silence.

8.103 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the trader supplied the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with all their necessities there in the garden of Prince Jeta. After he had respectfully served them with all their necessities for three months, on the last day he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks food of a hundred flavors, and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe.

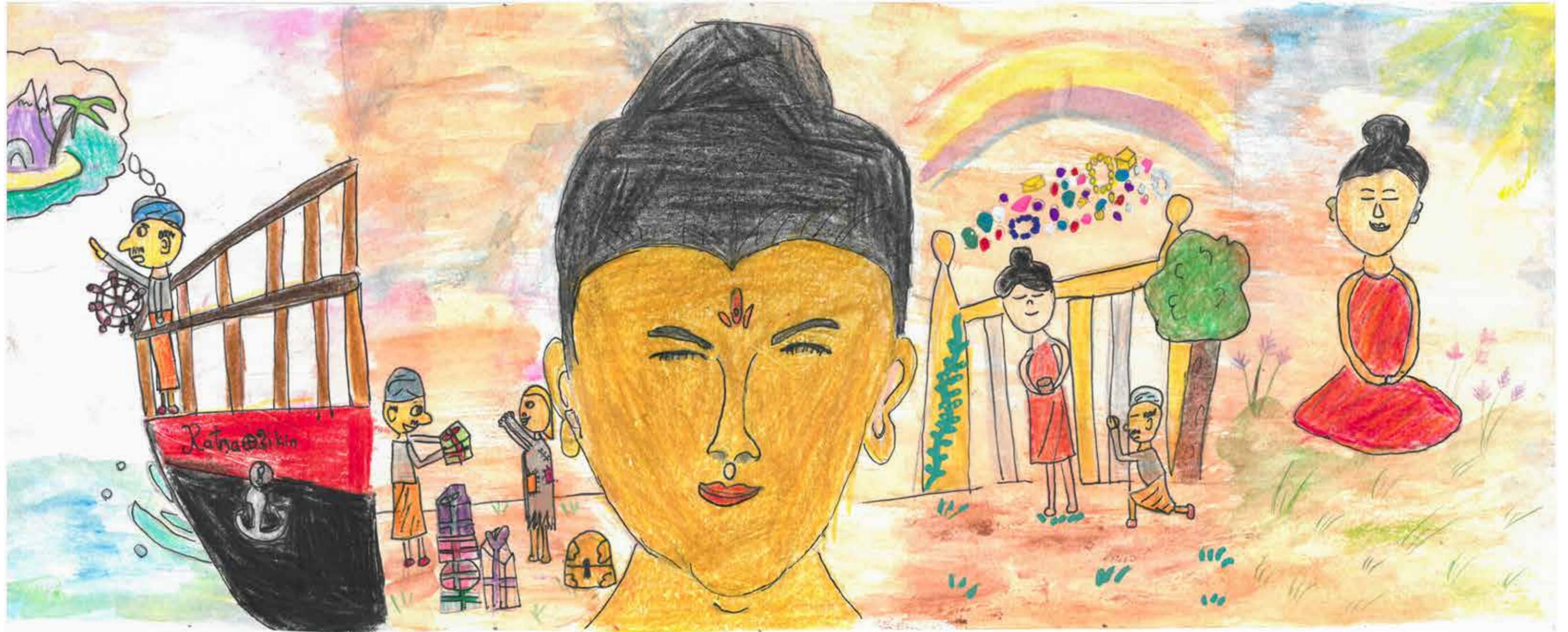
8.104 After that he also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton, and prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without any guide at all, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha

possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.105 The Blessed One said to the trader, “Very good, trader, very good. Trader, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without anyone to show them the way, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Ratnaśikhin.”

THE END

Next: *Wealth*



The Story of Ratnaśikhin

Vidya Yeo / 10 years old

Part Eight (9)

Wealth

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 Wealth

8.106 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī there lived a certain brahmin. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan.

8.107 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake. As he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination. One day he loaded up his wares and set out on the great ocean only to return after completing his voyage.

8.108 In the meantime his father, a householder who served the householder Anāthapiṇḍada, found faith in the Blessed One, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts. One day the householder invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to his house for three months. By his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished, and then sat before them to listen to the Dharma.

8.109 The Blessed One directly apprehended the householder's thoughts, habitual tendencies,

temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, the householder and his retinue destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

8.110 After seeing the truths the householder went again and again to the garden of Prince Jeta to hear the Dharma from the Blessed Buddha. There, again and again his thoughts turned to his son, and he thought, "How nice it would be for him to come here and find faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, and to receive such teachings as these!"

8.111 One day the householder's son completed his voyage and returned. Upon his arrival he dropped off all the riches in the garden and hurried home to see his parents, but his parents had gone to the garden of Prince Jeta to listen to the Dharma. When he was told that his parents had gone to the garden of Prince Jeta to listen to the Dharma, the householder's son went there too. When he arrived, thinking, "I shall see my parents," he saw them sitting before the Blessed One listening to the Dharma. He approached them, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, embraced his parents, and sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

8.112 With the boy seated before him, the Blessed One gave a discourse on generating enthusiasm for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, and as soon as the young man heard it, he felt a strong desire for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment.

After they had heard the Dharma from the Blessed One, the householders returned home with their son.

8.113 When they arrived they asked him, "Child, what did you bring back for us from out upon the great ocean?"

"I searched for and found very precious jewels,"

replied the young man.

“Son, you set out upon the great ocean, undergoing countless thousands of hardships, and the jewels you brought back are very ordinary,” his parents told him. “Just sitting here, with little difficulty, the two of us have found very precious jewels.”

8.114 “Well then,” said the young man, “let me see these jewels you found with such little difficulty.” His parents then explained to him in detail all the great virtues they had acquired for themselves, and when he heard about them the young man was especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he approached the Blessed One, and upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

8.115 The Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to his condition. Then the householder’s son, knowing the Blessed One had completed his discourse, rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested of the Blessed One, “I would like to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks for three months with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick. Blessed One, please permit me to do so.” The Blessed One assented to the householder’s son by his silence.

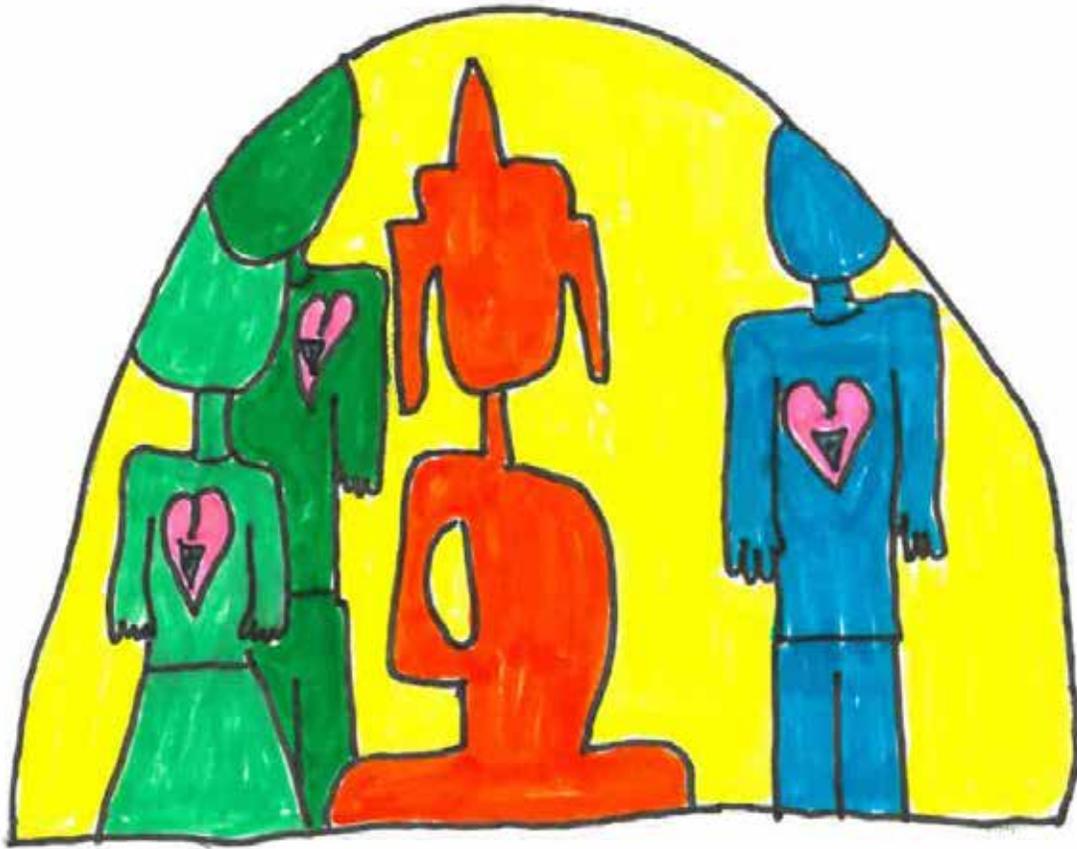
8.116 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the householder’s son then supplied the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with all their necessities there in the garden of Prince Jeta. After he had respectfully served them with all their necessities for three months, on the last day he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks food of a hundred flavors, and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe. After that he also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton.

8.117 Then he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

8.118 The Blessed One said to the householders’ son, “Very good, householders’ son, very good. Householders’ son, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Jalataraṅga.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Vijaya*



Wealth

Luca Tenzin Rich / 7 years old

Part Eight (10)

The Story of
Vijaya

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 The Story of Vijaya

8.119 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, the king of North Pañcāla and the king of South Pañcāla did not get along, and from time to time a great many people were killed. King Prasenajit was a beloved friend of both, and he thought, “How can I reconcile these two?” Then the thought came to him, “The Blessed One tames those who have not been tamed. I will put this request before the Blessed One.”

8.120 King Prasenajit went to see the Blessed One, and upon his arrival he bowed down at the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side. Then he put this request to the Blessed One: “Lord, the king of North Pañcāla and the king of South Pañcāla do not get along, and from time to time a great many people are killed. Since the Blessed One tames those who have not been tamed, I beseech you, out of compassion for them, please strive to purge them of enmity.” The Blessed One assented to King Prasenajit by his silence. King Prasenajit then praised this assurance from the Blessed One, rejoiced, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took leave of him.

8.121 The Blessed One disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and traveled to the border between North and South Pañcāla, where he performed a miracle that caused the kings to feel ineluctably compelled to battle. So the king of North Pañcāla and the king of South Pañcāla arrayed the four divisions of their armies and set out to wage war. As they began waging war, due to the power of the

Blessed One neither was able to win. Each had the perception that the other would defeat him, so they both mounted their chariots and went to see the Blessed One.

8.122 Upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and took seats to one side. The Blessed One performed a miracle so that neither could see the other, and thought, “Of these two, one will go forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship. The other will pursue unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment with single-minded resolve.”

8.123 To the first he gave a discourse on the four truths of noble beings. To the other he gave a discourse that would spur him on to unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Thereupon the king of South Pañcāla rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

8.124 With the words “Come, join me, monk!” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

8.125 Then the king of North Pañcāla rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “For three months I would like to provide the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick. Blessed One, please permit me to do so.” The Blessed One assented to the king of North Pañcāla by his silence.

8.126 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the king of North Pañcāla then invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to his own country. There he respectfully served the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of monks with all their necessities for three months. On the last day he offered the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks food of a hundred flavors, and to the Blessed One he offered a very costly robe.

8.127 After that he also offered each of the other monks a set of robes fashioned from cotton, and he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, “By this root of virtue may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.”

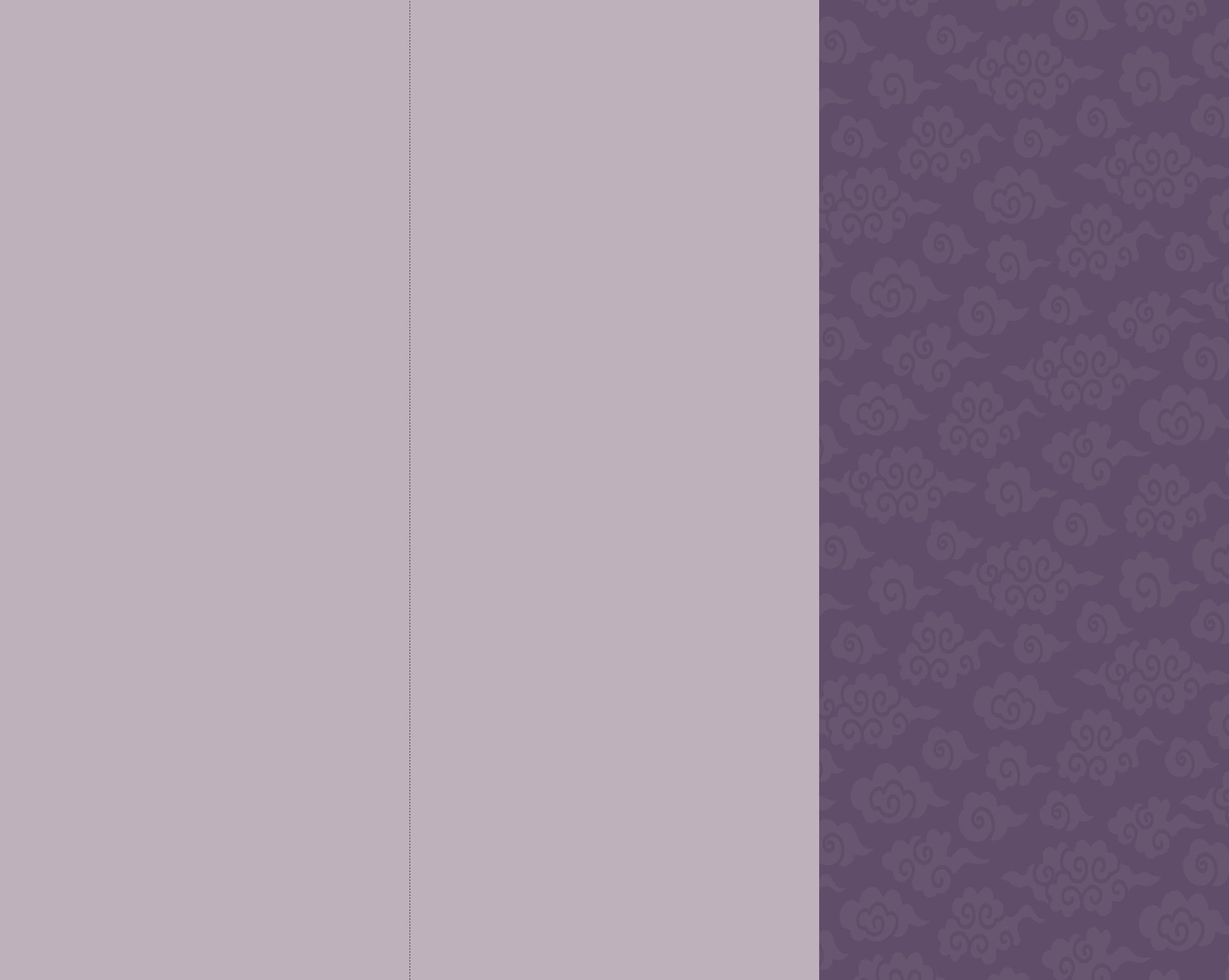
8.128 The Blessed One said to the king of North Pañcāla, “Very good, great king, very good. Great king, in the future you will be a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—the blessed buddha known as Vijaya.”

8.129 *This concludes Part Eight of The Hundred Deeds.*

THE END

Next: *Part Nine: The Sons*





The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་ལ།
Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Part Nine

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. The Sons | 7. Father, or The Story of Sudarśana |
| 2. The Crevasse | 8. The Bandits |
| 3. The Ransom | 9. The Piśācas |
| 4. The Attack | 10. The Story of Head of Indra |
| 5. Trapped | |
| 6. The Partridge | |
-

Part Nine (1)

The
Sons

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟུང་།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 The Sons

9.2 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain brahmin. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him according to their clan. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids.

9.3 Now desires are like salt water—the more you use to slake your thirst, the more you need. Over time, the brahmin eventually had one, and then two, and so on, up to seven sons. They named them according to their clan, and raised them on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids.

9.4 As they grew up they studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, they became masters of the six types of brahminical activities.

9.5 One day the brahmin gave his home to his sons, apportioning what wealth was in the house and distributing it among them. Then, after the brahmin's wife died and the brahmin himself had

become old and could no longer see, they threw him out of the house, so he frequented others' houses, and sustained himself by begging.

9.6 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

9.7 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?”

9.8 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.

But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

9.9 The Blessed One thought, “The time has now come to tame those brahmins.” In the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he went for alms in Śrāvastī. As the Blessed One was walking through Śrāvastī, he saw a brahmin, aged and infirm, carrying a walking stick and bowl, begging at the houses of others. The Blessed One spoke to him, saying, “Brahmin, you are aged and infirm. Why is it you carry a walking stick and bowl, and beg at others’ houses?”

9.10 “Oh, Gautama,” the brahmin replied, “I had seven sons. I made sure they were cared for and raised well, and that their education was complete. And after I arranged for their marriages, apportioned among them what wealth was in the house, and gave it to them, they threw me out of the house. That’s why I carry a walking stick and bowl, and go about begging at others’ houses.”

9.11 The Blessed One asked the brahmin, “Brahmin, would you be able to learn some verses from me, and when you’ve learned them all, to proclaim them to all your sons?”

“Yes, Gautama, I can do that,” replied the brahmin.

9.12 Thereupon the Blessed One spoke these verses to him:

“Those at whose birth I was happy,
For whom I saved up all my wealth,
And whose weddings I arranged
Have now driven me from home.

9.13 “While using up my wealth,
They cast me out.
Monsters all, parading as sons—
Still I have not forgotten their cries of ‘Papa!’

9.14 “My youth has faded,
Like an old horse who’s lost his strength.
An aged father of young men,
I beg at other’s houses.

9.15 “Since my sons are no support,
I’ve taken up this stick instead.
With its help
I fend off cattle and move along,

9.16 “Warding off the snakes and dogs,
Walking on in darkness,
Counting my paces in fear,
And when I stumble, it’s my sole support.”

9.17 After the brahmin had heard these verses from the Blessed One, he went and related them to his sons. When they heard him, they begged his forgiveness at once and made him master of the house again.

9.18 One day the brahmin thought, “Whatever glory and fortune I have is all by the grace of the Blessed Gautama, so I will offer the Blessed Gautama food and very costly robes.” So the brahmin extended an invitation to the Blessed One, offering him many good, wholesome foods, and presenting him with very valuable clothes. Then the Blessed One taught the brahmin and his sons the Dharma particularly suited to them. When they heard it, the brahmin and his sons destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

9.19 After seeing the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the

presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

9.20 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship.

9.21 “Lord,” the monks requested of the Blessed One, “tell us why this brahmin, aged and infirm, was thrown out of his house by his sons, and the Blessed One, possessed of skillful means, restored him to his former condition and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

9.22 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, this brahmin was thrown out of his house by his sons, and I restored him to his former condition and established him in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Listen well!

9.23 “Monks, in times gone by, in the city of Campā there lived a certain householder who over time had seven children. When they had grown and been educated in the eight types of examination, the householder gave his home to his sons, apportioning among them all that he possessed and giving it to them. When the householder had become old and could no longer see, they threw him out of the house, so he gathered up his few things and went to another country.

9.24 “At that time there lived in a place devoted to austerities a certain sage, a person of great miracles and great power. Seeing the householder nearing his place devoted to austerities, the sage said, ‘Householder, you are aged and infirm. Why are you traveling in a foreign land?’

9.25 “The householder related the story to him in detail, whereupon the sage said, ‘Householder, I shall make it so your children venerate and serve you no matter what.’ The sage brought the

householder back to his own dwelling and taught the householder’s sons the Dharma particularly suited to them, such that the sons welcomed their father back to the house and restored things to the way they were. To repay his previous kindness, the householder offered food to the sage and went forth in his presence. After he had gone forth in his presence, he generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges.

9.26 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that householder then is none other than this brahmin. Those who were his sons then are none other than his sons today. At that time he was aged and infirm, and thrown out of his house, and I, possessed of skillful means, restored him to his former condition and placed him in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well he is aged and infirm and has been thrown out of his house, and I, possessed of skillful means, have restored him to his former condition and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

9.27 “He also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all his life then, his faculties ripened, and now he has been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Crevasse*



The Sons

Claire / 6 years old

Part Nine (2)

The
Crevasse

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The Crevasse

9.28 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder. When the time came for him to marry, he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth, they named him according to their clan.

9.29 They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids. As he grew up, he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

9.30 One day his father had him join a social club. The members of this social club would argue among themselves about different views and theories, and when they agreed with what someone said they would commend him. The householder's son was naturally astute. When he questioned everyone's philosophical systems, some would answer him. But when they answered, he didn't accept their various views and considered them untenable and incorrect.

One day a lay vow holder spoke correctly in praise of the Buddha, and as soon as the householder's

son heard this, he said, "I've never heard the term *buddha* before. Who is this one you call Buddha?"

9.31 Then the lay vow holder praised the Buddha in a way that particularly appealed to the householder's son, causing him to feel a strong desire to see the Blessed One. He left everything behind and went to see the Blessed One, and when he arrived he touched his head to the Blessed One's feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him, and when he heard it the householder's son felt joy toward the Blessed One. Then the householder's son, knowing the Blessed One had completed his discourse, rejoiced, praised all that the Blessed One had said, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and took leave of him.

9.32 One day he was of a mind to give gifts, but he saw there were no possessions at all in his house. The idea came to him to set out on the great ocean. "If I can complete just one crossing to Ratnadvīpa, it will be easy for me to give gifts and make merit," he thought, so he loaded up his wares and set out on the great ocean in the company of some five hundred merchants.

9.33 After he completed his crossing to Ratnadvīpa and was returning to Jambudvīpa, an overpowering gale arose and thrust their great seafaring vessel into a crevasse. As the tides of the great ocean returned, all of the merchants became terrified and cried out, "We're as good as dead! Our lives are over. Who can console us? Who can save our precious lives?"

9.34 "Have no fear, have no fear," said the captain. "Take refuge in the Blessed Buddha. He will grant us refuge from meeting with misfortune, suffering, and harm." No sooner had the merchants heard this than they all took refuge in the Buddha, saying, "Lord, Blessed One, if there is nothing past, present, or future that you do not see, know, or directly perceive, then heed us now, Lord, grant us refuge

from meeting with misfortune, suffering, and harm! Please save our precious lives!”

9.35 At this the Blessed One performed a miracle that caused the boat to return back from the crevasse to shore of its own accord. After the merchants had returned to shore, they eventually made their way to Śrāvastī, where they unloaded their wares. After that they went to see the Blessed One. They touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, kissed them, and said, “Look at the difficult task the Blessed One has done for us! He has saved our precious lives.” And they sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

9.36 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the captain and the rest of the five hundred merchants destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

9.37 Having seen the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

9.38 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. They cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like

wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

9.39 “Lord,” the monks requested of the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why the five hundred merchants entrusted themselves to the captain, and the Blessed One granted them refuge from fear and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

9.40 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, all five hundred merchants entrusted themselves to that captain, and I granted them refuge from fear and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Listen well!

9.41 “Monks, in times gone by, in the city of Vārāṇasī there lived in a place devoted to austerities a certain sage who had all the five superknowledges, a person of great miracles and great power, whom the inhabitants of Vārāṇasī held in high esteem and revered, and to whom they offered honor and worship.

9.42 “One day some five hundred merchants who held the sage in high esteem set out on the great ocean. After they completed their crossing to Ratnadvīpa and were returning to Jambudvīpa, their ship ran aground because of the ocean’s tide. They were terrified, and thinking, ‘There’s no way we’ll survive,’ they began praying to the deities. Then the captain said, ‘What need is there to pray to other deities? It’s to the sage we should go for refuge. He will grant us refuge from meeting with misfortune, suffering, and harm. He will save our precious lives.’ No sooner had the five hundred merchants heard this than all took refuge in the sage.

9.43 “At this a god who was fond of the sage called out to him, and by means of a miracle the sage pulled all five hundred merchants out of the ocean and set them down in his forest devoted to austerities. The merchants thought, ‘However this happened, the sage is the only reason that we are still alive.’ So they gave gifts and made merit, and went forth in the presence of the sage. After they went forth, they generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

9.44 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The ones who were the captain and merchants then are none other than these merchants. At that time they entrusted themselves to the captain, and I granted them refuge from fear and placed them in the four meditative states and five superknowledges. Now as well they have entrusted themselves to the captain, and I have granted them refuge from fear and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

9.45 “They also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all their lives then, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Ransom*



The Crevasse

Chisen Nakagami / 5 years old

Part Nine (3)

The
Ransom

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Ransom

9.46 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain householder, prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and they enjoyed themselves and coupled. The householder’s children were never in good health. All those born died, girls and boys alike.

9.47 The householder’s spiritual friend, Venerable Aniruddha, led the householder to take refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts, to give gifts, and to share what he had. One day the householder’s wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. As the householder thought, “How can we ensure that this child will have a long life?” the thought occurred to him, “Noble Aniruddha is renowned as a person of great miracles and merit. If I grant him my son as an attendant, perhaps his power will ensure the boy’s longevity.” So the child’s parents granted him to Venerable Aniruddha.

9.48 Every day the child was led into the garden of Prince Jeta, where he was placed in monks’ care, dressed as a monk, and went with the monks for alms. When the child had come into his own, the householder invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to his house and by his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome

foods, proffering all that they wished. He then offered up much gold and silver in exchange for having kept the boy safe. After the Blessed One had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted the householder with a discourse on the Dharma he rose from his seat and departed.

9.49 When the Blessed One had gone, the householder removed the young man’s colorful Dharma robes and dressed him in the clothing and accoutrements of a householder. But as he did so, the householders’ clothing he had on disappeared and the colorful religious robes returned. Finally, unable to have his clothes changed, he stayed in monks’ dress and they cared for him all the same. There at home, in the company of five hundred friends of the same age, they educated him in letters and composition.

9.50 The householder’s son was unhappy at home, needless to speak of elsewhere. He wished only to return to the monastery, so the householder brought him to the monastery and he was raised there. After he had realized all the scriptures there in the monastery, he still had no desire to return home. He manifested the resultant state of stream entry there in the monastery. After seeing the truths, he asked for his parents’ permission and went forth in the presence of Venerable Aniruddha, who conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship.

9.51 After achieving arhatship, he wondered, “Whom might I tame?” He looked out, and he saw that he could tame his parents, as well as his five hundred friends of the same age. So he disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta, and right there in front of his parents burst forth from the floor of their house. Upon seeing this, his parents felt a surge of joy toward him, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

9.52 He directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures,

and taught them the Dharma accordingly. When they heard it, his parents destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat. Once they saw the truths, he inspired them to go for refuge, established them in the fundamental precepts, and encouraged them to give gifts and to share what they had, until their home became like an open well for those in need. After that he led his five hundred friends of the same age to go for refuge and established them in the fundamental precepts.

9.53 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “what action did the householder’s son take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; and that by entrusting themselves to him both his parents and his friends of the same age saw the truths, and likewise pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers,” replied the Blessed One.

9.54 “Lord, where did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” recounted the Blessed One, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the blessed one, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain householder in the city of Vārāṇasī.

9.55 “One day a child was born to him who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. When he grew up he found faith in the doctrine

of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts. On the day he was born five hundred children were born to other householders as well. When they had grown and been educated in the eight types of examination, each of their parents had them join a social club.

9.56 “One day in the spring the social club wished to go out into the gardens, where the tree branches had thickened and the flowers were in bloom. The young man’s friends of the same age wished to send him on ahead, so they told him, ‘You run on ahead to prepare the food and drink, and we’ll follow after we finish some work here.’ So he went on ahead and prepared many good, wholesome foods.

9.57 “As the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and his disciples were passing through the area on their way for alms in Vārāṇasī, the boy saw the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and his disciples from a distance. Upon seeing him he thought, ‘One so supremely worthy of offerings, traveling about for alms! I could prepare food and drink for him with little difficulty. I will offer a meal to the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and his disciples first. After that I shall prepare my friends’ food and drink.’

9.58 “With this thought he invited the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and his disciples into the garden, and after he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished, he sat before them to listen to the Dharma. After the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma he rose from his seat and departed.

9.59 “The young man then began to prepare other food and drink for his social club. The social club arrived in the garden and heard him say, ‘I offered all the food and drink that was prepared for us

to the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and his disciples.’ As soon as they heard this, they began to seethe with anger, and in their anger prepared to kill the young man.

9.60 “The young man was terrified, so he fled to R̥ṣivadana where he begged his parents, ‘Mother, Father, please pacify this quarrel!’ They were unable to do so, so the young man asked for his parents’ permission and went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Having gone forth, he studied the Tripiṭaka and became a proponent of the Dharma with all the eloquence of his wisdom and freedom. He led his parents to go for refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts, to give gifts, and to share what they had.

9.61 “When the social club saw that he had gone forth they experienced regret and thought, ‘We have done something wrong.’ They bowed down at his feet, asked his forgiveness, went for refuge, and received the fundamental precepts from him.

9.62 “One day the monk fell ill. He was treated with medicinal roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits, but he could not be cured. At the time of his death, he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

9.63 “His parents and his social club sat before him, and when they heard him they too began to pray, ‘Entrusting ourselves to you alone, may we too please and not displease the Blessed One.’

9.64 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that monk and Tripiṭaka master then is none other than this householder’s son. The ones who were his parents then are none other than his parents now. The ones who were in that social club are now his five hundred friends of the same age. The acts of practicing pure conduct all his life and saying that prayer at the time of his death ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

9.65 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

9.66 “At that time his parents and the social club also said that prayer, and so it is that now they have pleased me, and not displeased me.”

THE END

Next: *The Attack*

Now!



Then~

Kasyapa~!



Part Nine (4)

The
Attack

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 The Attack

9.67 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, two mighty, agile, and ferocious lions lived at the border between Kośala and Magadha. While they stayed there they killed a great many people and cut off all passage along the road so that no one was able to travel by it.

9.68 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

9.69 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds,

shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

9.70 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

9.71 The Blessed Buddha saw the time had come to tame the two lions. He spoke to Venerable Ānanda, instructing him, “Ānanda, go and give the message to the monks that the Tathāgata will travel to Magadha. Inform them that those who wish to travel with the Tathāgata should prepare their robes.” After having stayed there during the rains, the Blessed One then set out for Rājagṛha, surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. In going for alms they eventually came to the lions’ forest den. The two lions were ranging about in search of food, and when they happened upon the monks, they prepared to attack.

9.72 Out of compassion for them both, the Blessed One took his place in front of them. The lions saw the Blessed One from a distance, and upon seeing him their fury disappeared and they felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. They approached the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and sat gazing at his countenance. Then the Blessed One spoke to them, saying, “My friends, you have taken birth in the lower realms because of your past wrongful ways. Even now you are creating nothing but such causes.

9.73 “So it is, my friends: all compounded things are impermanent. All phenomena are selfless. Nirvāṇa is peace. Let your mind be filled with joy at the thought of me, and you may even be released from rebirth in the animal realm.” Having spoken thus, the Blessed One departed.

9.74 Upon hearing this Dharma from the Blessed One, the two lions were pleased. Those who take birth in the animal realms are predisposed to feelings of warmth, so when they passed away, filled with joy at the thought of the Blessed One, they took rebirth among the god realms.

9.75 Now when young gods and goddesses are born they possess three different types of innate knowledge. They know (1) whence they have died and transmigrated, (2) where they have been born, and (3) why they have taken birth there.

9.76 They saw that when they had died as animals, filled with joy at the thought of the Blessed One, they transmigrated and took rebirth as gods. Then they thought, “It’s been a whole day since we approached the Blessed One and offered him our respect. This isn’t proper of us. Not a day should pass without our seeing the Blessed One.”

9.77 So the young gods who formerly were lions decorated themselves with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on crowns decorated with various types of precious jewels, and perfumed their bodies with saffron, tamala, spr̥ka, and other herbs. That night they filled the front of their long shirts with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandārava flowers. Then, appearing amid a great light in the garden of Prince Jeta, they scattered the flowers over the Blessed One, touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

Then the Blessed One taught them the Dharma particularly suited to them, and upon hearing the Dharma they saw the truths. After they had seen the truths they went back to where they belonged.

9.78 The monks, having noticed the great rays of light spreading forth from the garden of Prince Jeta, inquired of the Blessed One, “Blessed One, what was this? Last night, did Sahāṃpati Brahmā, or Śakra, King of the Gods—or perhaps the four great kings, or some other young god of great miracles and great power—come to offer respect to the Blessed One?”

9.79 “Monks,” the Blessed One told them, “last night it was neither Sahāṃpati Brahmā, nor Śakra, King of the Gods, nor the four great kings, nor some other young god of great miracles and great power who came to see me. Monks, did you see the two lions who attacked us from that deep forest den?”

“Yes, Lord, we saw them,” they replied.

9.80 The Blessed One then explained, “I taught them the Dharma, and upon hearing the Dharma from me they were pleased, whereupon they died, transmigrated, and took rebirth among the gods. As gods they came to me and I taught them the Dharma. Having heard the Dharma from me they saw the truths, and having seen the truths they went back to where they belonged.”

9.81 “Lord,” the monks requested of the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why the Blessed One purified the hostility of those two lions and led them to attain the god realms and liberation, dispelling the fears of two countries.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well I purged them of hostility and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges, dispelling the fears of two countries. Listen well!

9.82 “Monks, in times gone by, King Brahmadata reigns in the city of Kāśi, and King Mahendrasena reigns in the city of Videha. The two did not agree with one another, and from time to time a great many people were killed.

“One day they arrayed the four divisions of their armies, and, wishing to wage war, they hunkered

down at the border of their two countries. A certain sage who had all the five superknowledges and was a person of great miracles and great power lived in a place devoted to austerities near where they were hunkered down. Out of compassion for both of the kings, he traveled through the sky to sit between them on the border. Upon seeing the sage, their fury disappeared, and instead they were filled with the greatest admiration for the sage. In joy they asked the sage, ‘Sage, what advice can you grant us?’

9.83 “The sage said to them, ‘You must purge all your hostility.’

“The two kings replied, ‘As you wish, sage,’ and, coming to an agreement, they bowed down at the sage’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. Then the sage taught them the Dharma particularly suited to them, and the kings ceded their thrones to their children, went forth in the presence of that very sage, and generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

9.84 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were King Brahmadatta of Kāśī and King Mahendrasena of Videha are none other than those two lions. At that time I rid them of hostility and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well I have rid them of hostility and led them to the god realms and liberation.”

9.85 “Lord,” the monks inquired, “what action did they take that ripened into their birth as lions? What action did they take that, after they died, they transmigrated and took rebirth among the gods, and that they pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

9.86 “Monks,” the Blessed One replied, “it was partly their past actions, and it is partly their present actions as well. What were their past actions? As lay vow holders in the teaching of the totally and

completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa, lacking discernment they spoke in anger to many people, calling them animals. Then, after going for refuge and keeping the fundamental precepts all their lives, at the time of their deaths they prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha.’

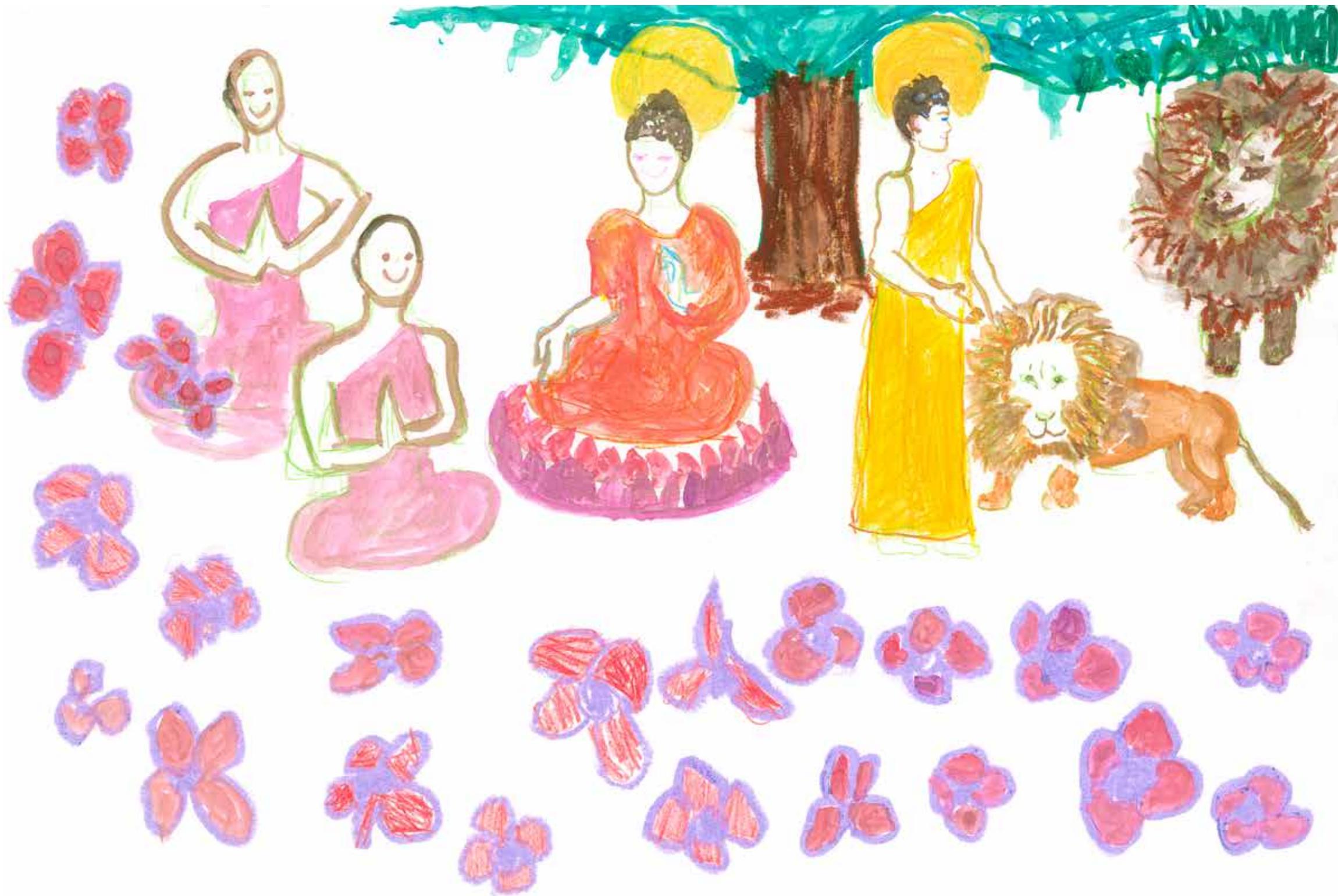
9.87 “O monks, what do you think? The ones who were the lay vow holders then are none other than these lions. The act of calling many people animals ripened into their births as animals. Then they went for refuge and maintained the fundamental precepts, and said that prayer at the time of their deaths.

9.88 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that they have pleased me and not displeased me. These were their past actions.

9.89 “What are their present actions? As lions, because they were filled with joy at the thought of me, they took birth among the gods. These are their present actions.”

THE END

Next: *Trapped*



The Attack

May Flower Pancha Shirisha Li / 4 years old

Part Nine (5)

Trapped

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟུང་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 Trapped

9.90 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there were certain hunters in the forests of Śrāvastī who had set out many nets, machine traps, and pit traps to hunt deer, and managed to catch a great number of deer. In the morning they rose and went to the forest, and when they saw the deer they had caught, they began to shoot and kill them with arrows, until only a few remained.

9.91 At that time the Blessed One was traveling through the region, and the deer and the hunters all saw the Blessed One from a distance. Upon seeing him they experienced a surge of joy toward the Blessed One. In their joy the hunters approached the Blessed One, and upon their arrival they touched their heads to his feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

9.92 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, taught them the Dharma accordingly, and the hunters manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat. After they saw the truths, they requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

9.93 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed

them. They cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

Then, filled with joy at the thought of the Blessed One, the deer died, transmigrated, and took rebirth among the gods.

9.94 Now when young gods and goddesses are born they possess three different types of innate knowledge. They know (1) whence they have died and transmigrated, (2) where they have been born, and (3) why they have taken birth there.

They saw that when they had died as animals, filled with joy at the thought of the Blessed One, they had transmigrated and taken rebirth as gods. Thereupon they thought, “It’s been a whole day since we went to see the Blessed One. This isn’t proper of us. Not a day should pass without our seeing the Blessed One.”

9.95 So the young gods who formerly were animals decorated themselves with earrings, garlands, and strings of precious stones, put on crowns decorated with various types of precious jewels, and perfumed their bodies with saffron, tamala, spṛka, and other herbs. That night they filled the front of their long shirts with divine blue lotus, lotus, white water lily, white lotus, and mandāra flowers, and they approached the Blessed One, scattered the divine flowers over the Blessed One, touched their heads to his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught them the Dharma particularly suited to them, and upon hearing the Dharma they saw the truths. Having seen the truths, they went back to where they belonged.

9.96 Having noticed the great rays of light spreading forth from the garden of Prince Jeta, the monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Blessed One, what was this? Last night, did Sahāmpati Brahmā, or Śakra, King of the Gods—or perhaps the four great kings, or some other young god of great miracles

and great power—come to offer respect to the Blessed One?”

9.97 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “last night it was neither Sahāmpati Brahmā, nor Śakra, King of the Gods, nor the four great kings who came to see me, nor some other young god of great miracles and great power. Monks, did you see the five hundred deer shot and killed with arrows in that deep hollow of the forest?”

“Yes, Blessed One, we saw them,” they replied.

9.98 “They died filled with joy at the thought of me, transmigrated, and took rebirth among the gods,” said the Blessed One. “As gods they came to see me and I taught them the Dharma. After they had heard the Dharma from me they saw the truths, and having seen the truths they went back to where they belonged.”

9.99 The monks inquired of the Blessed One, “Lord, what actions did the hunters take that ripened into their births as persons of low class? What actions did the deer take that ripened into their births as deer, and that they pleased the Blessed One and did not displease him?”

9.100 “All of them went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa,” the Blessed One explained. “As monks they were nothing but quarrelsome, and lacking discernment they called many other monks low class. Others among them called them animals. Those who called them animals took rebirth as animals. Those who called them low class were born as persons of low class. After that they practiced pure conduct all their lives, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Partridge*



Trapped

Zane deVries Lepson / 14 years old

Part Nine (6)

The
Partridge

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Partridge

9.101 Once, as the Blessed One was traveling through the countryside with a saṅgha of 1,250 monks, as well as with five hundred merchants and five hundred beggars, they cleared a path in the forest. After the Blessed One had passed through the forest, a great fire began to blaze there, terrifying many. They shouted, “We’re as good as burned! There’s no way we’ll survive!”

The Blessed One saw that many had become terrified, and he approached the travelers and spoke in verse, saying:

9.102 “May the strength of all the buddhas,
May the strength possessed by the arhats,
May the light of the Buddha-Jewel
Make this pathway free from fire.

9.103 “May the strength of all the buddhas,
May the strength possessed by the arhats,
May the light of the Dharma-Jewel
Make this pathway free from fire.

9.104 “May the strength of all the buddhas,
May the strength possessed by the arhats,
May the light of the Saṅgha-Jewel
Make this pathway free from fire.”

9.105 No sooner had the Blessed One spoken these words than the fire subsided. The merchants felt a surge of joy toward the Blessed One, and in their joy they

sat before the Blessed One to listen to the Dharma.

The Blessed One taught them the Dharma perfectly suited to them, and among the assembled some generated heat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

9.106 “Lord,” the monks requested of the Blessed One, “tell us why the Blessed One saved many from perishing in the fire and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well and in the same way, I saved many animals from perishing in a fire and delivered them to safety. Listen well!

9.107 “Monks, in times gone by, in a certain forest there lived a great number of birds. In that forest two dry sticks scraped against one another and a fire arose. Those birds that were able to, fled. Their eggs, and those birds that were not able to flee, were left behind.

9.108 “At that time there was a bodhisattva who had taken birth as a partridge, and from a distance the bodhisattva saw the approach of the blazing fire. He felt compassion for those living beings and thought, ‘If I make no effort to deliver these beings as they face suffering, how can I lead them from saṃsāra?’ So the bodhisattva wet his wings with water, and as he circled in the sky above the great

fire, he shook his wings and said in verse:

- 9.109 “ ‘Though they have wings
They cannot fly.
Though they have feet
They cannot run.
- 9.110 “ ‘Their parents, flown away, are gone.
Stay put, fire. Stir not.
- 9.111 “ ‘If it is true and a true statement
That I have perfectly
Cultivated kindness,
Then stay put, fire. Stir not.’
- 9.112 “Then Śakra, King of the Gods, saw that the bodhisattva was disheartened and remained there for the benefit of beings. When he saw this he thought, ‘This is the bodhisattva of our own fortunate eon, who is disheartened and remains there for the benefit of beings. I will help him!’ Then Śakra, King of the Gods, let fall a great rain to quell the fire, and rescued all the beings from the threat of fire.
- 9.113 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was the partridge then and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the beings of the forest then are none other than these many persons. At that time I rescued them from the threat of fire and delivered them to safety. Now as well I have rescued them from the threat of fire and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.
- 9.114 “They also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. Some became monks. Some became lay vow holders. After practicing pure conduct all their lives then, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *Father, or The Story of Sudarśana*



The Partridge

Lee Fan Yin Sadhana & Lee Fan Zhe Yeshe De
/ 5 & 2 years old

Part Nine (7)

Father, or The Story of
Sudarśana

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བཤམ་

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 Father, or The Story of Sudarśana

9.115 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, there lived a certain householder named Dhanika. He was prosperous and wealthy, a person of vast and magnificent means, endowed with the wealth of Vaiśravaṇa—with wealth to rival Vaiśravaṇa’s.

9.116 When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met.

9.117 When the great crowd of people saw him just after he was born he was beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, “What name should we give this child?” and they named him, saying, “Since when the great crowd of people saw him just after his birth he was beautiful, his name will be Sudarśana.” They reared young Sudarśana on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and his fame spread throughout Rājagṛha.

9.118 After the Blessed One achieved unexcelled wisdom he began to act for the benefit of those to be tamed and came to Rājagṛha. He stayed in Bamboo Grove, where he inspired thousands to go for refuge and take the fundamental precepts. From time to time, group after group and elder

after elder, one joyful group after another, gathered and went to see the Blessed One. No one came to see young Sudarśana anymore, so one day he asked his parents, “Why is it that many people came to see me before, but no one comes to see me now?”

“Now they go to see the Blessed One,” they replied.

9.119 “Who is this Blessed One?” asked the young man.

His parents praised the Blessed One, and as soon as he heard this, he was filled with wonder and thought, “How could he be more pleasing to the eye than I?” Then he said to his parents, “Mother, Father, I wish to go see the Blessed One.”

“Child, we’ll go with you,” his parents replied.

9.120 The parents took their child to Bamboo Grove, where the child saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance. His body, graced and resplendent with the thirty-two signs of a great person, looked like it was on fire, like flames stoked with ghee, like a lamp set in a golden vessel, and like a pillar adorned with all manner of jewels. He was immaculate, clear-minded, and pure of heart. When he saw the Blessed Buddha the sight of him filled him with supreme joy, and he believed himself to be looking at his father.

9.121 He cried out, “Father! Father!” and approached the Blessed One. Upon his arrival he touched his head to the feet of the Blessed One, and, believing the Blessed One to be his father, sat at the Blessed One’s feet. His parents likewise touched their heads to the feet of the Blessed One and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught them the Dharma particularly suited to their condition, then sat without speaking.

9.122 Knowing that the Blessed One had completed his discourse, the householder Dhanika and his wife then took their son by the hand and prepared to depart, saying, “We are going to go now.” But the young man could not be parted from the Blessed One.

9.123 His parents thought, “We can get him home

by inviting the Blessed One to our house.” They bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together and requested the Blessed One, “Please permit us to invite the Blessed One to take a meal at our house for seven days,” and the Blessed One assented by his silence.

9.124 Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, the householder said to his wife, “Sweet one, go and prepare food for the Blessed One. The boy and I shall stay with the Blessed One here.” The householder and his child slept that night in Bamboo Grove. After preparing many good, wholesome foods that night, in the morning the woman rose, prepared seats, filled the water pots, and set them out. Then she sent a message to the Blessed One reminding him it was time for the midday meal: “Lord, the midday meal is upon us. Know that the time has come, Blessed One, and your presence is requested.”

9.125 In the morning the Blessed One donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, he set out surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. They arrived at the householders’ reception room, where the Blessed One took his place on the seat prepared for him amid the saṅgha of monks. Once the householder knew that the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks were comfortably seated, by his own hand he contented them with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Once he knew that the Blessed One had finished eating and that his bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, he brought in a very low seat and sat before the Blessed One and his suite of attendants to listen to the Dharma.

9.126 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, the householder and his retinue destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain

of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

9.127 After seeing the truths, the child asked for his parents’ permission, then bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together and requested, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

9.128 With the words “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. His state was such that Indra, Upendra, and the other gods worshiped and venerated him and addressed him with respect.

9.129 The monks remarked to the Blessed One, “Lord, thousands of children have seen the Blessed One, but never has anyone encountered him quite like that.”

“Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “for five hundred lifetimes this young man was my child. It was on the basis of these habitual tendencies that he encountered me so.”

9.130 “Lord,” they inquired, “what action did the young man take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth; that he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful; and that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and

manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

9.131 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as forty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Krakucchanda was in the world, the totally and the completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda achieved unexcelled wisdom and then traveled to the royal palace known as Śobhāvātī.

9.132 At that time, King Śobha had built a monastery for the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda that was complete in every respect, and offered it to the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda.

9.133 It was King Śobha’s custom to go to the monastery every day with a suite of attendants and sweep. One day as King Śobha was headed to the monastery, some work came up, so the king instructed his eldest son, “Go and sweep the monastery today,” and departed. As the prince and the suite of attendants went to sweep the monastery, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda performed a miracle so that no matter what he did, the prince would not be able to finish sweeping the monastery before nightfall and would bed down there for the night.

9.134 As he was bedding down for the night, the prince saw miraculous displays performed by the monks, and he saw that Śakra and Brahmā and the rest had come. As soon as he saw them he experienced a surge of joy toward the Blessed One, and began putting great effort into serving the monks there in the monastery.

9.135 He no longer wished to return to the city, so he remained there and served the monks for five thousand years. He progressed in meditative stabilization on love, went for refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts all his life. At the time of his death he prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may I be well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. May I please and not displease a teacher just like this one. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

9.136 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was the prince then is none other than this young man. The act of serving the saṅgha of disciples of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda and saying that prayer at the time of his death ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

9.137 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

9.138 “The act of contemplating love ripened such that wherever he was born, he was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful.

“He also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all his life then, his faculties ripened, and now he has been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Bandits*



Part Nine (8)

The
Bandits

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Bandits

9.139 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, some five hundred bandits menacingly dwelt in a certain thicket of sāl trees on the border of Śrāvastī and Rājagṛha. Their presence there meant that a great many people were killed.

One day after many travelers had been robbed, the merchants approached King Prasenajit to inform him, and King Prasenajit's son, Prince Videha, mustered the four divisions of his army. They went and captured the five hundred bandits alive and brought them before King Prasenajit. He handed the five hundred bandits over to his executioners to be killed, and they led them away to the execution grounds.

9.140 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

9.141 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish?

Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?”

9.142 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

9.143 The Blessed One knew that the time had come to tame the five hundred bandits, so he disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and traveled to the royal court, where King Prasenajit saw the Blessed One from a distance. He approached the Blessed One, and upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One's feet and asked him, “Blessed One, why have you come?”

“Great King,” the Blessed One replied, “do not slay these five hundred noble children. Release them instead.”

9.144 “If they go forth,” replied the king, “I shall release them.” King Prasenajit brought out the five hundred bandits and presented them to the Buddha. The Blessed One led them to the garden of Prince Jeta and led them to go forth as novices, conferred on

them full ordination, and instructed them. They cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

9.145 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “tell us why you saved the precious lives of the five hundred bandits and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I saved the lives of all five hundred of these children of good lineage, and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Listen well!

9.146 “Monks, it took place in times gone by, during King Mahendrasena’s reign in Videha. One day the king arrayed the four divisions of his army, and as they set out to hunt deer, his five hundred ministers, who wished to harm to the king, thought, ‘Now the king is in our hands. We should kill him while he’s still here.’

9.147 “Now, worldly people are surrounded by both enemies and friends. So it was that someone sent word to the king, and no sooner had King Mahendrasena heard about it than he handed over all five hundred ministers to be killed. The executioners led them away. They entered the forest, and as the king ordered, ‘Kill them now!’ a certain sage who was living in the forest convinced him to release all five hundred ministers instead. The sage then led them to a place devoted to austerities. After they went forth before him, they generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

9.148 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the five hundred ministers are none other than these five hundred noble children. At that time I delivered them from being killed, saved their precious lives, and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well I have saved

their precious lives and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

9.149 “They also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all their lives then, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Piśācas*



The Bandits

Bright / 10 years old

Part Nine (9)

The
Piśācas

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བྲལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 The Piśācas

9.150 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, a thousand piśācas were living at the border between Śrāvastī and Rājagṛha. They cut off all passage and killed many in the countries of Magadha and Kośāla.

King Prasenajit dispatched an envoy to King Bimbisāra, asking him, “Did you know that there are a thousand piśācas living at the border between Śrāvastī and Rājagṛha, and that they are doing great harm to our two countries by staying there? Since the Blessed One is residing in your kingdom, it would be appropriate for you to make a request of the Blessed One regarding these piśācas.”

9.151 No sooner did King Bimbisāra hear this than he went to see the Blessed One. Upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side. Once King Bimbisāra had taken a seat at one side, the Blessed One instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with a discourse on the Dharma. Once he had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted him with many discourses on the Dharma, the Blessed One then sat without speaking.

9.152 Knowing that the Blessed One had completed his discourse, King Bimbisāra rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and said to the Blessed One, “Lord, the Blessed One has tamed vicious nāgas like Nanda, Upananda, and others besides. You have tamed the vicious yakṣa lord Aṭavika, and others besides. Now

at the border between the countries of Magadha and Kośāla there lives a great horde of piśācas, and by staying there they are doing harm to many. Blessed One, out of compassion for the horde of piśācas, please tame them.” The Blessed One assented to King Bimbisāra by his silence. Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One had given his assent, King Bimbisāra touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and took leave of him.

9.153 The Blessed One saw that the time had come to tame the piśācas so he disappeared from Rājagṛha and traveled to the sāl forest, close to where the piśācas were. The piśācas saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance, and upon seeing him they took on a hideous appearance and charged at the Blessed One with great force.

9.154 The Blessed One had a thought about the world: “It would be good for the great king Vaiśravaṇa to come see me with the yakṣa Maheśākhyā!” No sooner had the Blessed One had this thought than the great king Vaiśravaṇa and the yakṣa Maheśākhyā came to see the Blessed One. Upon their arrival they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side.

9.155 The horde of piśācas, terrified that the great king Vaiśravaṇa and the yakṣa Maheśākhyā would do them harm, began to run all about. The Blessed One emanated flames all about them in order to tame them. The piśācas saw there were great flames all about them and that they could not run away, and that it was only peaceful at the feet of the Blessed One. In search of refuge they went to the Blessed One and upon their arrival sat in a circle around him.

9.156 “My friends,” the Blessed One said to the piśācas, “you have taken birth in the lower realms, as piśācas, because of your past sins and nonvirtuous actions. Even now you are doing harm to many. When you die and transmigrate, what will be the state of your rebirth? Where will you go?”

“What advice can you grant us?” they asked.
9.157 “From this day forth,” the Blessed One instructed them, “give up sinful actions, go for refuge, and maintain the fundamental precepts.”

“As you wish, Blessed One,” the piśācas replied. Then the piśācas went for refuge, took the fundamental precepts, and gave up sinful actions.

9.158 The Blessed One taught them the Dharma that was appropriate for them, then disappeared from the sāl forest and traveled to Bamboo Grove. The piśācas remained on the unexcelled path, and they gave water to those who were traveling by, and gave them food as well. To those who had lost their way, they showed the way. The people of Kāśi and Kośala were filled with wonder and exclaimed, “The Blessed One tames those who are difficult to tame!”

9.159 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why the Blessed One has tamed even these demons, leading them to go for refuge and take the fundamental precepts so they would be of benefit to many!”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I turned them away from sinful actions and set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions. Listen well!”

9.160 “Monks, in times gone by a great horde of piśācas lived in this very place for a long time. By living there, they brought ruin upon the people of the countries of Kāśi and Kośala.

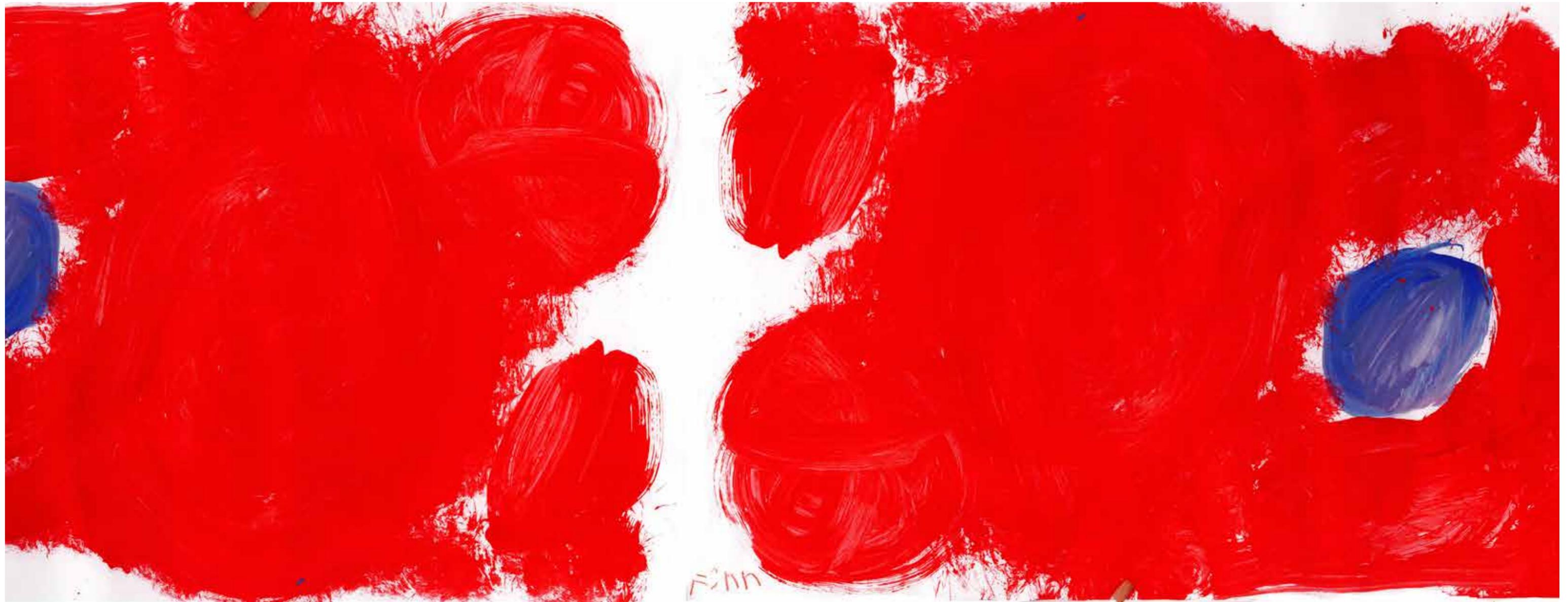
“There was a certain sage living in a place devoted to austerities near the city of Rājagṛha, and after many people had asked the sage to tame the piśācas, the sage tamed the piśācas and set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions.

9.161 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were that horde of piśācas are none other than these piśācas. At that time I set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions.

Now as well I have turned them away from sinful actions and set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of Head of Indra*



The Piśacas

Finn Pullen / 7 years old

Part Nine (10)

The Story of Head of
Indra

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བྱ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 The Story of Head of Indra

9.162 When the Blessed One was in Rājagṛha, in Vaiśālī there lived a certain archery master named Head of Indra who knew everything there was to know about archery. He trained five hundred Licchavis in archery, and they mastered it and became very powerful.

9.163 One day a disagreement arose between the people of Rājagṛha and Vaiśālī, and the people of Rājagṛha arrayed the four divisions of their army and advanced on Vaiśālī to wage war. Master archer Head of Indra heard that Rājagṛha was advancing on them to wage war, and when he heard this he set out with a retinue of five hundred and advanced on the Rājagṛha army to wage war.

9.164 As they advanced they massacred many, and the Rājagṛha soldiers fled. Many people of Rājagṛha were slaughtered as they advanced again not twice or thrice but five times. Soon word spread that master archer Head of Indra had shot five thousand men with arrows and killed them all.

9.165 So it was that one day the people of Rājagṛha implored the Blessed One, “Lord, Head of Indra is an adversary to those without adversaries, a rival to those without rivals. Lord, he has killed some five thousand men. Blessed One, out of compassion, please tame Head of Indra.” The Blessed One assented to the people of Rājagṛha by his silence. Understanding that by his silence the Blessed One

had given his assent, the inhabitants of Rājagṛha then took leave of the Blessed One.

9.166 The Blessed One disappeared from Rājagṛha and traveled to Vaiśālī, where he performed a miracle so that Head of Indra simply did not know archery anymore. This confused him, and he thought, “What’s wrong with me?” Then he heard that the Blessed One, who had been living in Rājagṛha, had come to Vaiśālī, and he thought, “Since the Blessed One is omniscient and all-seeing, he will be able to directly apprehend why I do not know archery anymore.” So he went to see the Blessed One. Upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

9.167 The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, Head of Indra destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

9.168 After he saw the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested, “Blessed One, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

9.169 “Head of Indra,” the Blessed One told him, “go announce this to your students. After that it will be easy for you to go forth, complete your novitiate, and achieve full ordination.”

“As you wish, Blessed One,” he replied.

9.170 He took leave of the Blessed One and went to Vaiśālī, where he taught the five hundred Licchavis the Dharma in such a way that they too wished to go forth no matter what. They then asked for their parents’ permission and went with Head of Indra

to see the Blessed One. When they arrived they touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

9.171 The Blessed One directly apprehended their thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperaments, capacities, and natures, and taught them the Dharma accordingly. Hearing it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

9.172 After they saw the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and also requested the Blessed One, "Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life."

9.173 With the words "Come, join me, monks!" the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship.

9.174 "Lord," the monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, "tell us why the five hundred Licchavis entrusted themselves to Head of Indra, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship."

9.175 "Not only now," the Blessed One explained, "but in times past as well, and in the same way, I turned Head of Indra and the five hundred Licchavis away from sinful actions and set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions.

9.176 "Monks, in times gone by, King Mahendra reigned in the city of Potalaka. One day the royal queen conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well

proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful, with glowing, golden skin and a well-rounded head, long arms, a broad brow, a fine and prominent nose, and eyebrows that met. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they asked, 'What name should we give this child?' and they named him, saying, 'Since this is Mahendra's child, his name will be Mahendrasena.'

9.177 "They reared young Mahendrasena on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids. As he grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one's head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five areas of knowledge.

9.178 "He came to see that his father and the five hundred ministers ruled both righteously and unrighteously, and he thought, 'I will give up the kingdom and go to live in a forest devoted to austerities.' Reflecting in this way, he asked for his parents' permission and went to live in the forest.

9.179 "One day his father died. Upon his death the neighboring kings began to do harm to the country, and the ministers thought, 'The neighboring kings do us such harm because we have no lord. We must summon the prince so that he can assume the throne.' With this in mind the chief minister went to see the prince and said to him, 'Lord, your father has passed away. Please come and assume your father's kingdom.'

9.180 “If you adopt the path of the ten virtuous actions, then I shall return,’ he replied. With that he led the chief minister to adopt the path of the ten virtuous actions. The chief minister then set all five hundred ministers on the path of the ten virtuous actions, and afterward they summoned the prince and set him on the throne. By returning there, he set all the country’s many inhabitants on the path of the ten virtuous actions.

9.181 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that king then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that chief minister then is none other than Head of Indra. Those who were his ministers then are none other than the five hundred Licchavis. At that time the five hundred ministers entrusted themselves to Head of Indra, and I turned them away from sinful actions and set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions. Now as well they have entrusted themselves to Head of Indra, and I have turned them away from sinful actions and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

9.182 “They also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all their lives then, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

9.183 *This concludes Part Nine of The Hundred Deeds.*

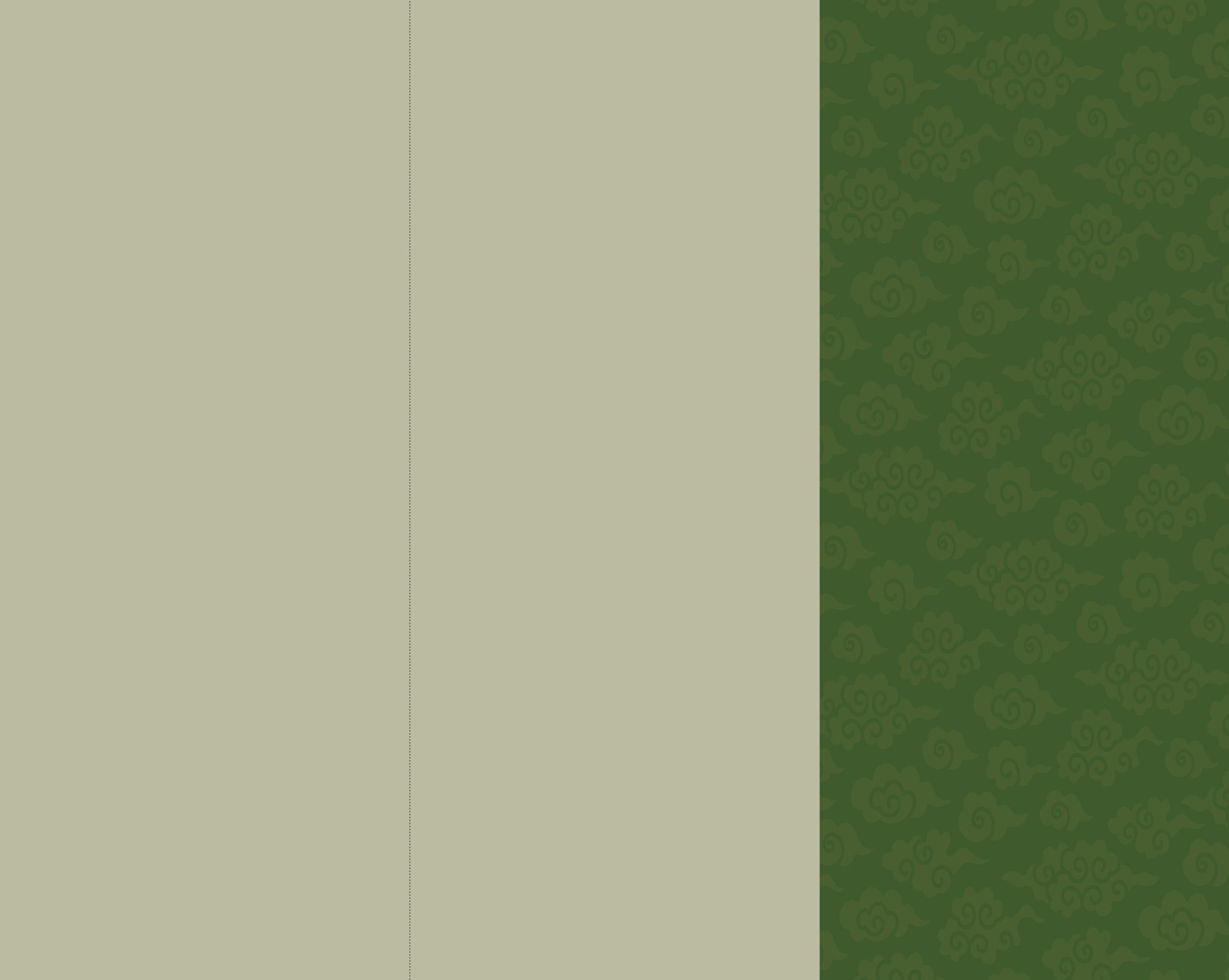
THE END

Next: *Part Ten: Śakra*



The Story of Head of Indra

Rachel Zhou / 11.5 years old



The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་པ།
Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Part Ten

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|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Śakra | 6. The Story of the
Householder Govinda |
| 2. The King | 7. The Quarrel |
| 3. The Hunter | 8. The Nāga (2) |
| 4. The Story of Deluded | 9. Two Stories about King
Śibi |
| 5. The Brahmin: Three
Stories | 9. i The First Story about King Śibi |
| 5. i The First “Brahmin” Story | 9. ii The Second Story of King Śibi |
| 5. ii The Second “Brahmin” Story | |
| 5. iii The Third “Brahmin” Story | 10. Kauśāmbī |
-

Part Ten (1)

Śakra

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བྲ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

1 Śakra

10.2 Among the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three it is Śakra, King of the Gods, who reigns over the kingdom of the thirty-three gods. Five signs customarily appear when gods near the time of their death and transmigration: (1) Deities are illuminated from within, but at that time this light dwindles. (2) The clothing and ornaments of the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, as well as the branches of flowers and fruit that adorn their clothing, normally make very pleasant sounds when shaken by the wind, but at that time the sounds become unpleasant. (3) Deities' clothing is soft to the touch, but at that time their clothing becomes very coarse. (4) No odor can cling to the body of a god, but at that time their bodies begin to reek. (5) Deities' eyes never close, but at that time their eyes close.

10.3 As gods approach the time of their death and transmigration, secondary signs also begin to appear: whereas before no odor could cling to their clothing, their clothing begins to reek; whereas before their garlands of flowers could not wilt, they begin to wilt; a foul smell comes over their bodies; perspiration starts to come from both of their armpits; and as they near death and transmigration, they no longer wish to sit upon their thrones.

10.4 So it was that one day the secondary signs began to appear on Śakra, King of the Gods. He noticed the secondary signs coming on, and upon noticing them, was immediately horrified. He thought, "To

whom can I go for refuge who could prevent me from dying and transmigrating from my current state?"

The young demigoddess Śacī said, "Kauśika, you should go to Jambudvīpa and ask those among the ascetics and brahmins who are of a virtuous nature how to prevent yourself from dying and transmigrating from your current state. Seek refuge in them."

10.5 No sooner had Śakra, King of the Gods, heard this than he and the young demigoddess Śacī disappeared from the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and traveled to Jambudvīpa, where they approached the ascetics and brahmins and others and asked, "How can one prevent the death and transmigration of a god?"

10.6 "Who are you?" they asked in reply.

"I am Śakra, King of the Gods," he said.

Overcome with joy and elation they said, "What a great boon for us! Śakra, King of the Gods, has come to see us!" And they went to him for refuge.

10.7 In despair, Śakra, King of the Gods thought, "I came here seeking refuge, wishing to ask them a question, and instead they took refuge in me. What need is there to put my question to these ascetics and brahmins now?" and he abandoned the hope he had in them.

10.8 Now on that occasion the Bodhisattva was in the Tuṣita Heaven observing the world by means of the four observations, and he addressed all six classes of beings in the desire realms, saying, "Friends, this evening I shall take birth in Jambudvīpa, where I shall satiate living beings with the nectar of immortality. Let those among you who wish for this nectar also take birth in Jambudvīpa. There I shall grant a share of nectar to you."

10.9 Then the Bodhisattva reincarnated in his mother's womb, and Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, "What need is there for me to offer the ascetics and brahmins my help and respect? This

bodhisattva has reincarnated in his mother's womb. After he is born he will realize the nectar of immortality—let me then offer him my help and respect.” He sent four gods to be the Bodhisattva's protectors. From time to time he himself went to protect the Bodhisattva, and when the Bodhisattva was born it was Śakra himself who gathered him up in his arms.

10.10 When the Bodhisattva grew up, became disillusioned with saṃsāra, and began making efforts in renunciation, Śakra also traveled to the Bodhimaṇḍa to protect him. When the Bodhisattva had achieved unexcelled wisdom, tamed a first and then a second group of five, tamed fifty upper-class village boys and the group known as the Good, established Nandā and Nandabalā in the truths, caused Uruvilvā Kāśyapa and Nadī Kāśyapa to go forth, displayed three miracles upon traveling to Gayā, and in Bamboo Grove placed in the truths King Bimbisāra and eighty thousand gods, as well as the brahmins of Magadha and thousands upon thousands of householders, Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, “This is still not a good time for me to ask the Blessed One my question.” After the Blessed One had placed King Bimbisāra in the truths, traveled to Rājagṛha, and accepted Bamboo Grove, he caused Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana to go forth, spreading the doctrine.

10.11 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their

buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

10.12 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha's presence, to be fruitful?”

10.13 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

10.14 The Blessed One thought, “I must establish Śakra, King of the Gods, and his suite of eighty thousand attendants in the truths.” With this thought he disappeared from Rājagṛha and traveled to Indra's cave on Mount Videha, south of Rājagṛha and north of a brahmin village called Mango Forest. As the Blessed One entered into equipoise on the element of fire, Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, “Now the time has come for me to ask the Blessed One my question.”

10.15 His suite of eighty thousand divine attendants, the young demigoddess Śacī, and the young

gandharva Pañcaśikha all disappeared from the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and came to sit upon Mount Videha. Then, by the power of the bodily presence of Śakra, King of the Gods, and that of the other thousands of demigods, great rays of light spread all over Mount Videha.

10.16 Śakra, King of the Gods, entered Indra’s cave, and upon entering, saw the Blessed One sitting in equipoise on the element of fire. Upon seeing him he thought, “The Blessed Buddha has entered into equipoise on the element of fire—the time has not yet come for me to go to the Blessed One and offer my help and respect.”

10.17 For a moment he sat without saying anything, then he said to the young gandharva Pañcaśikha, “Pañcaśikha, child, could you cause the Blessed One to stir? If you do so, it will be easy for us to go to the Blessed One and offer our help and respect.”

“Yes, Kauśika, I believe I could,” Pañcaśikha replied.

10.18 Taking up a guitar of beryl, with a suite of five hundred attendants he approached the Blessed One. He bid the Blessed One to stir with verses worthy of the Lord and worthy of the arhats. Then Pañcaśikha returned to Śakra, King of the Gods, and said to him, “The Blessed One stirs, Kauśika. The time has come for you to go see the Blessed One and to offer him your help and respect.”

10.19 The Blessed One thought, “Alas, this cave is very narrow, and that god’s suite of attendants is very large. I will perform a miracle that causes Śakra, King of the Gods, and his suite of attendants to be easily accommodated, that they might sit and listen to the Dharma.” Then the Blessed One performed a miracle that caused Indra’s cave to be large and open.

10.20 Śakra, King of the Gods, and his suite of eighty thousand divine attendants, the young demigoddess Śacī, and the young gandharva Pañcaśikha all approached the Blessed One. Upon their arrival

they touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

Śakra, King of the Gods, shared the story of his previous exploits with the Blessed One, and then asked his question: “Lord, what are the fetters of gods, humans, demigods, nāgas, garuḍas, gandharvas, or those with any other kind of bodily form?”

10.21 “Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “envy and avarice are what binds the gods, humans, demigods, nāgas, garuḍas, gandharvas, and those with any other kind of bodily form. They don’t think, ‘I should live without resentment, enmity, ill will, strife, reproof, conflict, and contention.’ Instead they live in resentment, enmity, ill will, strife, reproof, conflict, and contention.”

10.22 “Lord, so it is,” said Śakra. “It is just as you say. Envy and avarice are what binds the gods, humans, demigods, nāgas, garuḍas, gandharvas, and those with any other kind of bodily forms. They don’t think, ‘I should live without resentment, enmity, ill will, strife, reproof, conflict, and contention.’ Instead they live in resentment, enmity, ill will, strife, reproof, conflict, and contention. I have understood the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

10.23 After he heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, Śakra, King of the Gods, praised what the Blessed One said, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One other questions.

“Lord, on what are envy and avarice founded? What is their origin? What are their aspects? Whence are they born? What must be present for envy and avarice to arise? What must be absent for envy and avarice not to arise?”

10.24 “Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “envy and avarice are founded on affinity and antipathy. Affinity and antipathy are their origins. Affinity and antipathy are their aspects. They are born from affinity and antipathy. Where there is affinity and

antipathy, envy and avarice will arise. Where there is neither affinity nor antipathy, envy and avarice will not arise.”

10.25 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra agreed. “Envy and avarice are founded on affinity and antipathy. Affinity and antipathy are their origins. Affinity and antipathy are their aspects. They are born from affinity and antipathy. Where there is affinity and antipathy, envy and avarice will arise. Where there is neither affinity nor antipathy, envy and avarice will not arise. I have understood the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods, heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, he rejoiced and asked the Blessed One other questions.

10.26 “Lord, on what are affinity and antipathy founded? What is their origin? What are their aspects? Whence are they born? What must be present for affinity and antipathy to arise? What must be absent for affinity and antipathy not to arise?”

“Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “affinity and antipathy are founded on craving. Craving is their origin. Craving is their aspect. They are born from craving. Where there is craving, affinity and antipathy will arise. Where there is no craving, affinity and antipathy will not arise.”

10.27 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra agreed. “Affinity and antipathy are founded on craving. Craving is their origin. Craving is their aspect. They are born from craving. Where there is craving, affinity and antipathy will arise. Where there is no craving, affinity and antipathy will not arise. I have understood the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods, had heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, he praised what the Blessed One said, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One other questions.

10.28 “Lord, on what is craving founded? What is its origin? What are its aspects? Whence is it born? What must be present for craving to arise? What must be absent for craving not to arise?”

“Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “craving is founded on thought construction. Thought construction is its origin. Thought construction is its aspect. It is born from thought construction. Where there is thought construction, craving will arise. Where there is no thought construction, craving will not arise.”

10.29 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra agreed. “Craving is founded on thought construction. Thought construction is its origin. Thought construction is its aspect. Of thought construction it is born. Where there is thought construction, craving will arise. Where there is no thought construction, craving will not arise. I have understood the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods, had heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, he praised what the Blessed One said, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One other questions.

10.30 “Lord, on what is thought construction founded? What is its origin? What are its aspects? Whence is it born? What must be present for thought construction to arise? What must be absent for thought construction not to arise?”

“Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “thought construction is founded on discursive elaboration. Discursive elaboration is its origin. Discursive elaboration is its aspect. It is born from discursive elaboration. Where there is discursive elaboration, thought construction will arise. Where there is no discursive elaboration, thought construction will not arise.

10.31 “Kauśika, accordingly, where there is discursive elaboration, thought construction will arise. Where there is thought construction, craving will

arise. Where there is craving, affinity and antipathy will arise. Where there is affinity and antipathy, envy and avarice will arise. Where there is envy and avarice, there will be cudgels hefted, weapons taken up, strife, reproof, conflict, contention, cunning, deceit, retribution, lies disseminated, and many such nonvirtuous, sinful things. Thus does this entire great heap of suffering arise.

10.32 “Accordingly, where there is no discursive elaboration, thought construction will not arise. Where there is no thought construction, craving will not arise. Where there is no craving, affinity and antipathy will not arise. Where there is neither affinity nor antipathy, envy and avarice will not arise. When there is no envy and avarice, the hefting of cudgels, the taking up of weapons, strife, reproof, war, contention, cunning, deceit, retribution, the dissemination of lies, and any such nonvirtuous, sinful dharmas all will cease. Thus does this entire great heap of suffering cease.”

10.33 “Lord, so it is,” Śakra, King of the Gods, agreed. “It is just as you say. Thought construction is founded on discursive elaboration. Discursive elaboration is its origin. Discursive elaboration is its aspect. It is born from discursive elaboration. Where there is discursive elaboration, thought construction will arise. Where there is no discursive elaboration, thought construction will not arise. I have understood the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods, had heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, he praised what the Blessed One said, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One other questions.

10.34 “Lord, it is said that there is a path to stopping discursive elaboration. Lord, what is the path to stopping discursive elaboration? What is the path that, if the ordained set out upon it, will stop discursive elaboration?”

“Kauśika,” The Blessed One replied, “the

path that stops discursive elaboration is the noble eightfold path, namely, right view, right understanding, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditation. This is called the path that stops discursive elaboration. The ordained who enter it are known as those who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration.”

10.35 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra, King of the Gods, agreed. “They are known as those who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration. I have understood the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods, had heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, he praised the Blessed One’s words, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One other questions.

10.36 “Lord, is there something that is the causal attribute of the prātimokṣa vows taken by the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration?”

“Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “there are six causal attributes of the prātimokṣa vows taken by the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration. They are (1) the forms perceived by the eyes, (2) the sounds perceived by the ears, (3) the smells perceived by the nose, (4) the tastes perceived by the tongue, (5) the tangible objects perceived by the body, and (6) the mental phenomena perceived by the mind.

10.37 “Kauśika, I have said, ‘There are two types of forms that are perceived by the eyes—those that are trustworthy and those that are not trustworthy.’ I have said, ‘Any form perceived by the eyes that I have recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to is surely to be abandoned.’ And I have also said, ‘Any form perceived by the eyes that is suitable to adopt and adhere to is to be trusted.’ Thus has the Tathāgata taught, knowing when the time is right

for clarification on these.

10.38 “In the same way, I have also said, ‘There are two types of sounds perceived by the ears, smells perceived by the nose, tastes perceived by the tongue, tangible objects perceived by the body, and phenomena perceived by the mind—those that are trustworthy, and those that are not trustworthy.’ I have also said about these, ‘One should absolutely and surely abandon mental phenomena known by mind that are recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to.’ I have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the right time to teach what should be adopted at any occasion, phenomena known by the mind that are suitable to adopt and adhere to should indeed be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’”

10.39 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra, King of the Gods, agreed. “There are six causal attributes of the prātimokṣa vow taken by the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration. They are (1) the forms perceived by the eyes, (2) the sounds perceived by the ears, (3) the smells perceived by the nose, (4) the tastes perceived by the tongue, (5) the tangible objects perceived by the body, and (6) the phenomena perceived by the mind.

10.40 “Regarding those, Lord, you have said, ‘There are two types of forms that are perceived by the eyes—those that are trustworthy and those that are not trustworthy.’ You have said, ‘The forms perceived by the eyes that are recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to are absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ You have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the right time to teach what should be adopted at any occasion, phenomena known by the mind that are suitable to adopt and adhere to should be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’ The same applies to the others, up to the mental phenomena perceived by the mind.

10.41 “This is the meaning of the Tathāgata’s response, as I understand it. You have said, ‘If one trusts some form perceived by the eyes and nonvirtues multiply and virtues diminish, one should no longer trust such forms perceived by the eyes.’ You have also said, ‘If one trusts some form perceived by the eyes and nonvirtues diminish and virtues multiply, one should then trust such forms perceived by the eyes.’ Likewise you said, ‘If one trusts a certain sound perceived by the ears, a smell perceived by the nose, a taste perceived by the tongue, a tangible object perceived by the body, or a mental phenomenon perceived by the mind and nonvirtues multiply and virtues diminish, then one should no longer trust such mental phenomena perceived by the mind, nor, likewise, by the others.’ You have also said, ‘If one trusts a certain mental phenomenon perceived by the mind and nonvirtues diminish and virtues multiply, then one should trust such phenomena perceived by the mind.’ I understand the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, have overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, he praised the Blessed One’s words, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One other questions.

10.42 “Lord, what are the things that the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration should abandon? What are the things in which those who have gone forth who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration should exert themselves?”

“Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “there are three things that the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration should abandon, and three things in which they should exert themselves. They concern how one speaks, thinks, and analyzes. As I have said, Kauśika, ‘There are two types of speech—trustworthy and untrustworthy.’ I have said, ‘Utterances that are

recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to are absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ I have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the time to teach what should be adopted on any occasion, utterances that are recognized as suitable to adopt and adhere to are to be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’

10.43 “As I have said, Kauśika, ‘There are also two types of thought construction—trustworthy and untrustworthy. I have said, ‘Thought constructions and analyses that are unsuitable to be adopted and adhered to are absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ I have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the right time to teach what should be adopted on any occasion, analyses suitable to adopt and adhere to should be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’”

10.44 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra, King of the Gods, agreed. “There are three things that the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration should abandon, and three things in which they should exert themselves. They concern how one speaks, thinks, and analyzes. Lord, you have said, ‘There are two types of speech—trustworthy and untrustworthy.’ You have said, ‘Utterances that are recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to are absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ You have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the time to teach what should be adopted on any occasion, utterances that are recognized as suitable to adopt and adhere to are to be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’

10.45 “Lord, you have said, ‘There are also two types of thought construction and analysis—trustworthy and untrustworthy.’ You have said, ‘Thought constructions and analyses that are unsuitable to be adopted and adhered to should absolutely and surely be abandoned.’ You have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the right time to teach

what should be adopted on any occasion, analyses suitable to adopt and adhere to should be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’

10.46 “This is the meaning of the Blessed One’s response, as I understand it. You have said, ‘If one trusts some utterance and nonvirtues multiply and virtues diminish, one should no longer trust such utterances.’ You have also said, ‘If one trusts some utterance and nonvirtues diminish and virtues multiply, one should trust such utterances.’ You have said, ‘If one trusts some thought construction and analysis and nonvirtues multiply and virtues diminish, one should no longer trust such thought constructions and analyses.’ You have said, ‘If one trusts some analysis and nonvirtues diminish and virtues multiply, one should trust such analyses.’ I understand the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, have overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods heard the Blessed One’s response to his questions, he praised the Blessed One’s words, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One another question.

10.47 “Lord, how many of these aspects of the bodies of the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration have you said have two aspects themselves?”

“Kauśika,” The Blessed One replied, “I have said, ‘There are three aspects of the bodies of the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration, each of two different types.’ These are the pleasant body, the unpleasant body, and the neutral body. Kauśika, I have said, ‘There are also two types of pleasant body—trustworthy and untrustworthy.’ I have said, ‘The pleasant body that is recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to is absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ I have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the time to teach what should be adopted on any occasion, the pleasant body that is recognized as suitable to

adopt and adhere to is to be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’

10.48 “Kauśika, I have said, ‘There are also two types of unpleasant body and neutral body—trustworthy and untrustworthy.’

“I have said, ‘The unpleasant body and the neutral body that are recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to are absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ I have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the time to teach what should be adopted at any occasion, the unpleasant body and the neutral body recognized as suitable to adopt and adhere to are to be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’”

10.49 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra, King of the Gods, agreed. “Lord, you said, ‘There are three aspects of the bodies of the ordained who have entered the path that stops discursive elaboration, each of two different types. These are the pleasant body, the unpleasant body, and the neutral body.’ Lord, you have said, ‘The pleasant body that is recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to is absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ You have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the time to teach what should be adopted on any occasion, the pleasant body that is recognized as suitable to adopt and adhere to is to be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’

10.50 “You have said, ‘There are also two types of unpleasant body and neutral body—trustworthy and untrustworthy.’ You have said, ‘The unpleasant body and neutral body that are recognized as unsuitable to adopt and adhere to are absolutely and surely to be abandoned.’ You have also said, ‘Given that the Tathāgata knows the time to teach what should be adopted on any occasion, the unpleasant body and neutral body recognized as suitable to adopt and adhere to are to be adopted by the mindful and vigilantly introspective.’

10.51 “This is the meaning of the Blessed One’s

response, as I understand it. You have said, ‘If one trusts some pleasant body and nonvirtues multiply and virtues diminish, one should no longer trust such a pleasant body.’ You have also said, ‘If one trusts some pleasant body and nonvirtues diminish and virtues multiply, one should trust such a pleasant body.’ You have said, ‘If one trusts some unpleasant body or neutral body and nonvirtues multiply and virtues diminish, one should no longer trust such an unpleasant body or neutral body.’ You have also said, ‘If one trusts some unpleasant body or neutral body and nonvirtues diminish and virtues multiply, one should trust such an unpleasant body or neutral body.’ I understand the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, have overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods heard the Blessed One’s response to his question, he praised the Blessed One’s words, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One another question.

10.52 “Lord, are all beings alike in their desires, cravings, beliefs, and intentions?”

“No, Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “all beings are not alike in their desires, cravings, beliefs, and intentions. Kauśika, beings do not have a single temperament; they have various temperaments. Those who insist that a certain temperament is supreme are utterly convinced of it and act accordingly, thinking, ‘This is the truth. Others are deluded.’

10.53 “Kauśika, since it is the case that beings have various different temperaments, then those who insist that a certain temperament is supreme, are utterly convinced of it, and act accordingly should not think, ‘This is the truth. Others are deluded.’ This is because it is on account of beings having various different temperaments that they insist that a certain temperament is supreme, are utterly convinced of it, and act accordingly, thinking, ‘This is the truth. Others are deluded.’

10.54 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra, King of the Gods, agreed. “All beings are not alike in their desires, cravings, beliefs, and intentions. Lord, beings have various different temperaments. On this account, they insist that a certain temperament is supreme, are utterly convinced of it, and act accordingly, thinking, ‘This is the truth. Others are deluded.’ I understand the meaning the Blessed One’s words, have overcome my doubt, and have no hesitation.”

After Śakra, King of the Gods, had heard the Blessed One’s response to his question, he praised the Blessed One’s words, rejoiced, and asked the Blessed One other questions.

10.55 “Lord, tell me—have the ascetics and brahmins all attained the unsurpassed, supreme welfare? Are they all forever free of distorting influences and perfected in their practice of pure conduct?”

“Kauśika,” the Blessed One replied, “the ascetics and brahmins have not all attained the unsurpassed, supreme welfare, nor are they all forever free of distorting influences and perfected in their practice of pure conduct. Only those among the ascetics and brahmins who have exhausted their thirst for unexcelled liberation and whose perfect minds are utterly liberated have attained the unsurpassed, supreme welfare, and are forever free of distorting influences and perfected in their practice of pure conduct.”

10.56 “Lord, so it is. It is just as you say,” Śakra, King of the Gods, agreed. “The ascetics and brahmins have not all attained the unsurpassed, supreme welfare, nor are they all forever free of distorting influences and perfected in their practice of pure conduct. Only those among the ascetics and brahmins who have exhausted their thirst for unexcelled liberation and whose perfect minds are utterly liberated have attained the unsurpassed, supreme welfare, and are forever free of distorting influences and perfected in their practice of pure

conduct. I understand the meaning of the Blessed One’s words, have overcome my doubt, have no hesitation, and with this thorn removed, I no longer despair. On this account I shall henceforth never give rise to such thoughts again.

10.57 “Lord, because of not having gained any understanding before in specific response to my questions, after a long time waiting, I have now finally consulted the Blessed One. By means of the words spoken by the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the totally and completely awakened Buddha, the thorn of my doubt and second thoughts has been removed.”

10.58 The Blessed One asked him, “Kauśika, do you recall asking such questions of the other ascetics and brahmins?”

Śakra, King of the Gods, replied, “Yes, Lord, I do recall this. At one time the gods gathered and took their seats in the assembly hall of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. They searched for the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the totally and completely awakened Buddha, and not having found the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the totally and completely awakened Buddha, they rose from their seats and went their separate ways, and while the more prominent gods among them remained to search further, the others died, transmigrated, and disappeared.

10.59 “Lord, when even those most prominent gods died and transmigrated, I grew panicked and afraid, thinking, ‘Will I too die and transmigrate?’ And wherever I saw ascetics and brahmins living in isolation, thinking that they were the tathāgatas, the arhats, the totally and completely awakened buddhas, I approached them.

10.60 “ ‘Who are you?’ they would ask me, and I responded, ‘I am Śakra, King of the Gods.’ Then in joy and gladness they exclaimed, ‘Oh, we have seen Śakra!’ over and over again, and began to ask questions of me, so I did not put my questions to them. They took refuge in me, so I did not take

refuge in them.

“From this day forth I am a disciple of the Blessed One. I take my refuge in the Blessed One.

10.61 “There’s no end to thought construction.
I have had so many doubts and qualms.
Thus I ranged about so long,
In search of the Tathāgata.

10.62 “In blindness I have come to serve
The perfect Buddha, and since I know not,
I have to ask of all the rest
The means by which to please him best—

10.63 “With what practice, by what path?
But no answer do they give at all.
Blessed One, you apprehend
All my wishes, however small,

10.64 “Whatever I think, all I assess,
Whence the mind comes, and where it goes.
All of us whose minds are known by yours,
Each one of us, upon this day—

10.65 “Blessed One, arhat, we request
You make a statement, give some word.
Buddha, awakened teacher,
Victor, Māra’s tamer, skillful

10.66 “Surgeon for latent afflictions,
You who safely arrived, and yet returns
To rescue all beings—
In this world you are the Buddha,

10.67 “And you alone are unsurpassed.
Not in all the world nor even
Among the gods have you any peer.
Great hero, to you I bow.

10.68 “Highest of persons, to you I bow.

I bow to the one

From the Clan of the Sun

Who removes the thorn of existence.”

10.69 “Kauśika,” the Blessed One asked him, “do you recall ever attaining such a truth, or attaining experiences of such happiness?”

Śakra, King of the Gods, replied, “I recall attaining experiences of happiness. But I can’t recall an experience of attaining the truth. Lord, there was one time when the gods and demigods were waging war on one another, and the gods were victorious and the demigods defeated. Thereupon I thought, ‘Here I am now in the city of the gods. I will gather up all the pleasures of the gods and all the pleasures of the demigods and enjoy them for myself.’ That attainment of happiness came on the heels of war, on the heels of reproof, on the heels of conflict, on the heels of contention. But, Lord, the achievement of this happiness—this vision of truth—does not come on the heels of war, nor on the heels of reproof, nor on the heels of conflict, nor on the heels of contention.

10.70 “Lord, when I think of the kindness the Blessed One did in bringing me to the Dharma, I think, ‘When I die from here and transmigrate, may I take rebirth in a house equal in fortune to prosperous and wealthy persons of vast and magnificent means with many nice things, belongings, and personal effects; with riches, grain, gold, silver, treasure houses, and multitudes of every type of granary; and with many who are near and dear, friends, siblings, kin, servants both male and female, workers, and others to whom wages are paid.

10.71 “ ‘And after I eventually take birth there and my faculties ripen, when I have given gifts and made merit, shaved my head and face, donned the colorful religious robes, and with nothing short of perfect faith gone forth from home to live as a mendicant, Lord, if I am then worthy and receive

spiritual instruction, may I practice according to the instruction given. In so doing, if I am worthy, it shall be the end of suffering.’

10.72 “And I also think to myself, ‘Should I not receive spiritual instruction, then taking birth in divine form, may my faculties not deteriorate, and my faculties be unimpaired, with all limbs and digits and other parts of the body intact, with a fine complexion, and may I be illuminated from within, travel the sky, and partake of delightful food—blessed with delightful food and a long life free of any who would oppose me.’

10.73 “Dead, transmigrated, no longer a god,
Now rid of nonhuman life—
After I enter the womb, my ignorance gone,
May the vows please my mind.

10.74 “May I never lack for instruction.
Trusting in the way that I’ve been taught,
Upholding the holy life,
May I take up the practice of going for alms.

10.75 “And if worthy, when I then receive
Spiritual instruction, let my comportment be
Just as I have been instructed.
This would be my suffering’s end.

10.76 “Should it not come to pass,
Then when my lifespan, worn out, slips away
Let me take birth
As a god of Akaniṣṭha.

10.77 “Blessed One, I am a stream enterer. Sugata, I am a stream enterer. It is my hope to one day be a once-returner.”

“Very good, Kauśika, very good!
The good fortune with which you are blessed
The heedful can also achieve.”

10.78 Śakra replied:

“That which made me so peaceable,
And brought me stream entry as well,
Belongs only to you, Blessed One,
And only comes from your teaching.

10.79 “Its foundation is uncommonly vast—
What place is there, then, for another?
Anything like it accomplished before,
Was not something received from another.

10.80 “Lord, as I stand here before you
In the form of a god,
Please, wise one, I request—
Grant that I live long.”

10.81 When this Dharma teaching had been explained, Śakra, King of the Gods, and his suite of eighty thousand divine attendants were able to see these things unobscured, with the Dharma vision that has no trace of dust or stain with respect to phenomena. And having seen the truths, Śakra died, transmigrated, and took birth again right where he sat.

10.82 The Blessed One knew by touching his body that he had died, transmigrated, and taken rebirth without so much as closing his eyes or disappearing. Śakra, King of the Gods, the young demigoddess Śacī, and the others recognized it too, and the young demigoddess Śacī and the others asked Śakra, King of the Gods, “Kauśika, have you died and taken rebirth?”

“Yes, Śacī,” Śakra replied, “and all of you—I did die, transmigrate, and take rebirth. I acquired an extension of my lifespan right here where I sit.”

10.83 Now Śakra, King of the Gods, having seen the truths, was jubilant, joyous, and glad. Feeling jubilant, joyous, and glad, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment,

bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and told the Blessed One, “Lord, I have become a noble one. I am a noble one. As I come to you for refuge, please accept me as a lay vow holder from this day forth for as long as I live, for I am happy to the depths of my heart.”

10.84 Thereupon Śakra, King of the Gods, said to the young gandharva Pañcaśikha, “My boy, you are a great help and a delight to me. It was you who first admonished me to go see the Blessed One. Pañcaśikha, when we reach the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, I shall give to you in marriage the one for whom you have hoped and wished for so long—Princess Suprabhā, whom her father, the gandharva king Tumburu, calls ‘sweet one’—and you yourself shall assume the throne of your father, lord of the gandharvas.”

10.85 Śakra, King of the Gods, then spoke to the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three: “My friends, just as I previously did to Sahāmpati Brahmā throughout the three times, henceforth I shall bow to the Blessed One in the ways I had reserved for Brahmā. Why? Because the Blessed One himself is Brahmā. He has become Brahmā. He is peace. He is serenity.”

10.86 Śakra, King of the Gods, and the other gods touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet, circumambulated the Blessed One three times, and slowly backed away while continuing to bow down toward the Blessed One. And once he was outside the line of sight, Śakra, King of the Gods, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, knelt down on his right knee, and said, “I prostrate to the Blessed One, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the totally and completely awakened Buddha,” and disappeared on the spot.

10.87 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “what action did Śakra, King of the Gods, take that ripened into his becoming a being of great miracles and great power, and such that he pleased the

Blessed One, and did not displease him? Blessed One, what action did the eighty thousand gods take that ripened into their entrusting themselves to Śakra alone, and that they pleased the Blessed One, and did not displease him?”

“It came about by the power of their prayers.” replied the Blessed One.

10.88 “When did they make these prayers?”

“Monks,” the Blessed One recounted, “in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as forty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Krakucchanda was in the world, the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda achieved unexcelled wisdom and then traveled to the royal palace known as Śobhāvātī.

10.89 “At that time King Śobha built five hundred monasteries with six thousand rooms for the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda and offered them to the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda and the saṅgha of his disciples. And after King Śobha had provided them with everything they required, he and his suite of eighty thousand attendants put great effort into venerating the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda and the saṅgha of his disciples.

10.90 “When the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda had carried out all the activities of a buddha, he passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates. King Śobha performed veneration rites for the relics of the Blessed One, built a reliquary stūpa complete in every respect, made a large offering to the stūpa, and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may I take birth

as a god, a prominent god, a lord among the gods. Should I take birth as a human, may it be as a prominent human, the lord of a human kingdom.’

10.91 “The king’s servants saw him praying, and asked, ‘Deva, what is the prayer you are making?’ whereupon he related it all in detail.

“As soon as they heard this, they venerated the stūpa and themselves prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever we are born, may it be into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth. Entrusting ourselves to our king alone, may we please and not displease a teacher just like this one.’

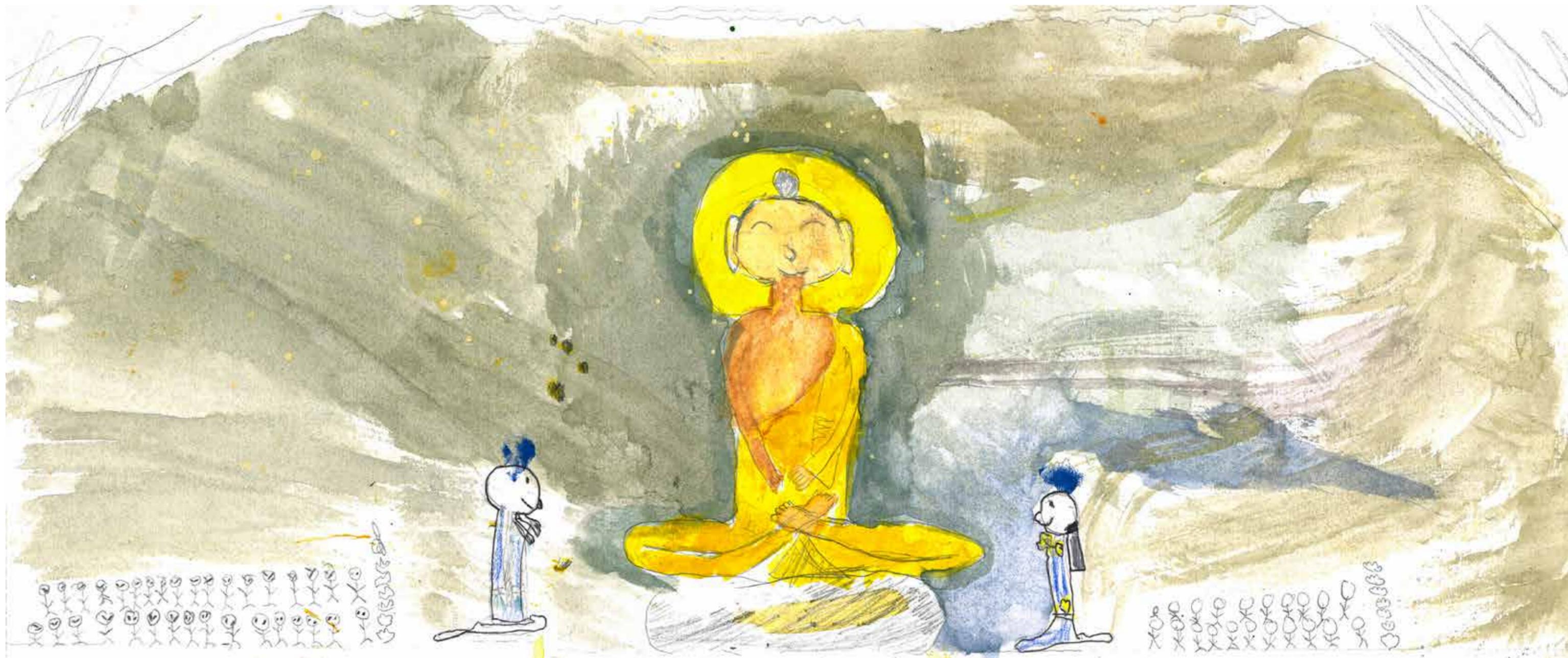
10.92 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was King Śobha then is none other than Śakra, King of the Gods. The act of venerating the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda and the saṅgha of his disciples and saying that prayer ripened into his birth as a god, a prominent god, a lord among gods, and such that when he took rebirth as a human, he became a prominent human, lord of a human kingdom.

10.93 “Now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—he has pleased me, and not displeased me.

10.94 “Those who were the eighty thousand servants are none other than these eighty thousand gods. The act of venerating the totally and completely awakened Buddha Krakucchanda and the saṅgha of his disciples, and saying that prayer, ripened such that wherever they were born, it was into families of great means, prosperity, and wealth, and that by entrusting themselves to Śakra they pleased me, and did not displease me.”

THE END

Next: *The King*



Part Ten (2)

The
King

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

2 The King

10.95 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain brahmin. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child.

10.96 As he grew up, he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *R̥g Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

10.97 One day his parents died. After their death the young man thought, “According to brahminical custom, one may take a wife after practicing pure conduct for forty-eight years. So I will practice pure conduct for forty-eight years.” He practiced pure conduct for forty-eight years and then took a wife. His wife was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. But she was also adulterous and lustful. Being with her aged husband did not satisfy her desire, and she looked for another man.

10.98 One day she thought, “So long as my husband still lives, I’ll have no opportunity to sleep with another man. I will send him to another land.”

She said to the brahmin, “Lord, there’s nothing at all in the house. Why did you make me your wife? Let me go back to my parents’ house. At least there I can get food without much trouble.”

The brahmin said, “Sweet one, don’t be sad. We brahmins can subsist just as well on alms. I will go seek riches in another country, then return.” So he departed, leaving his wife a supply of food.

10.99 After he arrived in that other land he came into possession of many gold coins, and as he was carrying them back to Śrāvastī, he was robbed by bandits on the road, and suffered greatly. “If I go home, there will be a great falling out with the brahminī. What a source of livelihood have I relinquished! I’ll just walk into the thick of the forest and die.”

10.100 So he walked into the thick of the forest intending to hang himself with a rope from a tree. When he halted there, the Blessed One thought, “This brahmin is acting rashly, for he is to go forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.”

10.101 So the Blessed One disappeared from Śrāvastī and traveled to the thick of the forest, where he said to the brahmin, “Brahmin, don’t be rash. I shall give you riches,” and revealed a treasure. “Brahmin, these riches are yours—don’t throw away your precious life.” With those words the Blessed One returned to the monastery.

10.102 The brahmin returned home bearing riches. The house prospered, and he began to give gifts and make merit. Then the thought occurred to him, “The ascetic Gautama has been beneficial and comforting for me. I will give up living at home to go forth in the presence of the Blessed One.” He gave up household affairs and went to see the Blessed One. Upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and sat at one side to listen to the Dharma.

10.103 The Blessed One directly apprehended his

thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, the brahmin destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

10.104 After seeing the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

With the words “Come, join me, monk!” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. He cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

10.105 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why this brahmin, for fear of poverty, was going to kill himself, and the Blessed One presented him with a mountain of riches and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, for fear of poverty this brahmin was going to kill himself, and I gave him a mountain of riches and set him on the path of the ten virtuous actions. Listen well!

10.106 “Monks, it took place in times gone by, during King Mahendrasena’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī. The kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and

there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma. He ruled the kingdom gently and mercifully, as a parent cares for a beloved only child.

10.107 “The king was of a loving nature, quite compassionate, loved beings, and delighted in giving. He gave gifts and made merit. He provided for the ascetics, the brahmins, the bereft, and the poor. He prepared a great deal of food and drink and made gifts of it to the creatures who flew through the sky, dwelt in the water, or made their homes in the fields. He set all his people on the path of the ten virtuous actions and promised, ‘From this day forth I shall give all to beings.’

10.108 “He ruled the kingdom in accord with the Dharma, so even nonhuman spirits strove to protect and shelter and shield him. From time to time they let fall streams of rain to make the grain crops flourish.

“One of the king’s neighboring kings reigned unrighteously. He tortured the inhabitants of the country, pillorying them and locking them in wooden stocks. The people were continually subjected to heavy taxes, and in their anxiety they fled to live in King Mahendrasena’s country.

10.109 “One day, as the neighboring king was traveling about with a great many ministers surveying the countryside, he saw that all the villages, towns, cities, forest settlements, and marketplaces were empty, and he asked the ministers, ‘Ministers, why is it that we have encountered such an empty land?’

10.110 “‘Deva,’ the ministers replied, ‘Mahendrasena’s country is prosperous, flourishing, happy, and has good harvests, and most who live there have hardly any taxes to pay, so many have left to go live there.’ As soon as the neighboring king heard this he seethed with anger, arrayed the four divisions of his army, and advanced on King Mahendrasena’s

country to wage war.

10.111 “Now King Mahendrasena heard that the neighboring king, seething, had arrayed the four divisions of his army and advanced on his country to wage war. Hearing this, he instructed his ministers, ‘I don’t dare engage in wrongdoing for just one lifetime’s sake, so if you don’t wish your country ruin, bow down to this neighboring king. I dare not harm him.’ And he said in verse:

10.112 “ ‘People concerned about their future lives
Would rather live in the woods, clad in tree bark,
Eating fruit in the midst of carnivorous beasts
Than shackle and kill for the sake of a kingdom.’

10.113 “The ministers thought, ‘This king doesn’t dare kill anyone. It’s not right for us all to perish and to suffer over something so pointless. Better that we all leave him behind instead.’ So they left the king behind, allying themselves with the neighboring king. When King Mahendrasena became aware that his ministers had left him behind, he went to live in the forest, and there he remained, eating roots and fruit.

10.114 “After he had gone, the neighboring king came, assembled the local people, and asked, ‘Where has the king gone?’

“ ‘Deva, he fled,’ the ministers replied. Then the neighboring king brought the country under his control. He divvied up the spoils among the war heroes, laid claim to the kingdom, and remained there.

10.115 “Now at that time there lived in a remote mountain village a certain poor brahmin who was destitute of means. Over time he had ever more sons and daughters to feed, and when a famine arose in the land he could not provide for the members of his household. He heard that King Mahendrasena of Vārāṇasī was of a loving nature, quite compassionate, had a love for

beings, delighted in giving, and was generous to all. When he heard this he thought, ‘I will seek an audience with him. Perhaps I can get some money from him.’ He went to Vārāṇasī, and there he heard that King Mahendrasena had gone to live in the forest. When the brahmin heard this, he felt greatly worried but thought, ‘If I seek an audience with him there in the forest devoted to austerities, perhaps he’ll bestow riches upon me yet.’

10.116 “He traveled to the place where the bodhisattva was living, and approached him. The bodhisattva pleased him with his gentle words, gave him roots and fruit, and asked, ‘Why have you come here?’

“ ‘A famine has struck recently, and I am destitute and unwell,’ said the brahmin. ‘What’s more, I have many children to provide for, and I’m not able to provide for them. I heard that King Mahendrasena gives away all he has, and I thought, “He could be a fountain of riches.” So here I am before you.’

10.117 “The bodhisattva said, ‘Did you not hear I’d gone to live in the forest? Where would all my riches be?’ No sooner had the brahmin heard this than he went senseless with despair and fell to the ground. The bodhisattva threw water on his face to wake him. When he awoke, the brahmin thought, ‘What’s the use of such a life? I will walk into the thick of the forest and die.’ He took up a rope and walked into the thick of the forest, intending to hang himself with the rope from a tree.

10.118 “When he halted there, the bodhisattva saw him, and seeing him so, immediately welled up with compassion and thought, ‘If this brahmin takes me to my enemy, he will be rewarded with a mountain of riches.’ So he said to the brahmin, ‘Brahmin, don’t be rash. I will put an end to your poverty. Come, brahmin—bind me tightly and take me before King So-and-So, and he will give you a mountain of riches.’

“ ‘I could never tie up someone like you,’ the

brahmin said.

10.119 “ ‘Don’t hesitate,’ said the bodhisattva. ‘Bind me and take me away.’ For he saw no other way.

“ ‘As you wish,’ the brahmin replied. The brahmin bound him tightly and took him to Vārāṇasī, where many people saw and recognized him, but when the people approached the king and informed him, he didn’t believe them. As he was being handed over, the king emerged from the royal palace. He approached the bodhisattva and saw that the brahmin had tightly bound the bodhisattva and brought him there. He asked him, ‘This man—whence did you bring him?’

10.120 “ ‘This man,’ he replied, ‘is your enemy, Deva. I overpowered him while he was living in the forest devoted to austerities and brought him here.’

“The king thought, ‘This king’s body is large and powerful, and the brahmin’s body is very weak—how would he have been able to catch him? This king is very compassionate, and has love for beings. He must have tied himself up and given himself over to him.’

10.121 “Then he said to the brahmin, ‘How did you catch him, brahmin? Tell us the truth.’

“The brahmin told the king everything just as it had been, and as soon as he heard it, the king developed faith and thought, ‘I have done harm to such a pure being!’ He released the bodhisattva immediately, invited him to the royal palace, embraced him, placed him on a lion throne, and restored the crown to him, taking the crown from his own head and placing it on the head of the bodhisattva.

10.122 “He said, ‘You are the rightful king! I am not worthy.’ He offered him back the armies and treasure houses, asked his forgiveness, and returned to his own country. Then King Mahendrasena gave the brahmin a mountain of riches and set him on the path of the ten virtuous actions.

10.123 “Monks, I am the one who was King Mahendrasena then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was that brahmin then is none other than this brahmin. At that time, for fear of poverty he was going to kill himself, and I presented him a mountain of riches and set him on the path of the ten virtuous actions. Now as well, for fear of poverty he was going to kill himself, and I have presented him with a mountain of riches and established him in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

THE END

Next: *The Hunter*



The King

Fongyan Fan / 6 years old

Part Ten (3)

The
Hunter

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་ལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

3 The Hunter

10.124 As the Blessed One was traveling through Magadha, he arrived in Rājagṛha, where he stayed at the Kalandakanivāsa, in Bamboo Grove. At that time Devadatta had repeatedly wronged many inhabitants of Rājagṛha, and those he had wronged expressed their grievances to the Blessed One.

10.125 The Blessed One spoke to Venerable Ānanda, saying, “Ānanda, go, don your Dharma robes and patched raiment, take any suitable monk as an assistant, and on the streets and thoroughfares of Rājagṛha, and at the crossroads and forks in the roads, tell the brahmins and householders that there is no longer any need for those who have been wronged by Devadatta or those belonging to Devadatta’s faction to express their grievances to the Buddha, Dharma, or Saṅgha. If they say that Devadatta is a person of great miracles and great power, tell them that while previously he did possess great miraculous ability, he has lost it now.”

10.126 Ānanda set out, and on the streets and thoroughfares of Rājagṛha, and at the crossroads and forks in the roads he instructed the brahmins and householders that henceforth they were no longer to express their grievances to the Blessed One.

10.127 One day the Blessed One fell ill, and the healer Jīvaka offered the Blessed One a medicinal butter called iron arrow. The Blessed One asked the expert healer, “Jīvaka—wondrous?”

“Wondrous, Blessed One,” he replied.

10.128 The Blessed One then asked, “Jīvaka—marvelous?”

“Marvelous, Blessed One,” he replied.

10.129 The Blessed One then asked, “Jīvaka—you know?”

“Yes, Blessed One, I do,” he replied.

10.130 The Blessed One then asked, “Jīvaka—you don’t know?”

“No, Blessed One, I do not,” he replied.

10.131 The Blessed One then asked, “What is it that’s wondrous?”

“Blessed One, cows eat grass and drink water, and from them an elixir is obtained from which the medicinal butter called iron arrow is drawn,” he replied.

10.132 The Blessed One then asked, “Jīvaka, what is it that’s marvelous?”

“The emergence of the Blessed One in the world, the teaching of the holy Dharma, and the good accomplishments of the Saṅgha,” he replied.

10.133 The Blessed One then asked, “What is it you know?”

“Blessed One, I know that whoever is born must certainly die,” he replied.

10.134 The Blessed One then asked, “Jīvaka, what is it you don’t know?”

“Blessed One, I don’t know who is going where,” he replied.

10.135 Now all the monks were perplexed, and they requested the Blessed Buddha, who cuts through all doubt, “Lord, tell us why Jīvaka had already realized the intention of the Blessed One’s speech.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, he understood the intention of my speech. Listen well!

10.136 “Monks, in times gone by, in a certain mountain village there lived a householder of great means,

prosperity, and wealth. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child. For twenty-one days they held an elaborate feast celebrating his birth and named him according to their clan. After that, as they continued enjoying themselves and coupling, another child was born, and again they held an elaborate feast celebrating his birth and named him according to their clan.

10.137 “The householder thought, ‘My loans have been paid off and someone to leave my wealth to has been born, so I will load up my wares and go to another country.’ And he thought, ‘My wife is very attractive. If I give her many gold coins before I go, she may enjoy herself and couple with another, so I will give her just a few gold coins before I go.’ He gave her just a few gold coins, and what gold was left he put into jars. He tied the necks of those jars with garlands of pearls and hid them in the cremation ground at the trunk of an *aśvakarṇa* tree. Then he loaded up his wares and went to another country.

10.138 “After turning a great profit in the other country he married there as well, and as he stayed on there his new wife gave birth to many children. His former wife, Bracelet, did her best to raise her two sons on what she could earn with her own hands or with a little help from her relatives.

“When her sons asked, ‘Where did our father go?’ she told them, ‘He is living in such-and-such a country at such-and-such a place. They say he has a great abundance of wealth. Go there—perhaps he’ll even provide you some small living.’

10.139 “So the elder of the two went off to find his father. He wandered about this way and that until in time he came to where his father was. His father recognized his features and called out to him, ‘Where are you from? Where are you going?’ The

elder son related everything in detail. His father thought, ‘This is none other than my own son,’ and put him up in his home. He told him, ‘My son, don’t let anyone know I am your father,’ but went on to show him great affection.

10.140 “His other sons, suspicious, asked, ‘To whom does this boy belong, Father?’

“ ‘He’s the son of a friend,’ their father replied.

“ ‘He has such deep affection for him,’ they thought. ‘There’s no doubt that’s his own son.’ And they said to one another, ‘That’s our elder brother!’

10.141 “Their father thought, ‘Among enemies, there’s none more wicked than a stepmother. I will send him back before she comes to kill him. If I give him even something small, because she is so confrontational, she will kill him on the way. I must send him back!’

10.142 “He gave the boy a letter he had written that said, ‘If you dig with great care and skill beneath the *karṇa* tree—the one that moves quickly from village to village—that is about a *yojana* east of home, you’ll find the very same inheritance you requested from me. Present Bracelet with what’s around its neck.’

10.143 “The boy took the letter and departed. On the way his younger brothers seized him on the road and demanded, ‘What did you get from Father?’

“ ‘I didn’t get anything from him,’ he said. ‘He just gave me this letter.’

“ ‘You see, Father has deceived us,’ they complained. ‘Get out of here!’

10.144 “With that they released him, and in time he came to his house. He rested for a bit, and after he had been there for some time, his mother asked, ‘What did you get from your father?’

“ ‘I didn’t get anything from him,’ her son replied, ‘except I did get this letter.’

“ ‘Boy, your father deceived you,’ his mother said, ‘and you’ve got nothing to show for your

trouble.’

10.145 “This is a big country. He didn’t cheat me,’ her son said, and he began to examine the letter. ‘From village” refers to where he was born. That’s what he means here by “village.” “To village” refers to where he’ll be disposed of, a charnel ground. The “quickly” in “the one that moves quickly” refers to a horse, and the “karṇa tree” means the aśvakarṇa tree—thus, the letter means “the trunk of the aśvakarṇa tree.” “East of home” means eastward, and “about a yojana away” means exactly that: one yojana away.’

10.146 “After analyzing the words in this manner, that night, when no one was about, he went to the charnel ground. Nearby stood the aśvakarṇa tree. Orienting himself to the east, he dug to the depth of a wooden yoke. After a while he discovered a golden jug with a garland of pearls strung around its neck. Elated, he hauled it up, and when he got back home he loosed the garland of pearls and presented it to his mother, Bracelet.

10.147 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that householder then. The one who was my son then is none other than Jīvaka. There he understood the intention of my speech. Now as well he has understood the intention of my speech.”

10.148 Jīvaka thought, “The Blessed One has an adamantine body, and since his body is so large he can’t be cured with just a little medicinal butter.” So he did the calculations, measured out thirty-two ounces of medicinal butter, and offered it for the Blessed One’s body. What was left in the alms bowl he gave to the monks, who thought, “These are the leftovers from the Blessed One’s alms bowl,” and all drank of it.

10.149 Devadatta thought, “I will also drink this medicinal butter.” So he asked Jīvaka, “Jīvaka, how much of this medicinal butter did the ascetic Gautama drink?”

“He consumed thirty-two ounces,” said Jīvaka.

10.150 Devadatta said, “Then I too will take thirty-two ounces.”

“The Blessed One has an adamantine body, and his body is very large,” Jīvaka replied. “You can’t digest as much medicinal butter as he can.”

“I’ve got an adamantine body too. Why can’t I digest it?” With that he too drank thirty-two ounces of medicinal butter, and while the Blessed One had digested it, Devadatta could not.

10.151 The next day Jīvaka again offered the Blessed One the medicinal butter, together with rice soup. Because the Blessed One had taken it, out of pride Devadatta likewise drank the medicinal butter together with the rice soup, but again he could not digest it and was wracked with pain. Stricken with illness all through his vital organs, he suffered the most severe, unbearable, scorching, awful pains, and he could not sleep day or night.

10.152 Venerable Ānanda loved his brother, so he brought the news to the Blessed One. The Blessed One reached his hands—which are like mighty elephant trunks, covered with insignias such as wheels, auspicious designs, and swastikas that are the result of hundreds upon hundreds of meritorious deeds and provide assurance from all fear—across Vulture Peak Mountain, placed them on Devadatta’s head, and invoked the truth, saying, “By the truth that I hold Devadatta to be neither more nor less than my only son—the good and beautiful Rāhula—may his illness be assuaged.” That invocation of the truth alone instantly cured Devadatta’s illness, and he regained the life that had been drained from him.

10.153 He saw the Blessed One’s hand, recognized it, and thought, “This is the ascetic Gautama’s hand.” Though it was by the greatness of the Buddha that his sickness had abated, Devadatta’s arrogance about all his deceit and trickery had smothered and held sway over his thoughts for so long that even now he said, “You have studied medicine

well, Siddhārtha. Maybe with that you can finally earn a living.”

10.154 The disciples who had gathered there started to spread the word, “Devadatta had fallen severely ill and was going to die, but the Blessed One’s invocation of the truth healed him.” When they heard this, even the members of Devadatta’s faction expressed their admiration for the Blessed One and said, “His love is absolute! How he has cultivated compassion for beings!”

10.155 Then the monks said to Devadatta, “The Blessed One healed you, Devadatta. Otherwise you would already be dead.”

“He knows tricks to turn the mind about,” Devadatta said. “That’s how he’s pacifying the whole world.” And he neither repaid his kindness nor felt any love for him.

10.156 After he had gone, the monks went to see the Blessed One, and upon their arrival, perplexed, they requested the Blessed Buddha, who cuts through all doubt, “Lord, tell us why Devadatta did not repay your kindness, had no sense of gratitude, and made a waste of what you did.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, he did not repay my kindness, had no sense of gratitude, and made a waste of what I did. Listen well!”

10.157 “Monks, it took place in times gone by, during King Mahendrasena’s reign in Videha. At that time in a certain forest there was a well, and into this well five beings fell: a man, a lion, a snake, a mouse, and a hawk. A certain hunter was also in the forest, on the hunt for deer. Stricken with thirst he went to the well, and when the five saw him peeking into the well they immediately cried out, ‘Help us, friend!’

“The hunter felt compassion for them as soon as he saw them, and he thought, ‘If I don’t pull them out, they will all die there,’ so he came bearing a rope and drew them all up out of the well.

10.158 “Another day the hunter was out hunting deer, and as he was walking in the forest, the lion, king of beasts, saw him, and asked the hunter, ‘My friend, why are you wandering through this forest?’

“ ‘I’m wandering through here to hunt deer,’ the hunter replied. ‘That’s my livelihood.’

10.159 “ ‘Don’t trouble yourself, my friend,’ said the lion. ‘I want to return your favor. If you stay here, every day I shall kill all the good deer and give you as much meat as you like.’ After that, every day the lion, king of beasts, went and killed all the best deer, and brought the man a great deal of meat.

10.160 “Another day, the hawk saw the hunter carrying the deer meat home. Recognizing him, the hawk asked the hunter, ‘Do you earn your livelihood by toiling so, my friend?’

“ ‘This is my livelihood,’ replied the hunter. ‘This is what I do to support myself.’

“The hawk thought, ‘This man once saved my life. I need to return the favor,’ and said, ‘My friend, stay here. I shall put your poverty to an end,’ and departed.

10.161 “After that the hawk went to the area surrounding the royal palace. He thought, ‘Whatever I get today I’ll carry back and give to him.’ As he was flying through the sky, he saw all the jewelry belonging to the most revered of King Mahendrasena’s queens on the roof of the royal palace, where she had loaded it into a basket. As she sat there washing her hair, the hawk took all the jewelry and brought it to the hunter.

10.162 “As the hunter was carrying the jewelry back to his house, the man saw him and asked, ‘My friend, where did you find that?’

“ ‘The hawk gave it to me,’ said the hunter, and he returned to his house.

“Soon after, King Mahendrasena ordered all the bird keepers, ‘Go through all the birds’ nests and bring me back that jewelry.’ When the man heard this, he thought, ‘Even though it’s not quite

right of me since that man pulled me from a well twice, I will go and tell the king. Perhaps he will give me a reward.'

10.163 "He went to the king and said, 'So-and-so the hunter has made off with Deva's jewelry.' After he heard this King Mahendrasena immediately gave the man a great reward, summoned the hunter, seized the ornaments, and put him in prison.

10.164 "While he was in prison, the mouse saw him, and recognized him. He thought, 'That's the man who saved my life! I will return the favor,' and said to him, 'My friend, for what offense have they put you in prison?' The man related everything in detail.

" 'Trust me, my friend' the mouse said. "Be strong. I shall make sure you don't lack for food and drink while you're here.' So the mouse made sure he did not lack for food and drink while he was in prison.

10.165 "Later, while the man was still in prison, the poisonous snake thought, 'He saved my life. I will return the favor.' So he said to the man, 'Listen, man—once I rescue you from this prison, I shall make you a wealthy lord.' And then he said, 'I will bite the king with my venom, my venom will render him powerless, and then you should say from your prison cell, "No one else can heal the king, only I can heal him.'"

10.166 " 'When the king summons you, go there, make a circle of cow dung, build a fire, and recite this mantra. I will come when I hear your voice. Then you say, "Either you jump into the fire or take your venom from the king!" And I will say to you, "I will jump in the fire then, for I shall not take my venom from the king!" Then you say, "You have already thrown away your own life, but you will not take the life of our king. It would be dishonorable of you not to take your venom from our king!" Then at your command I will take my venom from the king. The king will then be happy with you, release you from prison, and grant you a

mountain of riches.'

10.167 "So the poisonous snake went and bit the king with his venom, and it rendered the king powerless. The hunter told the prison guards, 'No one else can remove this venom from the king, but I can remove the venom from him.' The prison guards relayed this to the king.

"The king summoned the man and said, 'Listen, man—if you save my life I shall give you a mountain of riches.' And the man said, 'Please trust me, Deva. Be strong. As long as I live, you will not pass away.'

10.168 "Then the man made a circle of cow dung, built a fire, and recited the mantra. The poisonous snake heard him, approached the circle, and stayed put. Then the man said to him, 'Here you are! You have two choices—either remove your venom from the king or jump into the fire.'

"The poisonous snake replied, 'Of the two choices, I will jump, so the king will have to die.'

10.169 "The poisonous snake advanced and waited, and to turn him away the man said, 'You have already thrown away your own life, but you will not take the life of our king. For it would be dishonorable of you not to take your venom from our king.' No sooner had the poisonous snake heard this than he took his venom from the king. Then the king, in happiness, loaded up a mountain of riches and gave them to the hunter.

10.170 "O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that hunter then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The man who informed the king then is none other than Devadatta. Then, just as now, he did not repay my kindness or have a sense of gratitude, but made a waste of what I did."

THE END

Next: *The Story of Deluded*



The Hunter

Turbo Chen / 11 years old

Part Ten (4)

The Story of
Deluded

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

4 The Story of Deluded

10.171 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, in Śūrpāraka there lived a certain householder. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him Deluded.

10.172 They reared young Deluded on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, tallying, and arithmetic; the study of seals, lending, deposits, and commerce; and the examination of cloth, jewels, gems, incense, medicine, elephants, horses, and arms and armor. He became skilled in writing, skilled at reading, learned, decisive, and industrious, a master of the eight types of examination.

10.173 One day his body became completely covered in boils the size of mustard seeds. The boils swelled and burst, and his body became a continuous mass of sores. His father provided the healers with everything they needed for them to cure him, but they were unable to do so, and the worse it got, the more the blood and pus seeped out, until it produced an awful stench. After they covered his whole body with different kinds of fragrant water and draped him with clothes, he healed.

10.174 Now when his brothers saw this, they changed his name. They said, “Our little brother healed when we draped him in clothes and ornaments. Therefore, his name will be Covered.” After that some knew him as Deluded and some knew him as Covered.

10.175 One day the young man’s parents died, and afterward he helped with all their work, but whatever work he did—whether it was work in the fields, work as a merchant, or work on the boats—something always broke and was incomplete. So the householder Deluded thought, “Whatever work I do here—be it work in the fields, work as a merchant, or work on the boats—something always breaks and is incomplete. Is there anything in the world that doesn’t fall to ruin?”

10.176 Soon after, the ancestral deity of the householder Deluded’s friends, acquaintances, brothers, and elders came to the door of his house. When he arrived, the house was bathed in great rays of light, and the deity asked the householder Deluded, “Householder, do you not know which things in this world are subject to ruin, and which are not?”

10.177 “No, Deva,” said the householder, “I do not know which things in this world are subject to ruin and which are not. Deva, do you know which things in this world are subject to ruin and which are not?”

“No, householder,” replied the deity. “I also do not know which things in this world are subject to ruin and which are not.”

10.178 “Deva, who does know which things in this world are subject to ruin and which are not?” asked the householder.

“Householder, there is one who knows—the ascetic Gautama, the Śākyas’ heir, one of the Śākya clan, who shaved his head and face and donned the colorful religious robes, and with nothing short of perfect faith went forth from home to

live as a mendicant, and fully and completely awakened unto unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. He, the Blessed One, knows which things in this world are subject to ruin and which are not,” answered the deity.

10.179 “Deva, where is the Blessed One staying now?” asked the householder.

“Householder,” the deity replied, “right now the Blessed One is in the east, in a place called Śrāvastī at the garden of Prince Jeta, in the grove of Anāthapiṇḍada. Householder, if you wish, you may go to see the Blessed One and put your question to him. May you then accept whatever proclamation the Blessed One grants you.” After he said that the deity disappeared on the spot.

10.180 As soon as the householder Deluded heard this, he was eager to see the Blessed One. One day some merchants from Śūrparāka loaded up their goods and went to Śrāvastī. When they arrived there, they found faith in the doctrine of the Blessed One, went for refuge, and took the fundamental precepts. Then they loaded up their goods and earnings and returned to Śūrparāka, where they spoke in praise of the Buddha and the Dharma in the presence of the householder Deluded. And they said, “The Blessed One is omniscient and all-seeing. Go see him, and he will heal your physical and spiritual ills.”

10.181 When he heard their words, he felt especially inspired to go see the Blessed One. So one day the householder Deluded loaded up many provisions, mounted a good horse, and traveled from Śūrparāka to Śrāvastī. He went as far as he could by vehicle, then descended from his vehicle and approached the Blessed One. When he arrived, he touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side.

Once he had taken a seat at one side, the householder Deluded told the Blessed One, “Lord, this material body has become so weak. I

am so ashamed of it. I wish to cast it off. I revile it.”

10.182 “Householder,” the Blessed One replied, “this body is like an illness. It is like a series of wounds. It is like an affliction.” Using the aggregates as a basis, the Blessed One then taught him the Dharma particularly suited to him. When he heard it, the householder Deluded destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat. After he had seen the truths, he thought, “If my body weren’t like this, I too could go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, in order to ford the floodwaters and completely escape my fetters with diligence, practice, and effort.”

10.183 No sooner did the householder feel a sense of renunciation than his body became as smooth as the palm of a hand and free of wounds, and he immediately felt especially filled with joy toward the Blessed One. In his joy he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

10.184 With the words “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, he manifested arhatship. As an arhat, free from the attachments of the three realms, his mind regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of his hands as like space itself. He became cool like wet sandalwood. His insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. He achieved the

insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. He had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. He became an object of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

10.185 Venerable Deluded donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, went for alms in Śrāvastī, where a milk cow kicked him, killing him. At death his senses were clear, his appearance pure, and his complexion alabaster.

10.186 After that, a group of monks donned their lower garments and Dharma robes, and, carrying their alms bowls, set out toward Śrāvastī for alms. The group of monks who were going to Śrāvastī for alms heard that a milk cow had kicked the householder from Śūrpāraka named Deluded and killed him, and that at his death his senses were clear, his appearance pure, and his complexion alabaster.

10.187 Upon hearing this, they took alms in Śrāvastī. And after they had eaten their meal and returned from their afternoon alms round, they put away their alms bowls and Dharma robes, and went to see the Blessed One. When they arrived, they touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet and took a seat at one side.

10.188 After they had taken a seat at one side, the group of monks recounted to the Blessed One, "Lord, we monks donned our lower garments and Dharma robes, and, carrying our alms bowls, set out toward Śrāvastī for alms, when we heard that a milk cow kicked the householder named Deluded from Śūrpāraka, precipitating his death, and that at the time of his passing his senses were clear, his appearance pure, and his complexion alabaster. What was his destination? Into what state will he take birth? In what state did he die?"

10.189 "Monks," the Blessed One replied, "that noble child is a treasure. The Dharma he came to understand ensued from my own. That noble

child attained nirvāṇa. May you therefore perform a reliquary pūjā for his relics." In that way the Blessed One commended Venerable Deluded as supreme.

10.190 After the group of monks heard what the Blessed One had said they took leave of him, venerated the relics, built a reliquary stūpa, and then returned to see the Blessed One. When they arrived, they touched their heads to the Blessed One's feet and asked him, "Lord, what action did Venerable Deluded take that ripened into his being kicked by a milk cow and killed?"

10.191 "Monks," the Blessed One explained, "in addition to the actions he committed and accumulated himself, it also happened on account of my prayers. . . ."

Here his backstory should be told in detail according to the tale of Puṣkarasārin.

10.192 The monks asked, "Lord, what action did Venerable Deluded take that ripened into his birth into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth? What action did he take that ripened such that his body was a continuous mass of sores; that blood and pus seeped from his body until an awful stench arose; that he pleased the Blessed One, did not displease him, went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship; and that no sooner did he feel a sense of renunciation than his body became smooth and free of wounds?"

10.193 "Not only now," the Blessed One explained, "but in times past as well he committed and accumulated these actions. Since it was he himself who committed and accumulated them, who else would there be to experience them?"

10.194 "Monks, the actions he committed and accumulated did not ripen in the external element of earth. They did not ripen into the element of

water, nor the element of fire, nor the element of wind. The actions he committed and accumulated, both virtuous and nonvirtuous, ripened into nothing but his own aggregates, sense bases, and constituent elements.

10.195 “When the time arrives—and even if
A hundred eons pass—
Fruit is born of every act
That sentient beings amass.

10.196 “Monks, in times gone by, during King Brahmadata’s reign in the city of Vārāṇasī, there lived in Vārāṇasī two householders who had a certain mutual disagreement. When one of them made offerings of great riches to the king, the other householder criticized him. When King Brahmadata weighed their case, he ruled against the latter householder in the argument and handed him over to the first, who took him back to his house, lashed him viciously, and sprinkled poisonous powder all over the lash wounds until his flesh was like raw meat. Then his brothers paid a ransom of great riches to the householder, and his body was healed through the advice of a healer.

10.197 “One day he became disillusioned with saṃsāra and said, ‘I have had enough of living at home. I will go live in a forest devoted to austerities.’ He gave gifts and made merit and went to live in a forest devoted to austerities. There, with neither a teacher nor oral instruction, he contemplated the thirty-seven wings of enlightenment and manifested the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas. Thereupon he thought, ‘My mind caused that householder to generate great demerit. I will go and be his friend.’ From that very place he traveled through the sky to where the householder was, making a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning.

10.198 “Ordinary people are quickly brought to faith through miracles. The householder bowed down at the sage’s feet like a tree felled by a saw, saying, ‘Oh great fortunate one, please, please come down! I’m mired in misdeeds! Please reach down and lift me up!’

10.199 “Out of compassion for him, the solitary buddha descended to the earth. The householder bowed down at his feet, asked his forgiveness, and said, ‘Noble one, you accept alms, and I seek merit. So I ask you, please stay here in this garden. I shall provide you with everything you need.’ The solitary buddha assented by his silence.

10.200 “After that the householder fashioned a hut of branches and leaves for the solitary buddha and began to provide him with everything he needed. One day the solitary buddha thought, ‘I have done what I needed to do with this material body. Let me enter the sphere of peace!’ After reflecting in this way, he made a miraculous display of fire and light, rain and lightning, and passed beyond all sorrow into the realm of nirvāṇa without any remainder of the aggregates.

10.201 “The householder venerated his relics, built a reliquary stūpa, made a large offering to his reliquary, and prayed, ‘By this root of virtue, wherever I am born, may it be into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth. May I please and not displease a teacher even more exalted than this. May I achieve such great virtues. May the act of harming that other one not return to me. Should the ripening of this action come to me before it is exhausted, may I then feel a sense of renunciation. May that misfortune immediately vanish, and may I be fortunate instead.’

10.202 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that householder then is none other than Deluded. The act of lashing the body of that other householder and sprinkling him with poisonous powder ripened such that wherever he was born,

his body became like this. The act of later paying homage to the solitary buddha and saying that prayer ripened such that wherever he was born, it was into a family of great means, prosperity, and wealth.

10.203 “Monks, I am more exalted than even one hundred billion solitary buddhas, and he has pleased me, and not displeased me. As soon as he felt a sense of renunciation, his misfortune vanished and he became fortunate instead, and he went forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.

10.204 “He also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all his life then, his faculties ripened, and now he has been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Brahmin: Three Stories*



The Story of Deluded

Wang Qing Rong / 13 years old

Part Ten (5)

The Brahmin:
Three Stories

- 5. i The First “Brahmin” Story
- 5. ii The Second “Brahmin” Story
- 5. iii The Third “Brahmin” Story

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

5 The Brahmin: Three Stories

5. i The First “Brahmin” Story

10.205 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain brahmin. As he prepared to perform a sacrifice, the brahmins who had gathered for the sacrifice from various regions thought, “Any sacrifice that gives rise to strife, reproof, conflict, and contention will not succeed.”

One day there was a dispute over the offerings at the site of the sacrifice between the brahmins gathered there from the countryside and those from the center of town.

10.206 The city brahmins told the country brahmins, “You make your livelihood by working in the fields, so you are not worthy of these offerings. We are qualified to receive offerings. It is we who are worthy of them.”

10.207 “You serve to glorify the king,” retorted the country brahmins. “Therefore, you are not qualified to receive offerings. We, however, are qualified. It is we who are worthy of them.”

10.208 As they sat there and proceeded to quarrel, argue, and debate each other, one of the brahmins absconded from the ritual offering site carrying a great deal of gold, silver, food, and drink. The other brahmins caught him, pummeled and kicked him brutally, and then left.

10.209 Terrified of dying from the beating, that brahmin entered the garden of Prince Jeta. Upon entering he saw the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks sitting without chattering, comporting themselves with elegance and restraint. As soon as he saw them, he felt joy toward the doctrine of the Blessed One. In his joy he thought, “I have had enough of being a brahmin. I will go forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One.”

10.210 He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, and made this request of the Blessed One: “Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life.”

10.211 With the words “Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life,” the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination, and instructed him. He cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

10.212 After achieving arhatship, he wondered, “Whom might I tame?” He looked out and saw that he could tame the lord of the sacrifice and the rest of the many brahmins. So he disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta, and made his way to the site of the sacrifice. The lord of the sacrifice and the other brahmins saw a monk approaching through the sky, and seeing this they felt a surge of joy toward the monk. In their joy they took him into their laps, placed him in his seat, bowed down at his feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

10.213 Then the monk taught them the Dharma particularly suited to them, and among the brahmins and the lord of the sacrifice some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in

accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha.

10.214 “Lord,” the monks asked the Blessed Buddha, “what action did this brahmin take that ripened into his pleasing the Blessed One, and not displeasing him, and that he went forth in the doctrine of the Blessed One, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

“It came about by the power of his prayers,” the Blessed One replied.

10.215 “Lord, where did he make these prayers?”

“Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years and the tathāgata, the arhat, the totally and completely awakened buddha possessed of insight and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, a certain brahmin lived in Vārāṇasī.

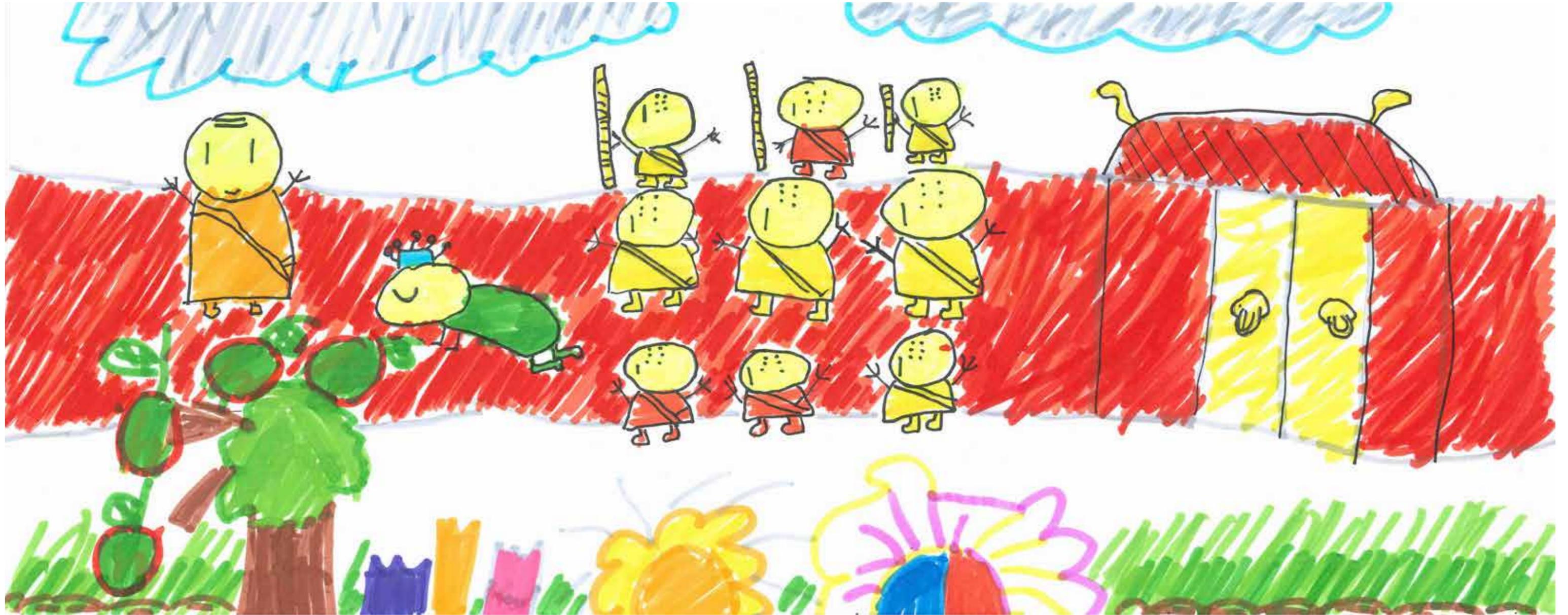
Continue the account as above.

10.216 “After he had gone forth he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues,

still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore, may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

10.217 “O monks, what do you think? The one who was that brahmin then is none other than this brahmin. At that time he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

10.218 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, not displeased me, gone forth in my very doctrine, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”



5. ii The Second “Brahmin” Story

10.219 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, there lived a certain brahmin. When the time came for him to marry he took a wife, and as they enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day his wife conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child, and they named him according to their clan. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and when he had grown, he began to study letters.

10.220 It was brahminical custom to take a break on the eighth and the fifteenth days of the lunar month—sometimes to visit the city, sometimes to visit the riverbank, or to visit the temple deities, or to collect wood for the holy pyres. So it was that one day, when it came time for the break, the young brahmin went to the garden of Prince Jeta, where the Buddha sat teaching the Dharma amid a company of hundreds.

10.221 The young brahmin saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance and felt a surge of joy toward him. In his joy he approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One taught him the Dharma particularly suited to his condition, leading him to go for refuge and abide by the fundamental precepts. Knowing that the Blessed One had completed his discourse, he rejoiced, praising all that the Blessed One had said, touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet, and took leave of him.

10.222 One day the young brahmin began to perform a sacrifice, and, while sitting at the sacrifice site, he thought, “How wonderful it would be for the Blessed One to come to this sacrifice site and partake, adorning the site by sitting at the head of the row.” And then he thought, “O Blessed One,

please come to this sacrifice site and partake.”

10.223 As soon as the young brahmin thought this, the Blessed One disappeared from the garden of Prince Jeta and traveled to the sacrifice site. He took his place at the head of the row of brahmins but did not appear to them. The young brahmin, however, saw the Blessed Buddha seated at the head of the row. Seeing him there, once the young brahmin knew that the Blessed One was comfortably seated, he contented him with many good, wholesome foods. The Blessed One partook of the sacrifice without revealing his body, sent forth rays of light to all the brahmins, and then returned to the garden of Prince Jeta.

10.224 The brahmins saw the entire sacrifice site completely bathed in a great light, and when they saw this they concluded, “Our sacrifice has been successful.”

“Sahāmpati Brahmā has come to the sacrifice site,” said some.

“It is not Brahmā but Īśvara who has come to the sacrifice site,” said others.

10.225 “It is neither Brahmā nor Īśvara but Viṣṇu who has come to the sacrifice site,” still others declared.

“All of you are deluded,” said the young brahmin. “It was the Blessed One who came to the sacrifice site.” The brahmins did not believe him, so the young brahmin said, “Tomorrow morning I’ll show you.”

10.226 The next day, before the entire group of brahmins the young brahmin drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, knelt down on his right knee facing the direction of the garden of Prince Jeta, pressed his palms together, set his intention, and spoke these words: “Lord, Blessed One, if there is nothing past, present, or future that you do not see, know, or directly perceive, then, Blessed One, I ask you, please come to this sacrifice site with the saṅgha of monks and partake.”

10.227 The very instant he uttered these words, the

Blessed One traveled through the sky to the sacrifice site surrounded and attended by an assembly of monks. Then, without revealing his bodily form, he took his place on the seat the brahmins prepared for him. The young brahmin could see the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks seated at the sacrifice site, so he approached the Blessed One, and upon his arrival he touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, pleasing the Blessed One.

10.228 The brahmins responded by saying, "This young man has gone mad! He is sitting and talking to no one but himself!"

The young brahmin replied, "I have not gone mad. The Blessed One sits at the center of the sacrifice site, along with the saṅgha of monks."

10.229 Right when he said this the brahmins all plainly saw the Blessed One and the saṅgha of his disciples comfortably seated at the center of the sacrifice site. The young brahmin contented the Blessed One and the rest of the saṅgha of his disciples, now visible to the whole world, with many good, wholesome foods, proffering all that they wished. Once he knew that the Blessed One's bowl had been taken away and his hands washed, he brought in a very low seat and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. After the Blessed One had instructed, encouraged, inspired, and delighted the young brahmin with a discourse on the Dharma, he rose from his seat and departed.

10.230 The brahmins were consumed with fury. "He gave to the ascetic Gautama the food and drink prepared for us!" they complained. As they prepared to kill the young brahmin in their anger, he fled to the garden of Prince Jeta. Still the other young brahmins followed him, and when they arrived at the garden of Prince Jeta, they said, "We can't kill him in the garden of Prince Jeta. Not only does it belong to the householder Anāthapiṇḍada, but King Prasenajit has also issued an edict on this matter." Realizing this, they turned back.

10.231 The young brahmin was terrified, so he went to see the Blessed One. When he arrived, he touched his head to the Blessed One's feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. The Blessed One directly apprehended his thoughts, habitual tendencies, temperament, capacity, and nature, and taught him the Dharma accordingly. When he heard it, the young brahmin destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where he sat.

10.232 After he had seen the truths, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and told the Blessed One, "After I entrusted myself to you, my spiritual friend, the Blessed Buddha, you lifted me up from among the hell beings, animals, and anguished spirits. Leading me to live among the gods and humans, you have brought the cycle of existence to an end, dried up the ocean of blood and tears, led me over the mountain pass of bones, destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection to which I have been accustomed since beginningless time, and brought me to manifest the resultant state of stream entry. This is something that neither my father, my mother, the king, the gods, my relatives, my many friends, my ancestors before me, nor the ascetics and the brahmins could do for me.

10.233 "Lord, if permitted I wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete my novitiate, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, I too wish to practice the holy life."

With the words "Come, join me, monk! Practice the holy life," the Blessed One led him to go forth as a novice, conferred on him full ordination,

and instructed him. He cast away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, and manifested arhatship.

10.234 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “tell us why, as the brahmins were going to kill that young brahmin, in terror he went forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, as these same brahmins were going to kill the young brahmin, in terror he went forth, and thus practiced the holy life all his life. Listen well!

10.235 “Monks, in times past, in this fortunate eon, when people lived as long as twenty thousand years, and the totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, the sugata, the knower of the world, the tamer of persons, the charioteer, the unsurpassed one, the teacher of humans and gods, the blessed buddha known as Kāśyapa was in the world, there lived a certain brahmin in Vārāṇasī.

“When the time came for him to marry, he took a wife, and though they enjoyed themselves and coupled, they had neither a daughter nor a son.

10.236 “One day he sat brooding with his cheek resting on his open palm, thinking, ‘Since I have riches and gold, but neither daughter nor son, after I die all I have will become property of the king. It’s just not right to be without children in this world.’ Then he vowed, ‘If I have an heir, I shall perform a sacrifice, and I shall make many offerings to the brahmins.’ Hoping for the birth of an heir, he wished, ‘May my heir be conceived today or tomorrow.’ But the brahmin grew old thinking this, and had neither daughter nor son.

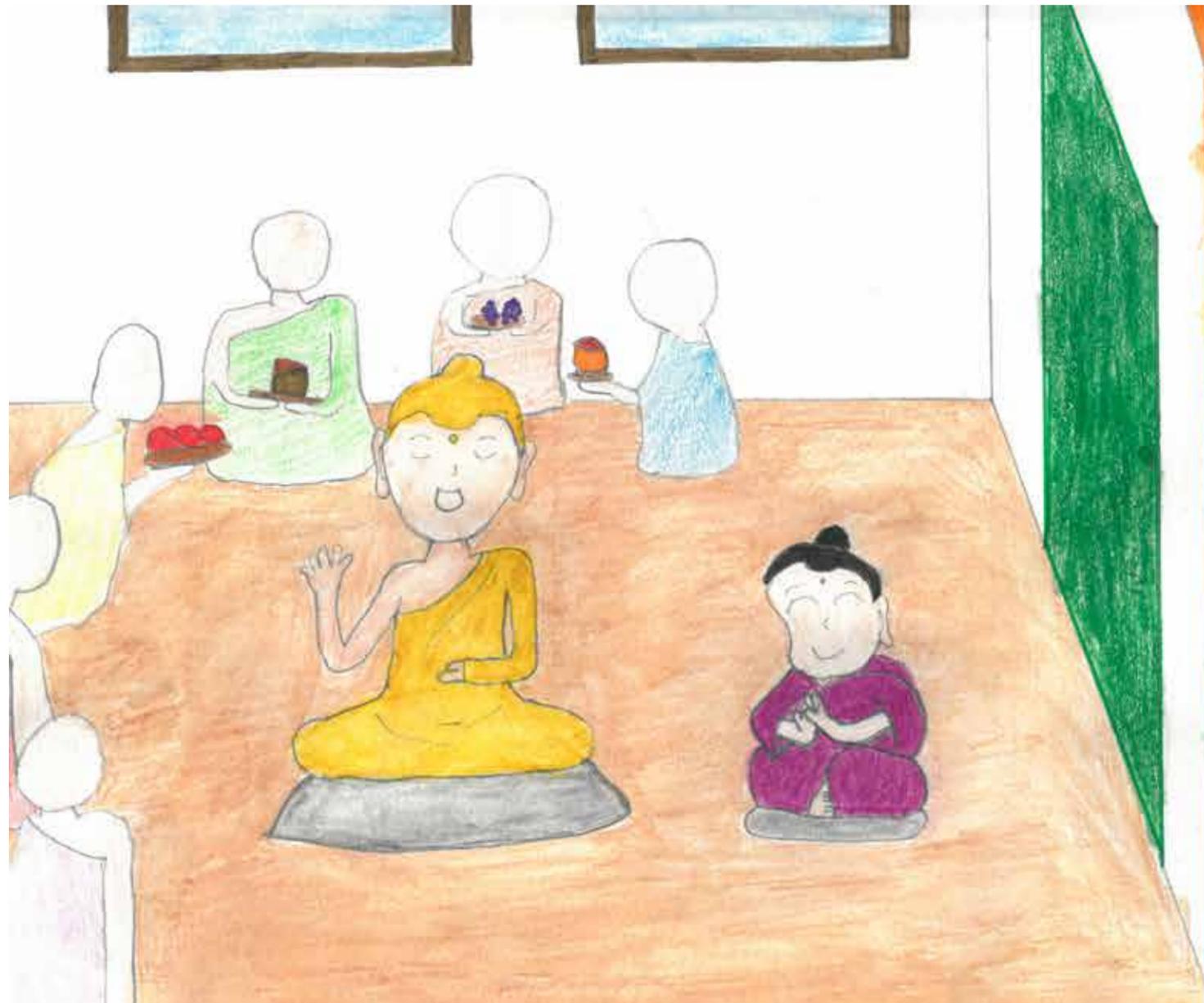
10.237 “At a certain point the brahmin thought, ‘I have neither daughter nor son. I have given no gifts, and now I am old. Therefore, I will give gifts and make merit, regardless of whether we bear a child.’

10.238 “So it was that one day he performed a sacrifice and made many offerings to the brahmins. As the offerings were distributed a great quarrel arose, and the lord of the sacrifice shouted, ‘Stop your quarreling!’ Then he thought, ‘The brahmins are going to attack and kill me,’ and in terror he went to R̥ṣivadana and went forth in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa.

10.239 “Once he had gone forth, he practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death, he prayed, ‘While I may not have attained any great virtues, still I have gone forth like this in the doctrine of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa and practiced pure conduct all my life. Therefore may I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

10.240 “Monks, the one who was that brahmin then is none other than this young brahmin. At that time, as the brahmins were going to kill him, in terror he went forth, practiced pure conduct all his life, and at the time of his death prayed, ‘May I please and not displease Uttara, the young brahmin prophesied by the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa to be the next blessed buddha. Going forth in his doctrine alone may I cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifest arhatship.’

10.241 “So it is, monks, now that I myself have become the very equal of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa—equal in strength, equal in deeds, and equal in skillful means—that he has pleased me, and not displeased me, and that even now, as the brahmins were going to kill him, in terror he has gone forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship.”



5. iii The Third “Brahmin” Story

10.242 When the Blessed One was in in Śrāvastī there lived a certain brahmin who performed ritual sacrifice and offered a great deal of gold and silver to the brahmins. As they were distributing the offerings, a great quarrel arose, to which the brahmins from the countryside responded by saying, “You serve to glorify the king. We are qualified to receive these offerings. It is we who are worthy of them. Therefore, we deserve double.”

The brahmins from the center of town said, “You pursue your livelihood by working in the fields. We are qualified to receive these offerings. It is we who are worthy of them. Therefore, we deserve double.”

10.243 The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

10.244 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended

to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

10.245 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

10.246 The Blessed One saw the time had come to tame the brahmins of Śrāvastī, so he traveled through the sky to the sacrifice site, surrounded by a group of monks and preceded by the saṅgha of monks, where he took his place amid the saṅgha of monks. The brahmins immediately experienced a surge of joy toward the Blessed One, and in their joy sat before him to listen to the Dharma.

The Blessed One said to the brahmins, “Friends, as a root cause, quarreling becomes the basis for five types of dire consequence, so what is the point of arguing?”

10.247 Then the Blessed One taught the Dharma particularly suited to them, taking as his point of departure the casting away of their particular attachments. Among the many hundreds of brahmins, some generated heat right where they sat. Some generated the peak, or generated the patience in accord with the truths, or generated the highest worldly dharma, or generated the

attainment of seeing. Some manifested the resultant state of stream entry. Some manifested the resultant state of once-return. Some manifested the resultant state of non-return. Some went forth and manifested arhatship. Some sowed the seeds to become universal monarchs, some to become great universal monarchs, some to become Indra, some to become Brahmā, some for the enlightenment of the listeners, some for the enlightenment of the solitary buddhas, and some for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment. Among the assembled, most found themselves drawn to the Buddha, intent on the Dharma, and favoring the Saṅgha. With this accomplished, the Blessed One returned to the monastery.

10.248 “Lord,” the monks inquired of the Blessed Buddha, “what action did the brahmins take that ripened into some of them pleasing the Blessed One, and not displeasing him, and that some of them went forth, cast away all afflictive emotions, and manifested arhatship?”

10.249 The Blessed One replied, “Some had been lay vow holders in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. At that time some went forth, took refuge, and maintained the fundamental precepts. As a result, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Story of the Householder Govinda*



Part Ten (6)

The Story of the
Householder
Govinda

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་ལ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

6 The Story of the Householder Govinda

10.250 As the Blessed One was traveling through Magadha, he was accompanied by a saṅgha of numerous monks including the thousand monks who had all previously been the matted-hair ascetics. They were also all arhats who had exhausted the outflows, done what was before them, carried out their activities, subsequently fulfilled their ambitions, completely eradicated that which bound them to saṃsāra, and with right cognition liberated their minds.

10.251 They made their way with him across the breadth of Forest of Reeds, proceeding directly to the stūpa of the Magadha people called Very Steady. As they arrived at the stūpa Very Steady, the Blessed One seated himself at the base of the stūpa.

10.252 Bimbisāra, the king of Magadha, heard that the Blessed One and a saṅgha of numerous monks including the thousand monks had made their way across the country to arrive at the Magadha stūpa called Very Steady, near Forest of Reeds. Upon hearing this, he emerged from Rājagṛha in a display of great opulence and royal power, with two thousand chariots and 1,800 mares, accompanied by thousands upon thousands of brahmins and householders who lived in Magadha. As he was coming out of the city gates to

go before the Blessed One, see him, and venerate him, the crown fell off his head, and the thought occurred to him, “Perhaps this bodes ill for my visit to the Blessed One?”

10.253 The gods called out to him, “Good shall come of this! Good shall come of you seeing the Blessed One and venerating him. However, some of the people you have imprisoned have produced roots of virtue. It would be right for you to release these prisoners who yet remain in your country, king, and proclaim throughout the country that they too should come along to see the Blessed One and venerate him.”

10.254 No sooner had King Bimbisāra heard this than he released the prisoners, calling together all the many people who lived in his country. As he was traveling in the company of this great crowd of people all the way to the Magadha stūpa called Very Steady, near Forest of Reeds, he looked back at his assembled army. When he saw his entire army assembled he became arrogant and thought, “No one can equal me in appearance and might.”

10.255 The Blessed One directly apprehended what King Bimbisāra was thinking, so he emanated five hundred kings, gorgeous and statuesque, to whom he began teaching the Dharma. King Bimbisāra of Magadha approached the Blessed One. The king went as far as he could go by vehicle and then left behind the five signs of his consecration—crown, parasol, sword, jewel, and tail fan—as well as his colorful boots, and approached the Blessed One.

10.256 There he saw the five hundred kings, gorgeous and statuesque, sitting before the Blessed One listening to the Dharma. When he saw them, all his arrogance about his appearance vanished, and he thought, “If I do not state my name and my lineage, the Blessed One will take no interest in me.” So he approached the Blessed One, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, knelt down on his right knee, bowed toward the

Blessed One with palms pressed together, and three times stated his name and lineage.

“Lord, I am King Bimbisāra of Magadha. Lord, I am King Bimbisāra of Magadha . . .”

10.257 Thereupon the Blessed One spoke, saying, “So it is, Great King. You are King Bimbisāra of Magadha. Please take your seat, Great King.”

Then King Bimbisāra of Magadha touched his head to the Blessed One’s feet and took a seat at one side. Some of the brahmins and householders of Magadha also touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and took seats to one side. Some made all manner of entertaining and jovial conversation with the Blessed One and took seats to one side. Some bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together and took seats to one side. Some saw the Blessed Buddha from a distance, and upon seeing the Blessed One, took seats to one side.

10.258 At that time the dreadlocked ascetic Venerable Uruvilvā Kāśyapa was also seated among the company. The brahmins and householders of Magadha thought, “Does the Great Ascetic practice Kāśyapa’s code of conduct, or does the dreadlocked ascetic Venerable Uruvilvā Kāśyapa practice the Great Ascetic’s code of conduct?”

10.259 The Blessed One directly apprehended what the brahmins and householders of Magadha were thinking, and he addressed Venerable Kāśyapa in verse:

“Inhabitant of Uruvilvā, what do you see?
Here there is no fire, sage, or observance.
Kāśyapa, why have you given up the fire sacrifice?
Please, tell me all the reasons why.”

10.260 He replied:

“Some here praise food and drink,
Others retinue, or women.

Since I’ve seen the impurity of these heaps,
I find no joy in the sacrificial fire.”

10.261 The Blessed One inquired:

“If you’ve no taste for lusting, nor for food,
Nor for drink, nor for a high, haughty seat,
How is it that you—among all on earth—
Could be happy, Kāśyapa? Answer this question
for me.”

10.262 He replied:

“There is no greater peace than being free of
heaps,
Nothing like non-attachment to sense pleasures
and existence.
Having seen the state that another cannot induce,
I find no joy in the sacrificial fire.

10.263 “My deluded mind thought I’d be liberated
By sacrifices and fire observances.
Since I hadn’t seen the supreme state free of
death,
Birth followed death and I remained blind.

10.264 “Now I’ve seen the uncompounded state
The best of humans and protector taught so well.
You, Gautama—foremost of sages, well versed in
truth—
Truly were born to benefit many beings.”

10.265 The Blessed One said:

“You have reflected well upon
What strikes to the vital point
As you dwelt upon phenomena, so finely
distinguished—
You are welcome to resolve it once and for all.

“O Kāśyapa, may you fill those in your retinue with sorrow for saṃsāra!”

10.266 Then, just as the dreadlocked ascetic Venerable Uruvilvā Kāśyapa placed his mind in equipoise and entered into meditative stabilization, rising up into the eastern sky, he began to carry out the four activities—walking, sitting, standing, and sleeping—and entered into equipoise on the element of fire. Now in equipoise on the element of fire, from his body the dreadlocked ascetic Venerable Uruvilvā Kāśyapa emitted rays of light in various hues such as blue, gold, red, white, rose madder, and crystalline, then made a further display of miracles: fire blazed from his upper body while a stream of cool water flowed from his lower body; then fire blazed and from his lower body while a stream of cool water flowed from his upper body.

10.267 He then performed the same miracles in the south, the west, and the north that he performed in the east. Having displayed miracles in each of the four cardinal directions the dreadlocked ascetic Venerable Uruvilvā Kāśyapa concluded his miraculous display, and then he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and declared to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, you are my teacher. I am a disciple of the Blessed One. The Sugata is my teacher. I am a disciple of the Sugata.”

“Kāśyapa, so it is,” the Blessed One replied. “It is just as you say, Kāśyapa. I am your teacher, Kāśyapa. You are my disciple. Kāśyapa, take your place on your designated seat, just as it should be.”

10.268 The dreadlocked ascetic Venerable Uruvilvā Kāśyapa took his place on his designated seat, just as it should be, whereupon the brahmins and householders of Magadha thought, “The dreadlocked ascetic Venerable Uruvilvā Kāśyapa practices the ascetic Gautama’s code of conduct.

It is certain, then, that the Great Ascetic does not practice Uruvilvā Kāśyapa’s code of conduct.”

10.269 Thereupon the Blessed One addressed King Bimbisāra of Magadha: “Great King, forms arise and decay, one after another. You should know the arising of forms, and you should know their decay. Great King, sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness likewise arise and decay, one after another. You should know their arising, and you should know their decay. Great King, knowing the nature of forms’ arising and decay, you will understand form. Great King, knowing also the nature of the arising and decay of sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness, you will understand consciousness.

10.270 “Great King, when you understand form, you do not grasp at it, thinking, ‘This is my self!’ Nor do you appropriate it, dwell upon it, or continue your habitual adherence to it. Great King, when you understand sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness, you do not grasp at consciousness, thinking, ‘This is my self!’ Nor do you appropriate it, dwell upon it, or continue your habitual adherence to it.

10.271 “Great King, not grasping at form nor appropriating it, dwelling upon it, or habitually adhering to it—this I call ‘the infinite, the boundless, nirvāṇa.’ Great King, not grasping at sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness, nor appropriating them, dwelling upon them, or habitually adhering to them—this I call ‘the infinite, the unbounded, nirvāṇa.’”

10.272 The brahmins and householders of Magadha then reflected, “If forms are not the self, and, likewise, sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness are not the self, what then is the self, the being, the life force, the creature, the soul, the person, the human being, humankind, the actor, the agent, the speaker, the feeler, the creator, or the fundamental creator? If nothing

has been born or arisen, and nothing will arise, then once these aggregates are discarded no other aggregates will be appropriated.”

10.273 The Blessed One directly apprehended what the brahmins and householders of Magadha were thinking, then addressed the monks: “Monks, the so-called ‘self’ is only something apprehended by ordinary beings who do not know any better. But there is in fact no such self or anything possessed there.

“Monks, this suffering is born at birth, and this suffering ceases at cessation. These formations are born at birth, and these formations cease at cessation. Consigned to such causes and conditions, beings will be subject to a perpetual stream of formations.

10.274 “Monks, the Tathāgata directly apprehends the reincarnation of beings in a perpetual stream of formation, and labels it death, transmigration, and rebirth. With perfectly clear divine vision, beyond that of normal humans, the Blessed One sees how beings continue to die and transmigrate, and continue to take birth; whether they will have a good appearance or a bad one; and whether they will take happy births or fall to lower realms.

10.275 “I am fully aware of their actions, and I am fully aware of their destinations. I see that when they separate from their bodies at death—by cause and condition of the wrong views and actions they adopted—those who comport themselves wrongly, those who speak wrongly, those who reflect wrongly, those who hurl insults at the noble ones, and those who hold wrong views will fall to lower realms and take rebirth as hell beings. And I see that when they separate from their bodies at death—by cause and condition of the right Dharma and actions they adopted—those who comport themselves rightly, those who speak rightly, those who reflect rightly, those who refrain from hurling insults at the noble ones, and those

who hold right views will take the highest rebirth among the god realms.

10.276 “Monks, because I have known it to be so and seen it to be so, I would not say, ‘I am self, I am a being, I am a life force, I am a creature, I am the soul, I am a person, I am a human being, I am part of humankind, I am an actor, I am an agent, I am a speaker, I am a feeler, I am the creator, or I am a fundamental creator.’ These things I would not say. Nor would I grasp at the thought, ‘Although they are not arisen, have never arisen, and will never arise, when these aggregates are discarded no other aggregates will be appropriated.’”

10.277 “But this does not include the conventional expression of the Dharma. The conventional expression of the Dharma is as follows: since this is, this will be; since this has arisen, this will arise. Thus, due to the condition of ignorance there are formations. Due to the condition of formations there is consciousness. Due to the condition of consciousness there are name and form. Due to the conditions of name and form there are the six sense bases. Due to the condition of the six sense bases there is contact. Due to the condition of contact there is sensation. Due to the condition of sensation there is craving. Due to the condition of craving there is appropriation. Due to the condition of appropriation there is becoming. Due to the condition of becoming there is birth. Due to the condition of birth there is old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and strife. Thus does this entire great heap of suffering arise.

10.278 “So it is that without this, that will not occur. If this ceases, that will cease. In this way, due to the cessation of ignorance, formations will cease. Due to the cessation of formations, consciousness will cease. Due to the cessation of consciousness, name and form will cease. Due to the cessation of name and form, the six sense bases will cease. Due

to the cessation of the six sense bases, contact will cease. Due to the cessation of contact, sensation will cease. Due to the cessation of sensation, craving will cease. Due to the cessation of craving, appropriation will cease. Due to the cessation of appropriation, becoming will cease. Due to the cessation of becoming, birth will cease. Due to the cessation of birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and strife will cease. Thus does this entire great heap of suffering cease.

“In this way, monks, if the cause arises, suffering will arise, and if the cause ceases, suffering too will cease. Its course interrupted, it cannot begin, and in the absence of rebirth, it ceases to be. This alone is the end of suffering.”

10.279 Then the Blessed One asked King Bimbisāra of Magadha two times, “Great King, what do you think—is material form permanent, or is it, rather, impermanent?”

“Lord, it is impermanent,” he replied.

“And that which is impermanent—is it suffering, or is it, rather, not suffering?”

“Lord, it is suffering,” he replied.

10.280 “Regarding those things that are impermanent and, therefore, suffering—do noble listeners, educated in the teachings, hold them to be a self and grasp at the thought that they are their possession, them, or their self?”

“Lord, they do not,” he replied.

10.281 Then the Blessed One asked, “Great King, what do you think—are sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“Lord, they are impermanent,” he replied.

“And that which is impermanent—is it suffering, or is it, rather, not suffering?”

“Lord, it is suffering,” he replied.

10.282 Then the Blessed One asked, “Regarding those things that are impermanent and, therefore,

suffering—do noble listeners, educated in the teachings, hold them to be a self and grasp at the thought that they are their possession, them, or their self?”

“No, Lord, they do not.”

10.283 “Great King,” the Blessed One then said, “that is why no form—whether past, present, or future; inner or outer; gross or subtle; bad or good; near or far away—could possibly be a possession, them, or their self. Thus should you regard them, with perfect wisdom.

“What do you think, Great King? Neither could sensations, nor perceptions, nor formations, nor consciousness—whether past, present, or future; inner or outer; gross or subtle; bad or good; near or far away—possibly be a possession, them, or their self. Thus should you regard them, with perfect wisdom.

10.284 “Noble listeners, educated in the teachings, who see thus, will become disillusioned with material forms. They will become disillusioned with sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness. In their disillusionment they will cling to nothing. And when they cling to nothing, they will be liberated. Thus liberated, they will think, ‘I have been liberated. My wisdom and vision are manifest. I have exhausted my rebirths. I have succeeded in the practice of the holy life. I have done what was before me. I shall know no other existence.’ And thinking thus, their wisdom and vision will manifest.”

10.285 When this Dharma teaching had been explained, King Bimbisāra of Magadha and the others—the eighty thousand gods and the thousands upon thousands of brahmins and householders of Magadha—were able to see these things unobscured, with the Dharma vision that has no trace of dust or stain with respect to phenomena. King Bimbisāra of Magadha had perceived the truths, discovered the truths,

realized the truths, and fathomed the truths to their very depths, until whatever doubt and hesitation he had he overcame.

10.286 Then, of his own accord, completely unprompted, and unafraid of the truths his teacher had shown him, he rose from his seat, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and asked the Blessed One, “Lord, I have become a noble one. I am a noble one. Lord, I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha of those gone forth. Please accept me as a faithful lay vow holder, from the depths of my heart, from this day forth, for as long as I live.

10.287 “Blessed One, I beseech you, please come to Rājagṛha. I shall offer my respect and service to the Blessed One and the saṅgha of those gone forth. For as long as I live, please permit me to provide the Blessed One and the saṅgha of those gone forth with provisions of clothing, food, bedding, seats, and medicines for the sick.”

10.288 Then the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, “Tell us why the Blessed One led King Bimbisāra and the rest of the eighty thousand gods and thousands upon thousands of brahmins and householders of Magadha to go for refuge and established them in the fundamental precepts and the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa, and how it was cause for the fame of the Blessed One to spread throughout the entire world.”

10.289 “Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well, and in the same way, I placed King Bimbisāra and the rest of the eighty thousand gods and thousands upon thousands of brahmins and householders of Magadha in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges, and set them on the path of the ten virtuous actions, which was cause for my fame to spread throughout the entire world. Listen well!

10.290 “Monks, in times gone by, during King

Diśāṃpati’s reign in the city of Pāṃśula the kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves, illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord with the Dharma, and he treated the kingdom like a beloved only child.

10.291 “As he and the queen enjoyed themselves and coupled, one day the queen conceived. After nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him Reṇu.

10.292 “Prince Reṇu was brought up with two nurses to hold him in their laps, two wet nurses, two nurses to bathe him, and two nurses to play with him—eight nurses in all. They reared him on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and furthermore on every good thing he needed, and he flourished like a lotus in a lake.

10.293 “As the young man grew up, they made him study letters, and trained him in all the different fields of craft and skill in which duly consecrated rulers of the royal caste train, such as how to ride an elephant, how to ride horseback, how to wield a weapon, and how to shoot an arrow, advance, retreat, wage war, grasp with an iron hook, wield a lasso, shoot a spear, throw a single-pointed vajra, throw other single-pointed weapons, and throw a disk; how to cut, cleave, grapple and hold, employ footwork, guard one’s head, strike from a distance, and strike at the noise of an unseen enemy; and how to target the vital points, take infallible aim, and maximize damage. By the time he had been educated in all of these, he was learned in the five fields of knowledge.

10.294 “King Diśāṃpati’s magistrate was a brahmin householder named Govinda, who was capable,

clear-minded, and trustworthy, an intelligent person with deep knowledge of methods of accounting. Since King Diśāmpati's magistrate, the brahmin householder Govinda, was already administering all his righteous works, he put the kingdom in his hands as well, and himself stayed up on the roof of his palatial home in the company of women, playing music, enjoying himself, and coupling.

10.295 “One day the brahmin Govinda's wife conceived, and after nine or ten months had passed, she gave birth to a child who was well proportioned, pleasing to the eye, and beautiful. At the elaborate feast celebrating his birth they named him Guardian of the Flame.

10.296 “They reared young Guardian of the Flame on milk, yogurt, butter, ghee, and milk solids, and as he grew up he studied letters, brahminical customs and conduct, the syllables *om* and *bho*, ritual purity, ritual actions, the collection of ashes, holding the ritual vase, the *R̥g Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*, how to perform sacrificial rites, how to lead others in performing sacrificial rites, how to give and receive offerings, recitation, and recitation instruction. Trained in these procedures, he became a master of the six types of brahminical activities, and in time he mastered the eighteen sciences.

10.297 “Soon after, Guardian of the Flame's father said to him, ‘Son, after I, your father, pass away you will take over my position in the kingdom, and you will become its magistrate. You should tour this kingdom. You have not toured it before, and it would be good for you to do so.’

“I shall do as my lord instructs,’ Guardian of the Flame replied, and he began to follow Prince Reṇu about like a shadow.

10.298 “One day the brahmin Govinda died, and on account of his death Diśāmpati began to grieve and suffer greatly, wailing and lamenting, whereupon

Prince Reṇu asked the king, ‘Deva, why do you sit there, weary from wailing and mourning in despair over the brahmin Govinda's passing?’

“The king replied, ‘The brahmin Govinda administers each and every righteous deed of my kingdom. It's on his account that my heart shrinks with grief.’

10.299 “‘Deva,’ Prince Reṇu said, ‘don't grieve so over the passing of the brahmin Govinda. Don't weary yourself so. Don't wail so. Deva, your counselor's own son, the young brahmin called Guardian of the Flame, is far more exalted than even his father. Deva, I urge you, appoint him as your magistrate, that he might administer all the righteous works of the kingdom for you.’

10.300 “No sooner had King Diśāmpati heard this than he sent for the young brahmin Guardian of the Flame and appointed him magistrate, whereupon he likewise took over all the king's duties. One day, after ceding the throne to Prince Reṇu, Diśāmpati died. From then on he was no longer called Prince Reṇu, but King Reṇu.

10.301 “King Reṇu summoned the young brahmin Guardian of the Flame and told him, ‘Counselor, may you carry out all the righteous works of my kingdom just as you did those of my father.’

“As you wish, Deva,’ the young brahmin replied.

10.302 “The brahmin Guardian of the Flame took on all King Reṇu's royal duties, after which he was no longer called Guardian of the Flame, but Guardian of the Flame Govinda. At that time, while King Reṇu was still young, friendly, and companionable, there were six princes of the warrior class who came before the king and said, ‘Deva, we ask that you bestow to us our own countries.’

10.303 “As soon as the king heard this, he told Guardian of the Flame Govinda, ‘Counselor Govinda, divide this great land into seven parts. Give six parts to

these princes, and let one be mine.’

“ ‘As you wish, Deva,’ he replied.

10.304 “Then Guardian of the Flame Govinda divided that great land into seven parts, giving six parts to the princes, with one part remaining as King Reṇu’s share. King Reṇu appointed each of the six warriors to his own kingdom, and Guardian of the Flame Govinda was esteemed as Brahmā in Jambudvīpa. The people held Guardian of the Flame Govinda as the way to Brahmā, and regarded him as such.

10.305 “One day the brahmin Govinda thought, ‘People throughout the kingdoms esteem me as Brahmā, think that I am the way to Brahmā, and regard me as such. Old brahmin Viṣṇu is aged and infirm, and I’ve heard from the masters of our group that Sahāmpati Brahmā will come to see a brahmin who keeps his mind full of love throughout the four months of the rainy season. Therefore I shall cast all else aside and go to the roof of the palace to dwell amid thoughts of love, compassion, joy, and equanimity.’

10.306 “He told the king, ‘Deva, please know, for the four months of the rainy season I wish to abide in the domain of Brahmā. Therefore, Deva must appoint another magistrate to carry out all the righteous works of the kingdom.’

“ ‘As you wish,’ King Reṇu said.

10.307 “No sooner had the brahmin Mahāgovinda heard this than he cast aside all his duties, went to the roof of the palace, and there on the roof dwelt amid thoughts of love, compassion, joy, and equanimity. Finally, one day Sahāmpati Brahmā came to see him, and because of Sahāmpati Brahmā’s appearance the roof of the palace was completely bathed in light. When he saw this the brahmin Mahāgovinda said in verse:

10.308 “ ‘Never before have I heard of or seen
A color as beautiful as this.

A brilliant mien, a brilliant form—
Pray tell me, my friend, who you are.’

10.309 “Sahāmpati Brahmā said, ‘Boy,

“ ‘Other embodied beings
Like Kumāra, Indra, and the rest
Know me as the embodiment of Brahmā,
And so too should you know me, Govinda.’

10.310 “The great, high brahmin Govinda responded in verse:

“ ‘Brahmā, I bow down before you.
Brahmā, I worship you.
Please hear what I say and then
Grant your answer without delay.’

10.311 “Sahāmpati Brahmā replied:

“ ‘Govinda, I shall listen
To any word you say.
Brahmin, you may ask me
Any question in your heart.

10.312 “ ‘Whether for the sake of this life,
Or for the sake of the next,
Be assured I shall consider
Whatever you see fit to ask.’

10.313 “The brahmin Mahāgovinda said:

“ ‘About my doubts and the doubts that others cast,
I shall ask you, eternal prince of brahmins.
Then I shall think upon it and study it well,
For dispassionate are they who attain Brahmāloka.’

10.314 “Sahāmpati Brahmā said:

“ ‘Brahmā bows with undivided attention to those

who abandon pride.
He dwells in those motivated by compassion,
Who have the scent of virtue, and who abjure sex.
He teaches them, and such dispassionate ones
Attain Brahmāloka.’

10.315 “The young brahmin Mahāgovinda asked:

“Brahmā, who are these people who reek of sin,
Who spread like a river that’s overflown its banks,
Who wander through lower rebirth, defile the
entire world,
And know not the path to attaining Brahmā?’

10.316 “Sahāṃpati Brahmā answered:

“The angry, lying, malicious, and deceitful,
Who do wrong with a slanderous heart,
Who are lustful, hateful, ignorant,
Secretive, stingy, and mean—

10.317 “Brahmin, those are the people who reek of sin,
Who spread like a river that’s overflown its banks,
Who wander through lower rebirth, defile the
entire world,
And do not know the path to attaining Brahmā.

10.318 “But those who rise above this habit
Of ever taking such actions
Will be reborn pure, as Brahmā.
Therefore may you be firmly vigilant.’

“Having spoken thus, Sahāṃpati Brahmā
disappeared on the spot.

10.319 “Soon after Sahāṃpati Brahmā disappeared,
the young brahmin Mahāgovinda thought, ‘I
have understood the meaning that Sahāṃpati
Brahmā taught. If I thus remain at home, living
as a householder, it will be dull, and lifelong
practice of pure conduct—complete, untainted,

and pure—will be difficult. Let me then shave my
head and face, don the colorful robes of the holy,
and with nothing short of perfect faith go forth
from home to live as a mendicant.’

10.320 “One day King Reṇu went to see the brahmin
Mahāgovinda, and upon his arrival he touched his
head to the brahmin Mahāgovinda’s feet and took
a seat at one side. Brahmin Mahāgovinda said to
King Reṇu:

10.321 “‘Lord of the land, great King Reṇu,
Listen now to what I say!
You are the kingdom’s great defense;
I, the brahmin Govinda, am weary.’

10.322 “King Reṇu replied:

“‘I will grant you
Your wish, yet unfulfilled.
I will dispel what harms you.
Govinda, don’t leave me.’

10.323 “Mahāgovinda said:

“‘No wish of mine is unfulfilled,
And there are none who harm me.
I heard a wondrous being speak—
Now I’m weary of home life.’

10.324 “King Reṇu inquired:

“‘Whose words did you hear that you
Abandon both me and your wants?
What was this wondrous being like?
Brahmin, answer me this question.’

10.325 “Mahāgovinda replied:

“‘As I dwelt upon compassion,
Reflecting deeply in solitude,

Brahmā manifested and
Light shone in every direction.

10.326 “I listened to what he said,
Now I’m weary of home.’

10.327 “King Reṇu said, ‘Counselor, please remain here
until I cede the throne to my eldest son. Then after
you have gone forth, counselor, I too will do the
same.’ And then he said in verse:

“ ‘Brahmin, wherever you go,
I will follow you there.
I shall act as your disciple.
Govinda, you are my teacher.’

10.328 “Mahāgovinda told him:

“ ‘Cast away desire, to which
Ordinary people cling.
Ignore such desires
And be steadfast in the true Dharma.’

10.329 “King Reṇu said:

“ ‘Because Brahmā is pure from birth—
Unsullied as the skies—
Then likewise pure as beryl
May I practice brahmacarya, the holy life.’

10.330 “Mahāgovinda replied, ‘Great King, if you know
the time is right, may you do so.’ The brahmin
Mahāgovinda asked the six kings of the warrior
class, ‘If I decide to shave my head and face, don
the colorful religious robes, and with nothing
short of perfect faith go forth from home to live as
a mendicant, will you do the same?’

10.331 “ ‘Counselor,’ they replied, ‘please stay on for
seven more years. In seven years we shall cede
our thrones to our sons and younger brothers,

and then after you go forth, counselor, we shall do
likewise.’

10.332 “Mahāgovinda said, ‘Oh, seven years is much
too long. Desires will become inveterate. Pleasures
will become intoxicating. And it will be difficult to
tell the difference between life and death. Since
there is no certainty whether in seven years you
yourselves will go forth, this is all the more reason
I should go forth.’

10.333 “ ‘Counselor, wait awhile,’ they pleaded. ‘If you
wait just six years, or five, or four, or three, or two,
or one; or just seven months, or six, or five, or four,
or three, or two, or one; or just seven days, or six,
or five, or four, or three, or two, or one, then we
shall cede our thrones to our sons and younger
brothers, and after you go forth, counselor, we
shall do the same.’

10.334 “Govinda replied, ‘My, isn’t even seven days
too long a time? Desires will become inveterate.
Pleasures will become intoxicating. And it will
be difficult to tell the difference between life and
death. Since there is no certainty whether in seven
days you yourselves will go forth, this is all the
more reason I should go forth.’

10.335 “They said, ‘Never mind even seven days, then.
This very day we shall cede our thrones to our
sons and younger brothers, and after you go forth,
counselor, we shall do the same.’

“ ‘If you know the time is right,’ said Govinda,
‘may you do so.’

10.336 “Thereupon the brahmin Mahāgovinda turned
his attention from the company of the six kings of
the warrior class, and regarded the seven great,
high brahmins. He then turned his attention from
the seven great, high brahmins, and regarded
forty women with whom he was acquainted. He
then turned his attention from the forty women
with whom he was acquainted, and regarded five
hundred young brahmins.

10.337 “He then turned his attention from the five

hundred young brahmins, and regarded all the myriad carriage drivers, mahouts, equestrians, charioteers, infantry, archers, aides-de-camp, and dependents; the fearsome, the heroic, and the oppressed; and all the many princes, and asked, 'If I decide to shave my head and face, don the colorful religious robes, and with nothing short of perfect faith go forth from home to live as a mendicant, will you do the same?'

"They replied, 'After you go forth, counselor, we shall do the same.'

" 'If you know the time is right,' said Govinda, 'may you do so.'

10.338 "So the brahmin Mahāgovinda gave up all household affairs, gave gifts and made merit, gave much to the poor, shaved his head and face, donned the colorful religious robes, and with nothing short of perfect faith went forth from home to live as a mendicant. After he went forth, he went to live in the forest, fashioning a hut of branches and leaves, and while staying there he generated the four meditative states and five superknowledges, becoming a person of great miracles and great power. After Govinda went forth, King Reṇu and his suite of hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of attendants shaved their heads and faces, donned the colorful religious robes, and with nothing short of perfect faith went forth from home to live as mendicants.

10.339 "After Govinda had gone forth, likewise the six kings of the warrior class, the high brahmins, the seven great, high brahmins, the forty women with whom he was acquainted, and the five hundred young brahmins; all the myriad carriage drivers, mahouts, equestrians, charioteers, infantry, archers, aides-de-camp, and dependents; the fearsome, the heroic, and the oppressed; and all the many princes shaved their heads and faces, donned the colorful robes of the holy, and with nothing short of perfect faith all went forth from

home to live as mendicants.

10.340 "After the brahmin Govinda conferred on all of them instructions to ponder, through diligence, practice, and effort they generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

Thereafter the great, high brahmin Govinda's name was no longer great, high brahmin Govinda. Instead they called him Govinda the Teacher.

10.341 "O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was called Govinda the Teacher then. The one who was King Reṇu then is none other than King Bimbisāra. The hundreds upon hundreds of thousands who were led by King Reṇu then are none other than the eighty thousand gods and the hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of brahmins and householders of Magadha now led by King Bimbisāra.

10.342 "At that time I led King Reṇu and others—many people of his country and thousands upon thousands of brahmins and householders—to go forth, and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. For this reason my fame spread throughout the world. Now as well I have sated King Bimbisāra, the eighty thousand gods, and thousands upon thousands of brahmins and householders of Magadha with a taste of the holy Dharma, establishing them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa."

THE END

Next: *The Quarrel*



Part Ten (7)

The
Quarrel

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟོ་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

7 The Quarrel

10.343 One time when the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, many in Śrāvastī were caught up in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention.

The blessed buddhas, teachers of the one path to be traversed, with mastery over wisdom and the two types of knowable objects, in command of the three kinds of sterling equanimity, fearless by means of the fourfold fearlessness, freed from migration through the five destinies, keen in the six sense bases, practiced in the seven limbs of enlightenment, focused on the eight liberations, absorbed in the nine successive meditative absorptions, possessing all ten of the ten powers, whose proclamations are the great roaring of a perfect lion, by nature regard the world with their buddha eyes six times throughout the day and night—three times by day and three times by night.

10.344 These are their thoughts as they look out in wisdom: “Who is in decline? Who will flourish? Who is destitute? Who is in a dreadful state? Who is being harmed? Who is destitute, in a dreadful state, and being harmed? Who is veering toward the lower realms? Who is descending through the lower realms? Who has descended to the lower realms? Whom shall I pull up from the lower realms, and establish in the resultant state of heaven and liberation? Whom, mired in misdeeds, shall I lift up by the hand? Whom, lacking the seven jewels of the noble ones, shall I

lead to command of the seven jewels of the noble ones? Whom, not having produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to produce them? Whom, having already produced roots of virtue, shall I lead to ripen their roots of virtue? Whom, having already ripened their roots of virtue, shall I slice open with the blade of wisdom? For whom shall I cause this world, adorned with a buddha’s presence, to be fruitful?”

10.345 The ocean, home of creatures fierce,
Could fail to send its tides on time.
But when the time has come to tame
Their offspring, buddhas never fail.

10.346 The Blessed One thought, “The time has come to tame all of these people. I shall turn them away from this strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, and establish them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.” In the morning he donned his lower garment and Dharma robes, and, carrying his alms bowl, we went to Śrāvastī for alms and traveled to where those people were.

10.347 The people saw the Blessed One coming from a distance, and they were filled with wonder at the sight of him. They prepared a seat for him and requested him, “This way, Blessed One—if you please! Welcome, Blessed One, very good! O Blessed One, please have a seat on this cushion we have prepared for you!”

10.348 After the Blessed One had taken his place, he questioned them all, saying, “Friends, what are you doing? If you need to quarrel with others, is there anyone else with whom you could quarrel?”

“Tell us, Blessed One,” they replied, “with whom should we quarrel?”

10.349 The Blessed One said, “Please be seated, friends, and I shall tell you in detail.” They touched their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and sat before him to listen to the Dharma. Then the Blessed One

said to them, “It is your afflictive emotions you must fight. You should struggle to cast away your afflictive emotions.”

10.350 The Blessed One taught the Dharma particularly suited to them and they were no longer bound by their anger. When they heard it, they destroyed with the thunderbolt of wisdom the twenty high peaks of the mountain of views concerning the transitory collection, and manifested the resultant state of stream entry right where they sat.

10.351 After seeing the truths, they rose from their seats, drew down the right shoulder of their upper garments, bowed toward the Blessed One with palms pressed together, and requested the Blessed One, “Lord, if permitted we wish to go forth in the Dharma and Vinaya so well spoken, complete our novitiates, and achieve full ordination. In the presence of the Blessed One, we too wish to practice the holy life.”

10.352 With the words “Come, join me, monks!” the Blessed One led them to go forth as novices, conferred on them full ordination, and instructed them. Casting away all afflictive emotions through diligence, practice, and effort, they manifested arhatship. As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved the insights, superknowledges, and discriminations. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

10.353 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed One, “tell us why the Blessed One pacified the conflict among those many people and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.”

“Not only now,” the Blessed One explained, “but in times past as well I placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Listen well!

10.354 “Monks, in times gone by, in a remote mountain village, a certain brahmin performed a sacrifice. When the sacrifice was being performed, some other brahmins fought over a seat. There was a certain sage living in a forest devoted to austerities with five hundred attendants. The sage was at that sacrifice, so he taught them the Dharma particularly suited to them in order to pacify the brahmins’ conflict, and thus the conflict was pacified. The brahmins became disillusioned with saṃsāra and went forth in his presence. After they went forth, they generated the four meditative states and the five superknowledges.

10.355 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that sage then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. Those who were the brahmins then are none other than all these brahmins. At that time I pacified their conflict and placed them in the four meditative states and the five superknowledges. Now as well I have pacified their conflict and established them in the unsurpassed, supreme welfare of nirvāṇa.

10.356 “They also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. At that time, having practiced pure conduct all their lives, their faculties ripened and now they have been liberated.”

THE END

Next: *The Nāga* (2)



The Quarrel

Valentina Barbaro / 8 years old

Part Ten (8)

The
Nāga (2)

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བརྒྱ་བློ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

8 The Nāga (2)

10.357 When the Blessed One was in Śrāvastī, one of King Prasenajit's high ministers had everything he possessed confiscated on account of a dispute and was thrown into the dungeon where he suffered from hunger and thirst and died.

10.358 Now he had made very wicked prayers, and after he died and transmigrated, he took rebirth as a vicious yakṣa. Then he set a plague upon people all over Kośala, and after a great many had died the soothsayers declared, "At his death the high minister made very wicked prayers. Now he has taken rebirth as a vicious yakṣa. It is he who set this plague upon us."

10.359 When the people heard this, they were desperate and did not know what to do. King Prasenajit thought, "No one can tame him. I shall have to implore the Blessed One right now to do so." He approached the Blessed One, touched his head to the Blessed One's feet, and took a seat at one side.

10.360 Once he had taken a seat at one side, King Prasenajit implored the Blessed One, "Lord, the Blessed One has tamed vicious nāgas like Nanda, Upananda, and others besides. You have tamed even the vicious yakṣa lord Aṭavika, and others besides. How wonderful it would be if, out of compassion, the Blessed One could tame this vicious yakṣa as well." The Blessed One assented by his silence. King Prasenajit then praised this assurance from the Blessed One, rejoiced, touched

his head to the Blessed One's feet, and took leave of the Blessed One.

10.361 By means of a miracle the Blessed One set the yakṣa down near the garden of Prince Jeta, and to tame him he emanated a great fire. The yakṣa saw the great fire surrounding him on every side, and that it was peaceful only at the feet of the Blessed One. Afraid for his life, the vicious yakṣa approached the Blessed One, and the Blessed One said to him, "My friend, you were executed by King Prasenajit for a previous nonvirtuous action. Even now, since taking rebirth here you have killed many. When you die and transmigrate, what will be your next birth? Where will you go?"

10.362 "Blessed One, what advice can you give me?" the yakṣa beseeched him.

"Give up these evil acts," the Blessed One instructed. "Go for refuge and maintain the fundamental precepts."

"I shall do just as the Blessed One says," said the yakṣa. He went for refuge, took the fundamental precepts, and swore to the Blessed One, "Lord, I have given up evil acts. From this day forth, Lord, I shall guard and protect all the many inhabitants of Śrāvastī."

10.363 "Lord," the monks requested the Blessed Buddha, "tell us why the Blessed One tamed this vicious yakṣa, thereby granting many freedom from fear."

"Not only now," the Blessed One explained, "but in times past as well, and in the same way, I tamed this vicious yakṣa, and thereby granted many freedom from fear. Listen well!"

10.364 "Monks, in times gone by, during King Brahmadata's reign in the city of Vārāṇasī, a certain poisonous, extraordinarily venomous nāga appeared in Kāśī and emptied both the villages and the countryside. King Brahmadata heard that it was headed in the direction of Vārāṇasī, and upon hearing this he flushed with terror. He

armed the four divisions of his army and ordered them, 'Go, kill the poisonous nāga!'

"But they bowed down at his feet and said, 'Deva, a host of armies could not slay it. Mantras and medicine cannot slay it. Perhaps the ascetics or brahmins could tame it with their virtuous ways?'

10.365 "Now at that time there lived in Vārāṇasī a certain young untouchable with a loving nature, great compassion, and a love for beings. As he saw that the people were confused about what to do, he felt immense compassion for them, and assured them, 'There is no need for such desperate uncertainty, for I shall tame this poisonous nāga.'

"To this his parents replied, 'Its very breath is poisonous—you will not be able to tame it.'

10.366 " 'If I don the armor of love,' the child said, 'it cannot harm me in the least.' With that the child set out in the direction the poisonous nāga had gone. As the child approached, the wicked snake saw him from a distance, and blew its poisonous breath at him in anger.

"The child centered himself in love, and looked up at the poisonous nāga with love. No sooner had he cast this gaze than the poison disappeared. Then the boy picked up the nāga-snake in his two hands and set it down in a region where no people lived.

10.367 "King Brahmadaṭṭa and the others heard that young untouchable so-and-so had tamed the poisonous nāga. As soon as they heard this, the king himself approached the young untouchable and bid the child request some type of boon as his reward, saying, 'I will grant you some type of boon.'

10.368 "The child replied, 'Take the path of the ten virtuous actions and there remain. Then set the people of your country on the path of the ten virtuous actions.'

"At that, King Brahmadaṭṭa heaped material

comforts upon him, adopted the path of the ten virtuous actions, and there remained while also setting the people of his country on the path of the ten virtuous actions.

10.369 "O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was that young untouchable then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. The one who was the poisonous nāga then is none other than this vicious yakṣa. Those who were all those many people then are now the many inhabitants of Kośala. At that time I tamed that poisonous nāga, thereby granting many freedom from fear. Now as well I have tamed this vicious yakṣa, and thereby granted many freedom from fear.

10.370 "They also went forth in the teaching of the totally and completely awakened Buddha Kāśyapa. After practicing pure conduct all their lives then, their faculties ripened, and now they have been liberated."

THE END

Next: *Two Stories about King Śibi*



The Nāga (2)

Rigjema Chhoden Tobgay / 10 years old

Part Ten (9)

Two Stories about
Kiñg Śibi

- 9. i The First Story about King Śibi
- 9. ii The Second Story of King Śibi

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཀྲི་བ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

9 Two Stories about King Śibi

9. i The First Story about King Śibi

10.371 As the Blessed One was traveling through the province of Mallā, he stepped off the road that led to the Antavān River and to Kuśinagarī and said to Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, make four folds in the Tathāgata’s upper garment, and lay it out. I will rest my sore back awhile.”

Venerable Ānanda said, “As you please, Lord.” Heeding the word of the Blessed One, he made four folds in the upper garment, laid it out, and informed the Blessed One, “Lord, I have made four folds in the Tathāgata’s upper garment and laid it out. Blessed One, please know that the time has come.”

10.372 The Blessed One, seeing that his Dharma robes and patched raiment had been folded up and set out, sat himself down, and then mindful, self-possessed, and with clear perception, he lay down on his right side, placing one leg upon the other.

10.373 The Blessed One thought, “Of all those ascetics here in the assembly who are ordinary persons, whom might the Buddha tame, and whom might his disciples tame?” Then the Blessed One thought, “There are some here to be tamed by the Buddha, and some to be tamed by his disciples.” With this

thought the Blessed One instructed Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, speak with eloquence about the wings of enlightenment,” and performed a miracle so that the sound of his voice carried across the whole assembly.

10.374 Many of the monks thus heard the sound of his voice and thought, “The Blessed One has exhorted Venerable Ānanda to give a discourse on the wings of enlightenment. Now Venerable Ānanda will teach the Dharma that is sweet as honey from the hive.” They approached the Blessed One and upon their arrival sat in a circle around him.

10.375 Venerable Ānanda addressed the monks: “Venerable Ones! When the Blessed One became a totally and completely awakened buddha he used his perfect knowledge and taught the limbs of enlightenment. Right mindfulness means to commit oneself to solitude, to commit oneself to freedom from attachment, to commit oneself to cessation of the afflictive emotions, and to transform oneself through complete detachment.

10.376 “Venerable Ones! When the Blessed One became a totally and completely awakened buddha with perfect knowledge, he taught the limbs of enlightenment. Analysis of phenomena, diligence, joy, mental and physical pliancy, meditative stabilization, and equanimity likewise mean to commit oneself to solitude, to commit oneself to freedom from attachment, to commit oneself to cessation of the afflictive emotions, and to transform oneself through complete detachment.”

10.377 After Venerable Ānanda had set forth the limbs of enlightenment, he gave the monks the relevant Dharma teaching such that the disciples and those with the right roots of virtue cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship right where they sat.

10.378 When the Blessed One understood that Venerable Ānanda had completed his discourse,

he sat down cross-legged, with his body straight, and his mind completely recollected, and then asked Venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, did you teach diligence?”

“Yes, Blessed One,” he replied, “I taught diligence.”

10.379 “Ānanda, did you teach diligence?”

“Yes, Sugata, I taught diligence.”

“Ānanda,” the Blessed One declared, “diligence leads to unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment.”

10.380 After the Blessed One had set forth the wings of enlightenment, he taught the Dharma particularly suited to them such that those connected to the Blessed One and the roots of virtue cast away all afflictive emotions and manifested arhatship, right where they sat.

10.381 As arhats, free from the attachments of the three realms, their minds regarded gold no differently than filth, and the palms of their hands as like space itself. They became cool like wet sandalwood. Their insight crushed ignorance like an eggshell. They achieved insight, superknowledge, and discrimination. They had no regard for worldly profit, passion, or acclaim. They became objects of offering, veneration, and respectful address by Indra, Upendra, and the other gods.

10.382 On that occasion one monk spoke in verse:

“Monks, the teacher asked to hear
The sweet Dharma, as he was ill.
Now you have the limbs of enlightenment,
So teach it wherever you will!

10.383 “Elder Ānanda, skilled, respected,
And learned, consented to teach.
He is a master of all the pure teachings
That you, the hero, have preached.

10.384 “Mindfulness, analysis, diligence,
Joy, pliancy, meditation,
And equanimity—these are the pure limbs
Of your enlightenment.

10.385 “Told of the heart of the limbs of enlightenment,
He realized the heart of the limbs of enlightenment.
The Blessed One thus recovered from his injury,
Which was more painful than a severe illness.

10.386 “If even the Lord of Dharma himself,
Who taught this precious, holy Dharma,
Asked to hear the holy Dharma,
Why should others not listen to him?

10.387 “He who has all ten powers
Declared Upatiṣya
Wisest of monks, but even he
Is overcome with desire to hear the Dharma.

10.388 “They hold the sūtra, vinaya, and mātṛkā—
They’re wise and they see what’s true.
If they hearken to this holy Dharma,
Why should others not listen too?

10.389 “The wise, intent on learning,
Who lend their ears as they should,
Also take great joy in
The Buddha’s flawless teaching.

10.390 “When the mind is glad, and body supple,
And all experience is bliss—
From out of bliss, your mind can touch
The depths of meditation.

10.391 “With equipoise, the mind knows
That all objects are conditioned.
It becomes weary of saṃsāric birth.
Without attachment, the mind is freed.

- 10.392 “Weary of perpetual rebirth in saṃsāra,
Not attached to the realm of gods or humans,
Gone like fire when the fuel is spent
The arhats enter nirvāṇa.
- 10.393 “The Conqueror also taught the many
Benefits of hearing the holy Dharma.
Reflecting upon how this is so,
Let us listen to our teacher’s word.”
- 10.394 “Lord,” the monks requested the Blessed Buddha,
“tell us why the Blessed One, who teaches pithy
teachings, requested a pithy teaching, and how
the Blessed One exhorted Venerable Ānanda for a
pithy teaching. We who venerate you are listening
with respect. Please tell us why.”
- 10.395 “Monks,” the Blessed One explained, “just as
now the Tathāgata, who teaches pithy teachings,
has requested a pithy teaching, in past times
as well, and in the same way, the Tathāgata,
who teaches pithy teachings, requested a pithy
teaching, and I performed a magnificent austerity
for the sake of a pithy teaching. Listen well!
- 10.396 “Monks, it took place in times gone by, during
King Śibi’s reign in the royal palace of Catuṣka. The
kingdom was prosperous, flourishing, happy, and
well populated. The harvest was good. Quarreling
and arguments had ceased, there was no fighting
or infighting, and there were no robbers, thieves,
illness, or famine. Rice, sugarcane, cattle, and
buffalo were plentiful. His was a reign in accord
with the Dharma. He ruled the kingdom gently
and mercifully, as a parent cares for a beloved only
child.
- 10.397 “This king was also of a loving nature and quite
compassionate, with a love for beings, and wanted
deeply to perform acts of charity. He began to
give gifts and make merit. To those who wished
for food he gave food. To those who wished for
something to drink he gave something to drink.

To those who wished for clothes he gave clothes.
To those who wished for adornments he gave
adornments. To those who wished for bedding
and seats he gave bedding and seats. To those who
wished for mounts he gave mounts. To those who
wished for other goods, he gave other goods, and
to the sick and to homes for the sick he provided
everything that they needed, appointing healers
and attendants.

- 10.398 “He served the ill and the orphaned. He
prepared a great deal of food and drink and made
gifts of it to the creatures that flew through the
sky, dwelt in the water, or made their homes in the
fields. ‘From this day forth, to all I shall give all,’ he
promised. ‘I shall set the whole world on the path
of the ten virtuous actions.’ After they died, their
embrace of the path of the ten virtuous actions
was cause for the greater part of those beings to
take birth among the gods, until they began to fill
all the gods’ residences.
- 10.399 “Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, ‘What is this?
Is someone practicing to attain the state of Indra,
or perhaps to attain the state of Brahmā?’ Śakra,
King of the Gods, looked out, and saw that there
was one who was practicing to attain unexcelled,
total, and complete enlightenment. He thought, ‘I
will go for a time and see for myself whether he is
of firm resolve. If this being’s resolve is firm, I shall
worship him. If this being’s resolve is not firm, I
shall steady him.’ With this in mind, Śakra, King
of the Gods, emanated in the form of a rākṣasa, sat
on the canopy above King Śibi’s house, and spoke
half a verse:
- 10.400 “ ‘Sad that once formed, nothing can last,
But only arise and expire’
- 10.401 “With that, Śakra, King of the Gods, in his
nonhuman guise fell silent.
“Now King Śibi heard what Śakra, King of

the Gods, in nonhuman guise had said, and when he heard it he thought, ‘This alone is the foundation of nirvāṇa and opens the gate of dependent origination. This alone shows the path to unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment.’

10.402 “King Śibi saw Śakra, King of the Gods, in nonhuman guise sitting on the canopy above his house, and when he saw him he rose quickly, drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, bowed with palms pressed together toward Śakra, King of the Gods, in nonhuman guise, and said, ‘Speak, my friend, complete the verse. I will be your disciple, and listen.’

10.403 “‘What good is it, if you’re my disciple?’ Śakra, King of the Gods, asked. ‘Tormented by hunger and thirst, I sit and speak in desperate uncertainty of what I shall eat.’

“‘Speak, my friend, complete the verse,’ the Bodhisattva urged him. ‘I shall give you your fill of food.’

10.404 “Śakra, King of the Gods, in nonhuman guise replied, ‘My friend, how can you give me my fill? Being what they are, my food and drink will be difficult for you to give.’

“‘What are your food and drink?’ the Bodhisattva asked.

“‘I eat the flesh and drink the warm blood of humans freshly killed,’ he replied.

10.405 “Thereupon the Bodhisattva thought, ‘That kind of flesh and blood can’t be had without killing. I can’t do harm to another being for the sake of a pithy teaching.’ So he said, ‘If you can eat and drink my flesh and blood, my friend, I can give you all the more. Therefore, speak, and complete the verse. For your pithy teaching I shall give you my own flesh and blood.’

10.406 “Thereupon Śakra, King of the Gods spoke, completing the verse:

“‘Sad that once formed, nothing can last,

But only arise and expire.

Sad that once born, all things must cease.

Their pacification is bliss.’

10.407 “In reverence the Bodhisattva pondered the entire verse, and for a long time he practiced reciting it, thinking, ‘This is the foundation of the city of nirvāṇa and the gate of dependent arising. It is the path that leads to the city of nirvāṇa, the path by which every totally and completely awakened buddha has gone forth.’ Taking up a very sharp knife, he said, ‘An offering for your pithy teaching, my friend,’ and to Śakra, King of the Gods, in nonhuman guise he handed flesh cut from his side.

10.408 “‘My friend, will this satisfy you?’ he asked.

“‘No,’ came the reply. ‘It will not.’

“So he handed him flesh cut from his other side, and in the same way flesh cut from his shoulders and cut from all over his body, asking, ‘My friend, will this satisfy you?’

10.409 “‘No,’ came the reply. ‘It will not.’ Finally the Bodhisattva thought, ‘The time is here at last to completely let go of my whole body,’ and he prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, ‘By this root of virtue, may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way—a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.’ And he said in verse:

10.410 “‘By this great gift may I become
A self-arisen buddha for all the worlds.
May I rescue and liberate the many beings
Not liberated by the victorious lords who came
before me.’

10.411 “Having thus prayed for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, he said, ‘My friend, you may do as you please with my body.’

No sooner had the Bodhisattva conceived the spirit of enlightenment than the earth quaked six different ways. The gods who lived in the sky let fall a rain of flowers and said, ‘How good, friend, how good it is. What a magnificent austerity you undertook!’

10.412 “Śakra, King of the Gods, thought, ‘This bodhisattva took on extraordinary hardship. I can restore his body, but first I must finish measuring his commitment.’

So he asked the Bodhisattva, ‘My friend, are you not even a little unhappy to cut away your own flesh and to sever your sinews and veins?’

10.413 “‘Oh, I’m not the least bit unhappy to cut away my flesh or to sever my sinews and veins,’ the Bodhisattva replied. ‘I am compelled to undergo this suffering by compassion for beings born as hell beings, animals, or anguished spirits.’

“Śakra, King of the Gods, in nonhuman guise scoffed at him, ‘Who could believe your words, my friend?’

10.414 “‘With an invocation of the truth, I shall bring you to believe them,’ the Bodhisattva replied.

“‘If your invocation is true, may your body be as it was before,’ said Śakra. And just as he said this, the Bodhisattva stated, ‘If it is true that I’m not the least bit unhappy to cut away my flesh and to sever my sinews and veins, and that I am compelled to undergo this suffering by compassion for beings born as hell beings, animals, or anguished spirits, then by these words of truth may my body be restored.’ As soon as the Bodhisattva said this, his body was restored.

10.415 “Śakra, King of the Gods, rejoiced at this sight. His guise disappeared, and he returned to his natural body. He bowed down at the feet of the Bodhisattva and told him, ‘It was not with ill

intent that I made such trouble for you. I made such trouble for you to spur you on. With such joyous effort as you possess, you are certain to fully, completely awaken into total and complete enlightenment. When you do, please remember me.’ Then Śakra, King of the Gods, asked forgiveness of the bodhisattva, and disappeared on the spot.

10.416 “O monks, what do you think? I am the one who was King Śibi then, and lived the life of a bodhisattva. At that time I was a teacher of pithy teachings, and there I wished to hear a pithy teaching. Having become the Tathāgata, now as well, and in the same way, how would I not be a teacher of pithy teachings, and not wish to hear a pithy teaching myself? Why? Because, monks, it was I who first taught this Dharma.”



9. ii The Second Story of King Śibi

10.417 *The opening rationale and prior cause are the same as above.*

10.418 “Śakra, King of the Gods asked the Bodhisattva, ‘What good is it if you’re my disciple? I have told you to harm yourself in a certain way. If you dare do it, afterward I shall tell the verse to you.’

“ ‘Tell me the verse first, my friend,’ the Bodhisattva urged him. ‘Then I shall harm myself in all the ways in which you have told me. But give me the verse in its entirety, my friend.’

10.419 “At this, Śakra, King of the Gods, told the entire verse to the Bodhisattva. Then the Bodhisattva drew down the right shoulder of his upper garment, and bowed toward Śakra, King of the Gods, in nonhuman guise, with palms pressed together. After he had pondered the entire verse, and had practiced reciting it for a long time, he lay down and began to crush himself between two wooden boards—each board driven through with a thousand nails, each nail four fingers in length. As he lay there he began to pray for unexcelled, total, and complete enlightenment, saying, ‘By this root of virtue, may I become a protector for the world’s blind who are without a guide, without any guide at all, without anyone to show them the way—a tathāgata, an arhat, a totally and completely awakened buddha endowed with perfect knowledge and perfect conduct, a sugata, a knower of the world, a tamer of persons, a charioteer, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of humans and gods—a blessed buddha.’ And then he said in verse:

10.420 “ ‘By this great gift may I become
A self-arisen buddha for all the worlds.

May I rescue and liberate the many beings
Not liberated by the victorious lords who came
before me.’

10.421 “Then the Bodhisattva again crushed himself between the two boards, and as blood began gushing out from all over his body, the earth quaked six different ways. The gods who lived in the sky let fall a rain of flowers, exclaiming, ‘How good it is!’ ”

10.422 *The rest should be told as in the preceding story, beginning with the invocation of the truth on up to and including the restoration of their bodies.*

THE END

Next: *Kauśāmbī*



The Second Story of King Śibi

Rain Scrivo / 4 years old

Part Ten (10)

Kauśāmbī

a story from

The Hundred Deeds

ལས་བཟང་པོ།

Karmaśataka

Toh 340

Degé Kangyur, vol. 73, folios 1.b–309.a,
and vol. 74, folios 1.b–128.b.

10 Kauśāmbī

10.423 When the Blessed Buddha was staying in the garden of the householder Ghoṣila in Kauśāmbī, there lived a certain Kauśāmbī monk who was a wicked and very powerful holder of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā. He had many adherents and attendants, and many other monk friends who were also nothing but wicked, powerful holders of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā, with many adherents and attendants themselves.

10.424 There was also a certain Vaiśālī monk who had come to Kauśāmbī and was likewise a wicked, powerful holder of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā, with many adherents and attendants, and many other monk friends who were also nothing but wicked, powerful holders of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā, with many adherents and attendants themselves.

10.425 While all of them were in retreat during the rains, they had agreed, “If any one of us sees that the water containers are completely empty, with no water whatsoever, that person should fill them, or else inform the one in charge of the utensils. Furthermore, not filling them or not informing the one in charge of the utensils will be cause for punishment.”

10.426 As those who were staying there during the rains were resolving a discussion, they became embroiled in argument and looked for opportunities to harm one another.

At that time a certain householder invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to

take their food at his house, so the Blessed One set out for the householder’s home accompanied by many of the monks, and eventually arrived at the householder’s home.

10.427 After the Blessed One left, the Vaiśālī monk went to bathe, and after he had washed and rinsed, he saw that there was no more than a little water left in the water container. He thought, “The monks have all already gone. No one is going to come here to bathe now, so there’s no need to fill the water container or to inform the person in charge of the utensils.” So he departed, leaving no more than a little water there.

10.428 Not long after he had gone, the Kauśāmbī monk came and was preparing to bathe when he saw that there was no more than a little water left. Since he had also seen the Vaiśālī monk bathe and depart, he thought, “That monk is doing one of two things—he’s either filling up the water container or informing the person in charge of the utensils,” and he waited there.

10.429 Some of the disciples who were living with him asked, “Preceptor, why are you waiting here, when all the other monks have gone?”

“I wish to bathe,” he replied. “The Vaiśālī monk bathed and departed, so he’s gone either to fill the water container or to inform the person in charge of the utensils.”

10.430 “Preceptor, he left with his attendants,” they said. “You shouldn’t wait here.”

He showed the water container to the monks. “Look here—do you think I can bathe and rinse with just this much water?”

“Preceptor,” they said, “in a little while, claim that there is no water. Then we will support you and take your side.” And then they departed.

10.431 The Vaiśālī monk began to feel some regret, and he said to some of the disciples who were living with him, “Oh no, after I bathed and rinsed off, there was no more than a little water in the water

container, and I left it like that and departed. We have an agreement among the saṅgha that you have to either fill the water container yourself or inform the person in charge of the utensils. I didn't fill it myself, nor did I inform the person in charge of the utensils, and now I've come back here. But maybe now some other monk will want to bathe and rinse."

10.432 They said, "Preceptor, in a little while, claim that there was water there. Then we will support you and take your side." Then they departed, and after he finished his food, he went outside.

The Kauśāmbī monks thought, "The Vaiśālī monk has violated the agreement made among the saṅgha. Since he committed the infraction, we will make him confess the infraction." So they prepared a seat and sounded the gong, and the entire saṅgha assembled.

10.433 When the Kauśāmbī monk accused him, the Vaiśālī monk replied, "There was water inside."

"Do you think I can bathe and rinse with that little water?" retorted the other.

They took action to sequester the monk for his shameless denial. The Vaiśālī monks interdicted that action, and performed a separate poṣadha purification ceremony of their own. This was cause for further strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, so in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention they remained.

10.434 The Blessed One sent for the sequestered monk, the disciples of the sequestered monk, and the disciples of the disciples of the sequestered monk, and asked them, "Monks, is it true you are engaged in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention?"

"Yes, Blessed One, it's true," they replied.

10.435 The Blessed One admonished them, "Monks, do not remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention. Monks, know that if you remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, virtues will decrease, and thereby not increase. Monks,

know that if you do not remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, virtues will increase, and thereby not decrease.

10.436 "Furthermore, monks, a sequestered monk must do the following: If a sequestered monk is a wicked, powerful holder of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā, with many adherents and attendants, and his many other monk friends are likewise nothing but wicked, powerful holders of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā, with many adherents and attendants, he may think, 'They carelessly accuse me and remember things carelessly. Therefore I shall not pay heed to their grievances as I should. They are sequestering me from view. I am being sequestered on account of egregious, intransigent, destructive views, which will be cause for strife, reproof, conflict, and contention in the saṅgha.' Assuming such, if the accused monk still makes amends as he should, all will be well. But by the same token, if he does not make amends, it will be an infraction."

10.437 Then the Blessed One dismissed the sequestered monk, the disciples of the sequestered monk, and the disciples of the disciples of the sequestered monk, and sent for the monks who had sequestered him, the disciples of the monks who had sequestered him, and the disciples of the disciples of the monks who had sequestered him. He asked them, "Monks, is it true you are engaged in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention?"

"Yes, Blessed One, it's true," they replied.

10.438 The Blessed One admonished them also, "Monks, do not remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention. Monks, know that if you remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, virtues will decrease, and thereby not increase. Monks, know that if you do not remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, virtues will increase, and thereby not decrease.

10.439 "Monks, the monk who has sequestered another

monk must do the following: If a sequestering monk is a wicked, powerful holder of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā, with many adherents and attendants, and his many other monk friends are likewise nothing but wicked, powerful holders of sūtra, vinaya, and māṭṛkā, with many adherents and attendants themselves, he may think, ‘I have accused him carelessly and remembered things carelessly, and he has not paid heed to that grievance as he should, so I have sequestered him from view. I sequestered him on account of egregious, intransigent, destructive views, which will be cause for strife, reproof, conflict, and contention in the saṅgha.’ Assuming such, he must not make careless accusations. He must not recall things so carelessly. If he makes a careless accusation, it will be an infraction.”

10.440 The Blessed One instructed them further, “Also, if the poṣadha purification ceremony still does not ameliorate the strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, it should be mentioned to the Blessed One as the occasion arises.”

Then the Blessed One sent for the sequestered monk, the disciples of the sequestered monk, and the disciples of the disciples of the sequestered monk, and said to them, “Monks, I have instructed you not to remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention. Is it true that the poṣadha purification ceremony still has not ameliorated the strife, reproof, conflict, and contention?”

“Yes, Blessed One, it’s true,” they replied.

10.441 “Monks, do not engage in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention. Monks, if you remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, then whether you perform the poṣadha purification ceremony, the lifting of restrictions ceremony, an act whose second member is a motion, or an act whose fourth member is a motion, all those acts would be interdicted, and they must be ratified.

10.442 “Why? Because, monks, you remain apart

from the others, and they remain apart from you as well. Monks, there are two types of remaining apart: one who remains apart of his own accord, and one who lives separately by consensus of the saṅgha.

10.443 “Monks, what does it mean then to remain apart of one’s own accord? In this case, monks, to remain apart of one’s own accord means to knowingly claim that a position that does not accord with the Dharma is a position that does accord with the Dharma.

10.444 “What does it mean to remain apart by consensus of the saṅgha? In this case, monks, to remain apart by consensus of the saṅgha refers to when the saṅgha has sequestered a monk out of view, and the sequestering is on account of egregious, intransigent, destructive views.

10.445 “Monks, there are two types of remaining together: one who remains on his own, and the saṅgha remaining together as the Dharma specifies.

“What do we mean by one who remains on his own? In this case, monks, one who remains on his own refers to a monk who knowingly claims that a position that accords with the Dharma is one that does not accord with the Dharma.

10.446 “What do we mean by the saṅgha remaining together as the Dharma specifies? In this case, monks, the saṅgha remaining together as the Dharma specifies refers to when the saṅgha is going to sequester a monk out of sight, and does the sequestering on account of egregious, intransigent, destructive views.”

10.447 Then the Blessed One dismissed the sequestered monk, the disciples of the sequestered monk, and the disciples of the disciples of the sequestered monk, and sent for the monks who had sequestered him, the disciples of the monks who had sequestered him, and the disciples of the disciples of the monks who had sequestered him.

10.448 “Monks,” he said to them, “I have instructed you not to remain in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention. Is it true that the poṣadha purification ceremony has still not ameliorated the strife, reproof, conflict, and contention?” When they replied, “Yes, Blessed One, it’s true,” he gave the previous instruction just as before, up through the saṅgha remaining together as the Dharma specifies. The Blessed One gave them this instruction, but they remained in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention.

10.449 Then a certain householder invited the Buddha and the rest of the saṅgha of monks to take their food at his house, so those monks went there. The Blessed One told the monk in charge of provisions, “Bring my food here.”

10.450 Now there are five reasons the blessed buddhas make the monks in charge of provisions bring them food: (1) they wish to meditate, (2) they wish to teach Dharma to the gods, (3) they wish to visit with a sick person, (4) they wish to survey the sleeping quarters, or (5) they wish to give the fundamental precepts to disciples.

On this occasion, the Blessed One did so because he wished to give the fundamental precepts of the monastic discipline.

10.451 After he sent the monk in charge of provisions to bring the food, many of the monks who had come to the house began to engage in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention as they sat in their seats. Remaining in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, they continued performing improper actions of body and improper actions of speech and they eventually began striking each other.

10.452 After they went to take their food and had done so, they approached the Blessed One, touching their heads to his feet and taking a seat at one side. The Blessed One asked the monks who had taken food, “Monks, has the saṅgha’s good food

contented you?”

10.453 “Yes, Lord, it has,” they replied. “Though it is good the saṅgha of monks is contented with good food, Lord, still many of the monks who came here began to engage in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention. Remaining in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, they continued to perform improper actions of body and improper actions of speech and eventually began striking each other.”

10.454 Then the Blessed One took his food, washed his feet outside the monastery, and entered to monastery to sit in meditation. In the afternoon the Blessed One rose from his meditation, took his seat amid the saṅgha of monks, and asked them, “Monks, is it true that those of you who went to the house remained in strife, reproof, conflict, and contention, continuing to perform improper actions of body and improper actions of speech until after a while you began striking each other?”

“Yes, Lord, it’s true,” they replied.

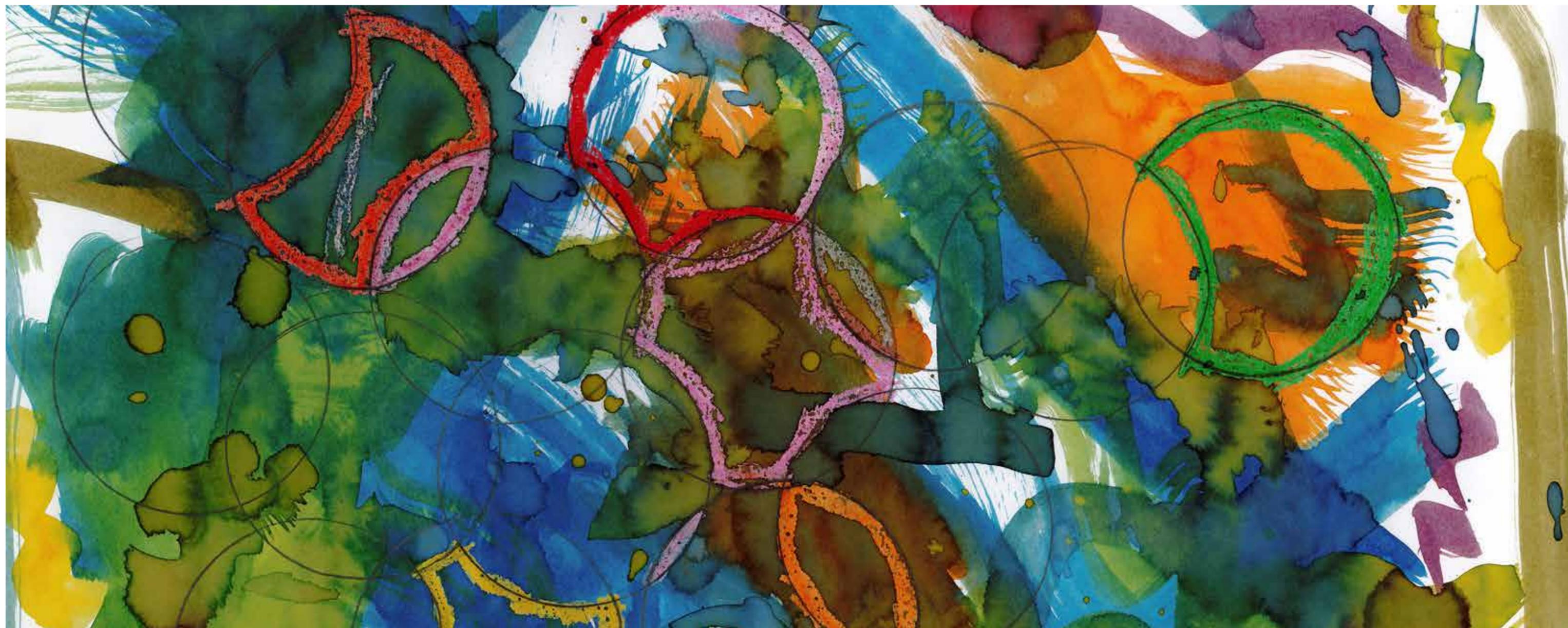
10.455 The Blessed One then declared to the saṅgha of monks, “I shall make rules that govern a group of monks that goes to a householder’s home in a separate group. A group of monks who separate themselves in a group must give up all bases for dispute. Those monks who remained neutral should neither associate nor live together with the group of monks that separate themselves in a group even a night or a day or a morning or an evening—not in the temple, nor in the monastery, nor outside the villages. They should neither walk on the same path, nor accompany one another on the same path. They should not gesture. They should not speak. Those who remain neutral, and perfectly apprehend the cause of the dispute, will be able to make peace in accord with the Dharma and the Vinaya. In order to protect the doctrine of your teacher, if you are able to reach an agreement and by some pure means to make peace as the Dharma and

Vinaya specify, then let your accord put to rest the cause of the dispute.”

10.456 *This concludes Part Ten of The Hundred Deeds.*

10.457 *This concludes “The Hundred Deeds.”*

THE END



Kausāmbī

Quinn Lewis Hegney / 9 years old

