ཞྭ། །རྒྱ་ཆེར་རོལ་པ།

The Play in Full

Lalitavistara

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

· Jinamitra · Dānaśīla · Munivarman · Yeshé Dé ·

ཀཀ། །འཕགས་པ་རྒྱ་ཆེར་རོལ་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་མདོ། །

'phags pa rgya cher rol pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra "The Play in Full"

Āryalalitavistaranāmamahāyānasūtra

Toh 95

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co.

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s.

SUMMARY

s.1 *The Play in Full* tells the story of how the Buddha manifested in this world and attained awakening, as perceived from the perspective of the Great Vehicle. The sūtra, which is structured in twenty-seven chapters, first presents the events surrounding the Buddha's birth, childhood, and adolescence in the royal palace of his father, king of the Śākya nation. It then recounts his escape from the palace and the years of hardship he faced in his quest for spiritual awakening. Finally the sūtra reveals his complete victory over the demon Māra, his attainment of awakening under the Bodhi tree, his first turning of the wheel of Dharma, and the formation of the very early saṅgha.

ac.

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ac.1 This text was translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche. Cortland Dahl, Catherine Dalton, Hilary Herdman, Heidi Koppl, James Gentry, and Andreas Doctor translated the text from Tibetan into English. Andreas Doctor and Wiesiek Mical then compared the translations against the original Tibetan and Sanskrit, respectively. Finally, Andreas Doctor edited the translation and wrote the introduction. The Dharmachakra Translation Committee would like to thank Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche for blessing this project, and Khenpo Sherap Sangpo for his generous assistance with the resolution of several difficult passages. This translation has been completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

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i. INTRODUCTION

i.1 *The Play in Full* (*Lalitavistara*) is without a doubt one of the most important sūtras within Buddhist Mahāyāna literature. With parts of the text dating from the earliest days of the Buddhist tradition, this story of the Buddha's awakening has captivated the minds of devotees, both ordained and lay, as far back as the beginning of the common era.

i.2 In brief, *The Play in Full* tells the story of how the Buddha manifested in this world and attained awakening. The sūtra, which is structured in twenty-seven chapters, begins with the Buddha being requested to teach the sūtra by several gods, as well as the thousands of bodhisattvas and hearers in his retinue. The gods summarize the sūtra in this manner (chap. 1, 1.14):

> "Blessed One, there is an extensive collection of discourses on the Dharma that bears the name *Lalitavistara* (*The Play in Full*). This teaching illuminates the basic virtues of the bodhisattvas, showing how the Bodhisattva descended from the sublime palace in the Heaven of Joy, intentionally entered the womb, and sojourned in the womb. It shows the power of the place where he was born to a noble family, and how he surpassed others through all the superior special qualities that he demonstrated through his actions as a youth. It shows his many unique qualities, such as his skills in arts, crafts, writing, arithmetic, calculations, astrology, fencing, archery, feats of physical strength, and wrestling, demonstrating his superiority to all others in these areas. It shows how he enjoyed his retinue of consorts and the pleasures of his kingdom.
> "This teaching proclaims how he attained the result brought about by the concordant cause of all the bodhisattva activities, showing how he manifested as a bodhisattva and destroyed the legions of Māra. It explains the ten powers, the fourfold fearlessness, and the other innumerable qualities of a thus-gone one, and presents the infinite teachings taught by the thus-gone ones of times past."

The Buddha silently accepts this request, and the following day he commences the teaching.

i.3 The story begins in the divine realms where the future Buddha (who, prior to his awakening, is known as the Bodhisattva) enjoys a perfect life surrounded by divine pleasures. Due to his past aspirations, however, the musical instruments of the palace call out to him, reminding him of his prior commitment to attain awakening (chap. 2). Inspired by this reminder, the Bodhisattva announces, to the despair of the gods, that he will abandon his divine pleasures in pursuit of full and complete awakening on this earth (Jambudvīpa), where he will take birth within a suitably noble family (chap. 3). However, before his departure from the heavenly realms, the Bodhisattva delivers one final teaching to the gods (chap. 4) and, having installed the bodhisattva Maitreya as his regent, he sets out for the human realm accompanied by great displays of divine offerings and auspicious signs (chap. 5). He enters the human world via the womb of Queen Māyā, where he resides for the duration of the pregnancy within an exquisite temple, enjoying the happiness of absorption (chap. 6).

i.4 After taking birth in the Lumbinī Grove and declaring his intention to attain complete awakening (chap. 7), we follow the infant Bodhisattva on a temple visit where the stone statues rise up to greet him (chap. 8) and hear of the marvelous jewelry that his father, the king, commissions for him (chap. 9). Next, as the Bodhisattva matures, the sūtra recounts his first day at school, where he far surpasses even the most senior tutors (chap. 10); his natural attainment of the highest levels of meditative concentration during a visit to the countryside (chap. 11); and his incredible prowess in the traditional worldly arts, which he uses to win the hand of Gopā, a Śākya girl whose father requires proof of the Bodhisattva's qualities as a proper husband (chap. 12).

i.5 The Bodhisattva has now reached maturity and can enjoy life in the palace, where he is surrounded by all types of pleasure, including a large harem to entertain him. Seeing this, the gods begin to worry that he will never leave such a luxurious life, and they therefore gently remind him of his vows to awaken (chap. 13). This reminder, however, turns out to be unnecessary, as the Bodhisattva is far from attached to such fleeting pleasures. Instead, to the great despair of everyone in the Śākya kingdom, he renounces his royal pleasures. Inspired by the sight of a sick person, an old man, a corpse, and a religious mendicant (chap. 14), he departs from the palace to begin the life of a religious seeker on a spiritual journey, which eventually leads him to awakening (chap. 15).

i.6 Already at this early stage of his religious career, the Bodhisattva is no ordinary being. It quickly becomes apparent that he surpasses all the foremost spiritual teachers of his day. His extraordinary charisma also attracts many beings, such as the king of Magadha, who requests the Bodhisattva to take up residence in his kingdom, but without success

(chap. 16). In a final test of the established contemplative systems of his day, the Bodhisattva next follows Rudraka, a renowned spiritual teacher. But once again he is disappointed, although he quickly masters the prescribed trainings.

i.7 These experiences lead the Bodhisattva to the conclusion that he must discover awakening on his own, so he sets out on a six-year journey of austere practices, which are so extreme in nature that they take him to the brink of death (chap. 17). Finally the Bodhisattva realizes that such practices do not lead to awakening and, encouraged by some protective gods, he begins to eat a normal diet once again, which restores his former physique and health (chap. 18). At this point he senses that he is on the verge of attaining his goal, and therefore sets out for the seat of awakening (*bodhimaṇḍa*), the sacred place where all bodhisattvas in their last existence attain full and complete awakening (chap. 19). As he arrives at the seat of awakening, the gods create a variety of impressive miraculous displays, and the place eventually comes to resemble a divine realm, fit for the epic achievement that awaits the Bodhisattva (chap. 20).

i.8 Still, just as everything has been prepared to celebrate the attainment of awakening, Māra, the most powerful demon in the desire realm, arrives with the aim of preventing the Bodhisattva from attaining his goal. Together with his terrifying army and seductive daughters, Māra tries every trick in the book to discourage the Bodhisattva, but to no avail. Sad and dejected, Māra eventually gives up his disgraceful attempt at creating obstacles (chap. 21). Now the stage is finally set for the Bodhisattva to attain awakening under the Bodhi tree, a gradual process that unfolds throughout the night until he fully and perfectly awakens at dawn to become the Awakened One (*Buddha*), or Thus-Gone One (*Tathāgata*), as he is known subsequent to his awakening (chap. 22). As is only suitable for such an epic achievement, the entire pantheon of divine beings now hurry to the Thus-Gone One, making offerings and singing his praise (chap. 23).

i.9 During the first seven weeks following his awakening, the Buddha keeps to himself and does not teach. In fact he worries that the truth he has discovered might be too profound for others to comprehend, except perhaps a bodhisattva in his last existence. Māra, who senses the Buddha's dilemma, turns up and tries one last trick, suggesting to the Buddha that perhaps this would be a suitable time to pass straight into parinirvāṇa. The Buddha, however, makes it clear that he has no such plans, and finally Māra relents. During these first seven weeks, we also hear of other encounters between the Buddha and some local passersby, but significantly no teaching is given (chap. 24). Setting up an important example for the tradition, the Buddha eventually consents to teach the Dharma only after it has been requested four times, in this case by all the gods, headed by Brahmā and Śakra. As he says, "O Brahmā, the gates of nectar are opened" (chap. 25, 25.49).

i.10 At this point, the Buddha determines through his higher knowledge that the first people to hear his teaching should be his five former companions from the days when he was practicing austerities. Although these ascetics originally rejected the Bodhisattva when he decided to abandon their path, when they meet the Buddha again at the Deer Park outside of Vārāṇasī, they are rendered helpless by his majestic presence and request teachings from him. The five companions instantly receive ordination and, in a seminal moment, the Buddha teaches them the four truths of the noble ones: suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path that leads to the cessation of suffering. Thus this occasion constitutes the birth of the Three Jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha (chap. 26). This marks the end of the teaching proper. Finally, in the epilogue, the Buddha encourages his retinue of gods and humans to take this sūtra as their practice and propagate it to the best of their abilities (chap. 27).

i.11 This version of the story thus ends at the very moment when the Buddha has finally manifested all the qualities of awakening and is fully equipped to influence the world, as he did over the next forty-five years by continuously teaching the Dharma and establishing his community of followers. From our perspective, this may seem odd. Why do we not get to follow the Buddha as he builds his community of monks and nuns and interacts with the people of India, high and low, throughout his teaching career? And why do we not get to hear the details of his old age and passing into nirvāṇa? After all, this is the part of his life where his inconceivable qualities are most evident and where his glory as the fully awakened Buddha is most radiant.

i.12 The answer of course cannot be settled here, but we can at least surmise. Perhaps the aim of this account is not to describe the life of the Buddha in the way one would expect in a traditional biography, or even a religious hagiography. Instead, the scope of *The Play in Full* may be to tell the story of the complete awakening of a bodhisattva in his last existence. The many events that occurred post awakening during the Buddha's forty-five-year teaching career are therefore not of particular interest to a project that aims to describe the awakening of a buddha. These events, moreover, are well documented in the teachings preserved elsewhere in the Buddhist canon.

i.13 If this assumption is correct, *The Play in Full* should not be viewed exclusively as the "life of the Buddha" in the way we might ordinarily understand such a phrase, but rather as an account of the unfolding of awakening itself, clearly centered around the figure of the Buddha Śākyamuni, yet with many themes and plots that do not exclusively refer to his particular life example. Although we do hear of events specific to the life of the Buddha Śākyamuni in the chapters concerning his education, athletic prowess, and so on, we are often reminded that the main occurrences recounted in *The Play in Full* have unfolded previously, namely whenever past bodhisattvas awoke to the level of a thus-gone one.

Thus this story represents nothing new under the sun; instead it recounts what happens to everyone who is in a position such as the Bodhisattva's.

i.14 This brings up another important feature of *The Play in Full*, which is the ahistorical Mahāyāna backdrop that informs the entire story line. Throughout the text, the story is covered by a latticework of mind-boggling miracles and feats that defy comprehension by the ordinary intellect. Clearly, in the perspective of the Mahāyāna, the world is fashioned according to the lenses that we use to see with. And here, in *The Play in Full*, the lenses are those of full and complete awakening. This fact is already alluded to in the title of the text, which describes the events in the Bodhisattva's life as a play. As such, the events in the Bodhisattva's life are not ordinary karmic activity that unfold based on the mechanisms of a conceptual mind, but rather the playful manner in which the nonconceptual wisdom of a tenth-level bodhisattva unfolds as an expression of his awakened insight. In this manner of storytelling, the reader is invited into the worldview of a timeless and limitless universe as perceived by the adepts of the Mahāyāna. The time span, numbers, and sizes within this Mahāyāna scripture are so persistently overwhelming that all historical and scientific thinking as we know it eventually loses meaning and relevance.

i.15 As such, *The Play in Full* is not a historical document and it was probably never intended to be. Instead it is a story of awakening that itself contains all the key teachings of the Mahāyāna. Thus, to fully appreciate this text, the reader must also attend to its aesthetic and rhetorical functions and how its narrative progression and episodes have been designed to impact readers, rather than simply approaching the text as documentary evidence of a life well lived. The text can thus be read on many levels from a Buddhist perspective, with new facets being discovered upon each reading. For the layperson it may provide an inspiring glimpse into the ethos of the Mahāyāna worldview, for the renunciant it can represent an encouragement to live the contemplative life, and for the scholar it may appear as an exemplary specimen of Buddhist philosophy and literature. For others it may be all of these, and still more.

i.16 Still, the fact that *The Play in Full* is not a text meant to provide historical details of the founder of Buddhism should not prevent us, if we are so inclined, from enjoying this magnificent religious literature through the lenses of historical awareness and philological scholarship. If we choose to adopt such perspectives, *The Play in Full* does indeed contain a wealth of information of interest to the historically inclined. The basic framework for the story of the Bodhisattva's awakening was already in place within the Buddhist tradition many centuries before this text appeared in writing, as early scholarship on the sūtra has already pointed out (e.g., Winternitz 1927). This essential framework, however, was greatly

developed and adorned by the sūtra's compilers/authors in order to create its current form, which Vaidya (1958) has dated to the third century CE. Before that time, stories surrounding the life of the Buddha (and the Bodhisattva in his last and previous existences) were in place in the various canons of the early Buddhist schools.

i.17 There is no single full biographical account in the Pali canon, but episodes of the Buddha's life are recounted in such works as the *Mahāpadānasutta* (DN 14), *Mahāparinibbāṇasutta* (DN 16), *Ariyapariyesanāsutta* (MN 26), *Mahāsaccaka-sutta* (MN 36), and *Acchariya-abbhutasutta* (MN 123). Perhaps the earliest work to be partly structured as a biographical account, although it also contains much other material and is not always ordered chronologically, is the Sanskrit *Mahāvastu*, a Vinaya text of the Lokottaravāda branch of the Mahāsāṅghika. In the Kangyur, the most detailed account of the Buddha's life from a non-Mahāyāna viewpoint is to be found in the rich narrative sections of the Vinaya texts translated from the Sanskrit of the Mūlasarvāstivāda school, particularly in *The Chapter on Schisms in the Saṅgha* (*Saṅghabhedavastu*, the volume-length seventeenth chapter of the *Vinayavastu*)[1] and in the standalone compilation extracted from it, the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* (Toh 301).

i.18 However, it is only with the appearance of *The Play in Full* that an extensive account of awakening according to the Mahāyāna perspective appears. It can be understood as a historically later text in the sense that it is an obvious compilation of various early sources, which have been strung together and elaborated on according to the Mahāyāna worldview. As such, this text is a fascinating example of the ways in which the Mahāyāna rests firmly on the earlier tradition, yet reinterprets the very foundations of Buddhism in a way that fits its own vast perspective. The fact that the text is a compilation is initially evident from the mixture of prose and verse that, in some cases, contains strata from the very earliest Buddhist teachings and, in other cases, presents later Buddhist themes that do not emerge—in written form at least—until the first centuries of the common era. Previous scholarship on *The Play in Full* (mostly published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) devoted much time to determining the text's potential sources and their respective time periods, although without much success. For example, while the first critical publications argued that the verse sections of the text represent a more ancient origin than the parts written in prose, that theory had largely been dismissed by the beginning of the twentieth century (Winternitz 1927). Although this topic clearly deserves further study, it is interesting to note that little new research on this sūtra has been published during the last sixty years (at least in English; some interesting papers by Japanese scholars deserve our attention). As such, the only thing we can currently say concerning the sources and origin of *The Play in Full* is that it was based on several early and, for the most part, unidentified sources that belong to the very early days of the Buddhist tradition.

i.19 *The Play in Full* makes no attempt to present itself as a homogenous text composed by a single author. In fact it seems that the compilers of the text took pride in presenting an account of the Bodhisattva's last existence that was as detailed and all-encompassing as possible and thus, to this end, it was perfectly acceptable to draw openly on a variety of sources. One obvious example of this is the fact that although the story is for the most part recounted in the third person, it occasionally and abruptly shifts into a first-person narrative where the Buddha recounts the events himself. In addition, there is often a significant overlap between the topics covered in the prose and verse sections, and in these places the compilers of the text have made no attempt to polish away the inconsistencies and redundancies. It is likely that the discerning readers of the time may have been quite aware of the sources on which *The Play in Full* draws, and that it was perfectly acceptable at the time to compile a "new" scripture from traditional sources, and to have this newly assembled literature be afforded the same inspired status as other instances of "the words of the Buddha" (*buddhavacana*). Certainly the Mahāyāna literature contains many statements in support of such an open-ended approach to canonical standards.

i.20 The title of this sūtra indicates that this is an elaborate account of the playful activity performed by the Bodhisattva. The fact that it is called *in full* (*vistara*) indicates that the compilers saw this text as an elaborate way of viewing the awakening of the Buddha, as opposed to other (from a Mahāyāna perspective) more limited accounts, which have less emphasis on miracles and elasticity of time and place. But *in full* is not to be understood only in terms of the vast Mahāyāna worldview. It can also signify an elaborate account that includes more details than previous presentations of the topic, since the Sanskrit word *vistara* can communicate this meaning as well.

i.21 Both of these interpretations of *vistara* are also possible based on the translated title in Tibetan (*rgya cher rol pa*). Although the grammatical elements in the Sanskrit and Tibetan titles differ, the Tibetan title can nevertheless be interpreted in ways similar to the Sanskrit. As such, the title of this text already gives subtle hints that the internal hermeneutics of this sūtra may differ from our contemporary historical perspective regarding definitions of "the words of the Buddha." Instead, by embracing the worldview of playful activity that *The Play in Full* presents, the words of the Buddha can manifest at any time, whether compiled, edited, or even newly authored.

i.22 In India, *The Play in Full* was no doubt a work in progress over several centuries before it finally settled into the form that we know today. It appears to have enjoyed a certain popularity in India, and it also had significant influence in several other Asian regions. In the Gandharan art of the period in which *The Play in Full* emerged, the themes of the text are widely represented in temple art, and even as far away as the Borobudur Temple complex in Indonesia this

sūtra provided inspiration for the elaborate artwork adorning sections of the temple structures. Versions of *The Play in Full* were translated into Chinese in the fourth century by Dharmarakṣa and in the seventh by Divākara.

i.23 We also have a very beautiful and accurate Tibetan translation of the text. This was produced in the ninth century CE during the early period of translation, which attests to the text's popularity and perceived importance at the time. This is the text that we have translated here. Once the text was available in a Tibetan translation, it quickly became the primary source for recounting the Buddha's attainment of awakening and, unlike many other sūtras, *The Play in Full* appears to have been read and studied often in Tibet. While numerous scriptures from the Kangyur have slipped into relative obscurity, *The Play in Full* has continued to have a lasting impact on Tibetan Buddhism, all the way down to the present.

i.24 In the West, the first mention of *The Play in Full* may have been the chapter-by-chapter summary by Robert Lenz published serially (in French) in 1836. A few years later, in 1839, Alexander Csoma de Kőrös published his own summary in *Analysis of the Mdo* (Calcutta, pp. 288–96). Eugène Burnouf also mentioned this text in his *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme Indien* published in 1844. In 1847, Phillipe Édouard Foucaux published an edition of the Tibetan, and his initial French translation, made from the Tibetan but with reference to the Sanskrit (the first ever translation of *The Play in Full*) appeared in 1848. An edition of the Sanskrit by Rajendralal Mitra began to appear over two decades starting in 1853, and in 1874 Salomon Lefmann published a partial translation into German. An English translation by Mitra began to appear in 1881, and in 1882 Lefman published his edition of the Sanskrit. Shortly thereafter in 1884, Foucaux published his second French translation, this time from the Sanskrit, followed by a further volume of notes in 1892.[2] Almost a hundred years later, Gwendolyn Bays, who based her work on Foucaux's translation with reference to the original Sanskrit and Tibetan, published a complete translation in English. More recently still, the Japanese scholar Hokazono Kōichi has published a new and improved Sanskrit edition (accompanied by extensive ancillary material in Japanese and a Japanese translation).[3]

i.25 This present translation builds on, and benefits from, the considerable efforts of these previous scholars. Unlike earlier translations, however, we have based our translation on the Tibetan text as found in the Degé Kangyur (Toh 95), with reference to the other available Kangyur editions. In addition we have compared the Tibetan translation line by line with the Sanskrit (Lefmann 1882),[4] and we have revised the translation on numerous occasions where the Sanskrit clarified obscure passages in the Tibetan version or represented a preferred reading.

i.26 It is fair to say, then, that this translation as it stands is an equal product of the Tibetan and the Sanskrit. Although some scholars may have preferred a translation from the Sanskrit alone, we believe that the present approach is justified,

since a comparative study of the available manuscripts makes it clear that several strands of manuscripts were extant in India, sometimes with significant differences in wording and content. Moreover, as the Tibetan translation predates the existing Sanskrit manuscripts by centuries, the Tibetan may indeed represent an earlier stratum that merits attention apart from merely complementing the Sanskrit.

i.27 In producing this translation, we have sought to incorporate the best of both manuscript traditions through a diplomatic approach that does not give preference to either language *a priori*. Since there are literally thousands of differences between the Sanskrit and the Tibetan manuscripts when all levels of variance are considered, we have avoided annotating each individual reading preference in the translation. Our motivation for this has been to present a translation that the general reader can enjoy without getting distracted by numerous philological discussions and annotations that would interest but a few scholarly specialists. Instead, for those who would like to study the translation together with the original manuscripts, we have included references to the page numbers of both the Sanskrit and the Tibetan manuscripts, providing the specialist with an easy means for comparative textual studies. In this way it is our hope that both the general reader and the specialist may find the present translation to be of benefit and inspiration.

The Translation

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra

The Play in Full

1.

Chapter 1

THE SETTING

[F.1.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was staying in Śrāvastī, in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada's Park, along with a great saṅgha of twelve thousand monks.
Among them were the venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya, the venerable Aśvajit, the venerable Bāṣpa, the venerable Mahānāma, the venerable Bhadrika, the venerable Yaśodeva, the venerable Vimala, the venerable Subāhu, the venerable Pūrṇa, the venerable Gavāṃpati, the venerable Urubilvā Kāśyapa, the venerable Nadīkāśyapa, the venerable Gayākāśyapa, the venerable Śāriputra, the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, the venerable Mahākāśyapa, [F.2.a] the venerable Mahākātyāyana, the venerable Mahākapphiṇa, the venerable Kauṣṭhila,[5] the venerable Cunda, the venerable Pūrṇamaitrāyaṇī-putra, the venerable Aniruddha, the venerable Nandika, the venerable Kampila, the venerable Subhūti, the venerable Revata, [2] the venerable Khadiravaṇika, the venerable Amogharāja, the venerable Mahāpāraṇika, the venerable Vakkula, the venerable Nanda, the venerable Rāhula, the venerable Svāgata, and the venerable Ānanda.

1.3 Along with these monks were thirty-two thousand bodhisattvas, all of whom had only a single birth remaining and were adept in all the perfections of the bodhisattvas. They enjoyed all the superknowledges of the bodhisattvas and had attained all the dhāraṇīs and all the confidence of the bodhisattvas. They had completed all the aspirations of the bodhisattvas, understood and realized all discriminating knowledges of the bodhisattvas, and gained mastery over all the absorptions of the bodhisattvas. They had obtained all the powers of the bodhisattvas and dwelt with all the patience of the bodhisattvas. Indeed each of them had completed all the bodhisattva grounds.
Foremost among them were the bodhisattva great being Maitreya, the bodhisattva great being Dharaṇīśvararāja, [F.2.b] the bodhisattva great being Siṃhaketu, the bodhisattva great being Siddhārthamati, the bodhisattva great being Praśāntacāritramati, the bodhisattva great being Pratisaṃvitprāpta, the bodhisattva great being Nityodyukta, and the bodhisattva great being Mahākaruṇācandrin.

1.4 At that time the Blessed One dwelt in the city of Śrāvastī, where he was revered by his fourfold retinue, as well as by kings, princes, royal ministers, vassal kings, and attendants. Likewise his followers among the military, the priests, the merchants, the householders, and the royal court revered him. Both city dwellers and those who lived in the countryside, as well as the adherents of extremist philosophies, ascetics, priests, logicians, and wandering hermits, also revered him. He was treated as their master and showed great respect.
Presented with offerings, the Blessed One received abundant savory food and drink, robes, alms bowls, [3] bedding, healing medicines and remedies, and other appropriate necessities. Yet the great wealth and renown he enjoyed were like drops of water rolling off the petals of a lotus flower. The Blessed One remained detached and untainted by it all.

1.5 As the Blessed One's fame spread throughout the world, he became known by various names and epithets, such as the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly and Completely Awakened One, He Who Is Both Wise and Virtuous, the Well-Gone One, the Knower of the World, the Peerless Guide Who Tames Beings, the Teacher of Gods and Men, and the Blessed Buddha.
Endowed with the fivefold vision, the Blessed One taught the inhabitants of this and other worlds, each with its gods, Māra, Brahmā, monks, nuns, and priests. [F.3.a] To all these beings, gods and humans alike, he taught what he himself had realized, and what he had thereby actualized and accomplished.
The teachings he gave were virtuous in the beginning, virtuous in the middle, and virtuous in the end. Sublime in both word and meaning, the Dharma he taught was at once distinct, complete, pure, and wholesome. He taught all these beings how to live a life of purity.

1.6 One evening during his midnight session, the Blessed One entered a state of deep absorption known as *the array of the Buddha's adornments*. The moment he entered into this state of absorption, the ray of light known as *the light of wisdom free from attachment that arouses the memory of the buddhas of times past* shone forth from his head's crown extension. Illuminating all the pure realms, the light attracted Maheśvara and innumerable other gods. From the mass of light that radiated from the Thus-Gone One, the following verses of exhortation arose:

1.7 "Come commune with the Sage, the Lion of the Śākyas.
Sublime, supremely brilliant, and pure,
The light of wisdom he radiates dispels darkness.
Peaceful in form, his mind is virtuous and tranquil.

1.8 "Take as your master the one with natural mastery of the Dharma,
An ocean of wisdom, with power both vast and pure,
The sovereign of the Dharma, the all-knowing lord of sages,
A god of gods, revered by gods and humans alike.

1.9 "Go before the Peaceful One, the One Who Is Liberated,
He who has mastered those minds that are difficult to tame
And whose own mind is free from the snares of Māra,
For seeing him and hearing him is not without benefit. [4]

1.10 "With supreme devotion, go, all of you,
Before the One Who Is Peerless in Illuminating the Dharma,
Who dispels darkness and shows the sublime way
With peaceful conduct and knowledge infinite in scope.

1.11 "As the king of doctors, he dispenses divine nectar,
Conquering the evil hordes with his courageous eloquence.
He is a friend of the Dharma and knows the ultimate.
He is a peerless guide who illuminates the path." [F.3.b]

1.12 Struck by the light of wisdom free from attachment, which arouses the memory of the buddhas of times past, the gods of the pure realms were inspired by these verses and immediately arose from their tranquil absorptions. Through the power of the Buddha, they recalled the blessed buddhas of innumerable and incalculable eons, remembering the qualities of the buddha realms of each blessed buddha, as well as the retinue that surrounded the buddhas and the teachings they gave.

1.13 That night, just as people went to bed, the gods of the pure realms visited the Blessed One. Among them were Īśvara, Maheśvara, Nanda, Sunanda, Candana, Mahita, Praśānta, Praśāntavinīteśvara, and many other gods of the pure realms. With their brilliant colors, they illuminated the entirety of Jeta's Grove with a divine light. They prostrated to the Blessed One, placing their heads at his feet, and then stood to one side, supplicating him with the following words:

1.14 "Blessed One, there is an extensive collection of discourses on the Dharma that bears the name *Lalitavistara* (*The Play in Full*). This teaching illuminates the basic virtues of the bodhisattvas, showing how the Bodhisattva descended from the sublime palace in the Heaven of Joy, intentionally entered the womb, and sojourned in the womb. It shows the power of the place where he was born to a noble family, and how he surpassed others through all the superior special qualities that he demonstrated through his actions as a youth. It shows his many unique qualities, such as his skills in arts, crafts, writing, arithmetic, calculations, astrology, fencing, archery, [F.4.a] feats of physical strength, and wrestling, demonstrating his superiority to all other beings in these areas. It shows how he enjoyed his retinue of consorts and the pleasures of his kingdom. [5]

1.15 "This teaching proclaims how he attained the result brought about by the concordant cause of all the bodhisattva activities, showing how he manifested as a bodhisattva and destroyed the legions of Māra. It explains the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the other innumerable qualities of a thus-gone one, and presents the infinite teachings taught by the thus- gone ones of times past, including the blessed Padmottara, Dharmaketu, Dīpaṃkara, Guṇaketu, Mahākara, Ṛṣideva, Śrītejas, Satyaketu, Vajrasaṃhata, Sarvābhibhū, Hemavarṇa, Atyuccagāmin, Prabālasāgara, Puṣpaketu, Vararūpa, Sulocana, Ṛṣigupta, Jinavaktra, Unnata, Puṣpita, Ūrṇatejas, Puṣkara, Suraśmi, Maṅgala, Sudarśana, Mahāsiṃhatejas, Sthita-buddhidatta, Vasantagandhin, Satyadharmavipulakīrti, Tiṣya, Puṣya, Lokasundara, Vistīrṇabheda, Ratnakīrti, Ugratejas, Brahmatejas, Sughoṣa, Supuṣpa, Sumanojñaghoṣa, Suceṣṭarūpa, Prahasitanetra, Guṇarāśi, Meghasvara, Sundaravarṇa, Āyustejas, Salīlagajagāmin, Lokābhilāṣita, Jitaśatru, Sampūjita, [F.4.b] Vipaśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and the Thus-Gone One, the Worthy One, the perfectly and completely awakened Kāśyapa.

1.16 "Blessed One, please teach this now to benefit the multitude of beings. Teach it to bring them happiness. Teach it out of compassion for the world, to benefit a great multitude of beings, gods and humans alike. Teach it to be our doctor and to bring us happiness. Teach it to propagate this Great Vehicle. Please teach it to defeat our opponents and overpower all demonic forces; to instruct all the bodhisattvas and inspire all those who follow the Bodhisattva Vehicle to arouse diligence; to embrace the true Dharma and ensure the continuity of the Three Jewels. [6] Please teach it to illuminate all the enlightened activities of the Buddha."

1.17 Out of compassion for these gods, and indeed for the entire world including the gods, the Blessed One remained silent, thereby offering his consent. Seeing that this silence indicated the Blessed One's consent, the gods were overjoyed and content. With happiness and delight, they prostrated at his feet and circled him three times, scattering sandalwood powder, aloeswood powder, and māndārava flowers. Then they vanished.

1.18 At dawn the next day, the Blessed One proceeded to a circular bamboo grove. Surrounded by the assembly of bodhisattvas, and with the saṅgha of listeners gathered before him, he sat down on the seat they had prepared and addressed the monks: [F.5.a]

"Monks, this evening a group of gods from the pure realms came before me. Among them were Īśvara, Maheśvara, Nanda, Sunanda, Candana, Mahita, Praśānta, Vinīteśvara, and many others."

1.19 The Blessed One then continued to recount the events of the previous evening, up to the point where the gods disappeared. Bowing before the Blessed One with palms joined, the bodhisattvas and great listeners then made the following request: "Blessed One! Please grant us the teaching entitled *The Play in Full*. Please teach this now to benefit the multitude of beings and bring them happiness. Please teach it out of compassion for the world and to benefit the myriad of beings, gods and humans alike. Please teach it to benefit the bodhisattva great beings of the present as well as the future. Please teach it to bring benefit and happiness."

1.20 Out of compassion for the great bodhisattvas, for the great listeners, for gods, humans, and demigods, and indeed for the entire world, the Blessed One remained silent, thereby offering his consent. He then addressed the assembly: [7]

1.21 "Monks, last night as I rested here,
Comfortable and free from afflictions,
And dwelling evenly with one-pointed concentration,
A group of gods arrived before me.

1.22 "With great miraculous powers and brilliant colors,
They were pristine, blazing with magnificence.
Illuminating Jeta's Grove with their splendor,
They joyfully approached me.

1.23 "There were millions of gods,
Including Maheśvara, Candana, Īśvara, Nanda,
Praśāntacitta, Mahita, Sunanda,
And a god called Śānta.

1.24 "They prostrated at my feet, circumambulated me,
And gathered here before me.
They joined their palms with respect
And offered me this request: [F.5.b]

1.25 " 'To benefit all the worlds,
This vast sūtra, this great discourse,
Was taught by all the victorious ones of times past.
Today as well, O Sage, since you have dispelled attachment,

1.26 " 'Consider the assembly of bodhisattvas,
Defeat opponents and tame all demons,
By teaching us this supreme Great Vehicle.
Thus, Able One, please grant us your lucid explanations.'

1.27 "The assembly of gods thus offered their request,
And with my silence, I indicated my consent.
This brought them joy and satisfaction,
And with delight they scattered flower petals.

1.28 "Thus listen here, monks, to this vast sūtra,
Taught in times past by all the thus-gone ones
For the welfare of all the worlds.
Listen, one and all, to this great discourse."

1.29 *This concludes the first chapter, on the setting.*

2.

Chapter 2

THE INSPIRATION

2.1 Now, monks, what is this extensive discourse on the Dharma known as *The Play in Full*?

Monks, the Bodhisattva dwelt in the supreme realm of the Heaven of Joy, where he was honored by offerings, received consecration, and was praised and revered by one hundred thousand gods. [8] He had achieved his goal and was elevated by his former aspirations. His intelligence was such that he had attained the entire range of the Buddhadharma. Indeed his eye of wisdom was at once both vast and utterly pure. Radiating with mindfulness, intelligence, realization, modesty, and joyfulness, his mind was extremely powerful. He had mastered the perfections of generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, mental stability, knowledge, and skillful means, and was adept in the fourfold path of Brahmā: great love, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity. With great awareness, he was free of obscurations and had manifested the vision of wisdom free from attachment. Likewise he had perfected each and every quality of awakening: the applications of mindfulness, the thorough relinquishments, the bases of miraculous power, [F.6.a] the faculties, the powers, the branches of awakening, the path, and the factors of awakening.

2.2 Sublime signs and marks, indicating his boundless accumulation of merit and wisdom, beautifully adorned the body of the Bodhisattva, who had engaged in proper conduct for a long time. Acting in perfect accordance with his words, his unerring statements were always genuine. At once honest, straightforward, and free of guile, his mind was invincible. Free of pride, conceit, arrogance, fear, and timidity, he was impartial toward all beings.

2.3 The Bodhisattva had paid homage to countless awakened beings, to billions upon billions of buddhas. His loving gaze was revered by billions upon billions of bodhisattvas. Likewise Śakra, Brahmā, Maheśvara, the guardians of the world, gods, nāgas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and yakṣas, in their multitudes, rejoiced in his glory.

2.4 Having perfectly discerned their every word, the Bodhisattva's learned understanding of the teachings was at once unimpeded, discerning, and perfect. He was an unerring vessel of mindfulness, able to recall the teachings of all the buddhas. The number of dhāraṇīs he had received was infinite. The Bodhisattva was the great captain of the vessel of the Dharma, which he had perfectly accomplished through the applications of mindfulness, the thorough relinquishments, the bases of miraculous power, the faculties, the powers, the branches of awakening, the path, the perfection of knowledge, the precious quality of skillful means, and merit. With the intention to travel beyond the four rivers,[6] he conquered Māra, subdued hostile forces, and defeated all of his opponents. Indeed he set himself at the frontlines and destroyed the enemy hordes of the afflictions with the firm vajra weapon of supreme wisdom. [F.6.b]

2.5 This great being was like a lotus. Having a stem of great compassion deeply rooted in the mind of awakening, this lotus was born of superior intention. It was sprinkled with the water of profound diligence and had skillful means as its center, branches of awakening for its anthers, and mental stability for its stamen. This lotus arose from an immaculate ocean of a vast accumulation of virtues. Its blossoming petals, illuminated by moonlight free from the torment of pride and arrogance, were pristine. Emitting the scent of discipline, study, and conscientious speech unhindered throughout the ten directions, this lotus was foremost throughout the world in terms of knowledge, [9] yet untainted by the eight worldly concerns. It radiated the sweet fragrance of the accumulation of merit and wisdom, while the sunlight of knowledge and wisdom warmed it, causing the hundred petals of its pure vision to blossom.

2.6 The Bodhisattva was a lion among men. Swift and strong were his four bases of miraculous power, just as the claws and fangs of the four noble truths were extremely sharp. He bared the fangs of the four communions with Brahmā and gathered others through the four ways of attraction with his head. With a well-proportioned body, due to having understood the twelve links of dependent origination, and a flowing mane of the complete perfection of the thirty-seven factors of awakening, along with awareness and wisdom, his mouth opened with the three gateways to liberation, while his eyes indicated the utter purity of tranquility and insight. He dwelt in the mountain caves of mental stability, complete

liberation, absorption, and deep meditation. Born of the jungles of the four activities and discipline, he was endowed with the ten powers, the fourfold fearlessness, and perfect might. The hairs on his body did not bristle with the fear of creation and destruction, nor did his valor ever diminish. He subdued the masses of extremists, who are like rabbits and deer, [F.7.a] letting out the great lion's roar of no self.

2.7 As the sun of great beings, light rays of knowledge radiated from the orb of his liberation and concentration, dispelling the light of the swarms of extremists, who are like fireflies, and eliminating the darkness and obscuring film of ignorance. Indeed, with brilliant strength and diligence, the radiant majesty of his merit shone brightly among gods and humans.

2.8 As the light of the moon, there was no darkness within him; he perfectly embodied all that is wholesome. The sight of him was beautiful to behold and pleasing to the mind, and his eye faculty was unobstructed. Adorned by the constellations of one hundred thousand gods, the moonlight of the soothing branches of awakening radiated from this sphere of concentration, liberation, and wisdom, causing the lilies among humans and gods to bloom.

2.9 The Great Bodhisattva was followed by a fourfold retinue, like the moon by the four continents, and he was endowed with the jewels of the seven branches of awakening. He engaged all beings equally and possessed an unimpeded analytical capacity. His intention was enhanced by the sublime and perfectly complete austerities and spiritual practices that he observed on the path of the ten virtuous activities. As the king of Dharma, he turned the precious wheel of the supreme Dharma without hindrance, having been born into a line of universal monarchs.

2.10 Filled with all the precious teachings, including that of dependent origination, so profound and difficult to fathom, he never tired of study. Thus his boundless wisdom had become vast and all-encompassing. His discipline was beyond measure as well. Indeed his mind was as vast as the oceans and the earth. Equal to earth, water, fire, and air, [10] his mind was as firm and unmoving as Mount Meru. He was free from attachment and aversion, with a mind as pristine and open as the center of space; it was vast and unlike any other. His superior intent was utterly pure. [F.7.b] His acts of generosity were done well, as were his previous endeavors and his superior deeds.

2.11 He sought out all basic virtues and had formed positive habitual tendencies. Ascertaining the basic virtues, he practiced all such virtues for seven incalculable eons. He practiced the seven forms of generosity and engaged in the five types of action that create merit, just as he tread the path of the ten virtues—the three physical, the four verbal, and the three mental wholesome actions—and practiced the forty kinds of correct application. Likewise did he make the forty kinds

of correct aspiration, immerse himself in the forty kinds of right intention, perfect the forty kinds of liberation, and erect the forty kinds of right interest.

He took ordination with four million buddhas and presented five and a half million buddhas with offerings. Similarly the Bodhisattva served 1,540 million solitary buddhas. Establishing innumerable sentient beings on the paths to the higher realms and liberation, he desired to become perfectly and completely awakened, to attain supreme, genuine, and complete awakening.

2.12 With only one lifetime remaining, he passed away and was reborn in the supreme realm of the Heaven of Joy as a supreme divine child named Śvetaketu. The assembly of gods showed him great reverence, honoring him as one who would leave their midst and take birth in the human world, where before long he would become the Buddha, attaining perfect, complete, and unexcelled awakening.

2.13 He dwelt in a celestial palace with 32,000 floors, adorned with verandas, domes, architraves, skylights, cool pavillions, multiple stories, and courtyards. [F.8.a] This palace was filled with parasols, flags, and streaming banners; it was covered by canopies of tiny jeweled bells and strewn with māndārava and mahāmāndārava flowers. The songs of millions upon millions of celestial maidens could be heard throughout. [11] Its enchanting, even grounds were covered with golden canopies and filled with various trees, such as mountain ebonies, campakas, trumpet vines, orchids, muchalindas, mahāmuchalindas, aśokas, banyans, persimmon trees, narras, karṇikāras, kesaras, sāls, and coral trees. In every direction there were flowered canopies, overflowing with jyotiṣ, mālikas, barasikas, taraṇīs, sumanas, bali, kotaranis, and other sweet-smelling flowers. Likewise there were danukari flowers, celestial flowers, blue lotuses, pink lotuses, water lilies, and white lotuses. Various birds flew through the air, singing out their beautiful melodies. Among them were parrots, śārikas, cuckoos, geese, peacocks, ducks, pheasants, snipe, partridge, and many others.

2.14 Millions upon millions of gods turned their eyes toward the palace and gazed at it in awe. The great and vast Dharma was proclaimed throughout, and thereby the force of their enthusiastic desire subdued all the afflictions, eliminating pride, conceit, arrogance, aggression, rage, and anger, and bringing about happiness, well-being, joy, and mindfulness on a vast scale.

The Bodhisattva dwelt comfortably in this great celestial palace, where a discourse on the genuine Dharma emerged amid a symphony of 84,000 musical instruments. From their sound, the following verses of inspiration arose, telling of the many virtuous deeds that the Bodhisattva carried out in times past:

2.15 "Recall the power of your vast store of merit
And the illuminating knowledge of your boundless intelligence, [F.8.b]
Peerless strength, and great power.
Recall the prophecy of Dīpaṃkara.

2.16 "With a mind free from the vast range of impurities,
You have pacified conceit and flaws, relinquishing the three stains,
While your virtuous heart is at once pristine and free from fault.
Bring to mind your generous deeds of times past.

2.17 "You have cultivated tranquility and discipline,
Practiced austerities and patience, subdued and diligent.
With concentration and the strength of knowledge,
Bring to mind all the deeds you engaged in over billions of eons.

2.18 "You developed compassion for all sentient beings
And made offerings to billions of buddhas.
Remember, do not forget, you who are of infinite renown!
Now the time has come—do not let it slip away!

2.19 "Immaculate One, destroyer of the afflictions, birth, and death:
Gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas,
And the powerful demigods await you.
You who know the way of death and passing away, take rebirth.

2.20 "Even enjoying pleasurable things for thousands of eons
Will not satisfy them, just as saltwater will not slake one's thirst.
Now that you yourself are sated, be kind;
Please satisfy those who have thirsted for so long.

2.21 "Are you not one of untarnished reputation
Who takes delight in the Dharma, not desire? [12]
And furthermore your eyes are unblemished,
So now please look with compassion upon the world with its gods.

2.22 "Were the millions of gods not satisfied
Upon hearing the Dharma from you?
So now please cast your gaze upon those who dwell
In the lower realms, those who have no freedom.

2.23 "With your mighty, unblemished gaze, have you not observed
The buddhas throughout the ten directions of the world,
Listening to them as they teach the Dharma?
Please therefore reveal this supreme Dharma to the world.

2.24 "Glorious One, do you not adorn the palace in the Heaven of Joy
With the splendor of your merit?
So please, with the heart of compassion,
Rain down upon Jambudvīpa.

2.25 "Many gods of the realm of form,
Who have transcended the realm of desire,
Are all rejoicing in you, saying, [F.9.a]
'Reach awakening through your austerities!'

2.26 "Protector, you are to conquer the works of Māra
And bring defeat to the extremists.
Has awakening not been placed in the palm of your hand?
The time has now come—do not let it slip away!

2.27 "Courageous One, like a great bank of clouds,
You cover this world that blazes with the fire of afflictions.
Please send down a shower of nectar
And soothe the afflictions of gods and humans.

2.28 "Like a skilled doctor who knows the constitutions of his patients,
You dispense medicine to those who are chronically ill.
With the healing salve of the threefold liberation,
Bring these beings swiftly to the blissful state of nirvāṇa.

2.29 "Not hearing the lion's roar,
Jackals yelp without fear.
Let forth the lion's roar of the buddhas,
Striking fear into the hearts of the jackal-like extremists.

2.30 "Holding the lamp of knowledge in your hand,
You have a power of strength and diligence unique upon the earth.
Now you must defeat Māra,
Touching the earth with the perfect palm of your hand.

2.31 "The four guardians of the world are present,
Waiting to offer you an alms bowl.
Śakra, Brahmā, and millions of others are present as well,
Waiting to receive you when you take birth.

2.32 "You with sublime wisdom, you whose line is great indeed,
Cast your gaze upon the great family with whom you will live.
Observe the precious, exalted family among whom you will take birth, [13]
For this is where you will manifest the conduct of a bodhisattva.

2.33 "When a precious jewel is placed in the right vessel,
It makes the jewel even more glorious.
Likewise let your pristine mind, like a precious jewel,
Rain down upon the victory banner of Jambudvīpa."

2.34 Thus did the melodious sounds
Of many verses such as these spring forth,
Exhorting the Compassionate One with the words:
"The time is now—do not let it slip away!"

2.35 *This concludes the second chapter, on the inspiration.*

3.

Chapter 3

THE PURITY OF THE FAMILY

3.1 Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva was exhorted that the time for the Dharma had come. Emerging from that great celestial palace, [F.9.b] the Bodhisattva went to the great Dharmoccaya Palace, where he taught the Dharma to the gods in the Heaven of Joy. In the palace, he seated himself upon a lion throne known as Sublime Dharma. He was joined in the palace by a group of gods whose good fortune equaled that of the Bodhisattva, and who had entered the same vehicle. Bodhisattvas with similar conduct to the Bodhisattva gathered from throughout the ten directions. Retinues with equally pure intentions accompanied the gods, without the assembly of divine maidens and even without ordinary gods. Altogether a retinue of 680 million entered the palace, each sitting on a lion throne according to rank.

3.2 The Bodhisattva then said, "Monks, in twelve years the Bodhisattva shall enter the womb of his mother."
At that time the gods from the pure realms ventured to Jambudvīpa. Hiding their divine forms, they took on the guise of priests and taught the Vedas to other priests. They made it known that one who entered the womb in this manner [14] would be a great being possessed of thirty-two marks:
"Someone with such marks would become one of two things. There would be no third option," they said. "If such an individual were to live as a householder, he would become a universal monarch with a fourfold army. He would become a conqueror, a righteous Dharma king. Such a king would have the seven treasures: the precious wheel, the precious elephant, the precious horse, the precious jewel, the precious wife, the precious steward, and the precious minister.

3.3 "How is it that a universal monarch comes to possess the precious wheel? Such a wheel can only belong to a king who has been properly consecrated by sprinkling his head. On the fifteenth day of the lunar month, while observing a poṣadha fast, the king will first wash his head and then go to the top terrace of the palace, surrounded by the women of the female quarters. Then a precious, divine wheel with one thousand spokes will appear from the east. [F.10.a] As high as seven tāla trees, the wheel, which is not made by a smith, is round with a central hub and made entirely of gold. "This precious, divine wheel will now belong to the king, who is appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class. As he sees it, he will think to himself, 'I have heard that if a precious, divine wheel appears from the east when a king, who has been appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class, ascends to the top floor of the palace surrounded by a gathering of women while observing a poṣadha fast on the fifteenth day of the lunar month, then he shall become a universal monarch. Since I can now clearly perceive this precious, divine wheel, I must certainly be a universal monarch!'

3.4 "The king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class will then draw his cloak back from one shoulder and lower his right knee to the ground. Turning the precious, divine wheel with his right hand, he will proclaim, 'Precious wheel, noble and divine, please turn in harmony with the Dharma, rather than that which is not the Dharma.'
"The precious, divine wheel, set in motion by the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class, will magically travel through space to the east, followed by the universal monarch and his four army divisions. Wherever the wheel comes to rest, [15] there the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class and his four army divisions will set up their camp.

3.5 "As he travels, the provincial kings of the eastern lands will come to greet him, carrying silver vessels filled with gold dust, and gold vessels filled with fragments of silver. 'Welcome, lord,' they will say. 'Please come. This kingdom is yours. It is extremely vast and prosperous. [F.10.b] With bountiful harvests, it is both delightful and populous. Indeed it is filled with people. Now that you have arrived in this land, lord, it is yours. We beseech you to stay.'
"Replying to the provincial kings, the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class will respond, 'May you rule your respective kingdoms according to the Dharma, and not by what is not Dharma. Do not take the lives of living beings, do not take what is not given, and do not engage in sexual misconduct. Likewise you should refrain from telling lies, sowing discord, speaking harshly, and talking frivolously. Do not let your mind be overcome by covetousness, malice, or misguided beliefs. Do not befriend those who take life or those with misguided beliefs. Should non-Dharma arise in my dominion, do not applaud those who practice it.' In this way the king, who is appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class, will conquer the east.

3.6 "Having conquered the east, the precious wheel will then move toward the eastern seas. Crossing over them, it will travel magically through space to the south, accompanied by the universal monarch and his four army divisions. As before he will conquer the south, and then move on to conquer the west and the north.

"Once the king has conquered the north, the wheel will move toward the northern seas and, traveling magically through the sky to the royal palace, it will come to rest unharmed at the entrance to the quarters of the queen's retinue. In this manner the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class comes to possess the precious wheel.

3.7 "How is it that a universal monarch comes to possess the precious elephant? [F.11.a] The precious elephant of the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class appears in the same way that the precious wheel appeared. Completely white in color, the precious elephant has four limbs, two tusks, and a trunk. Its head is ornamented with gold, and it bears a gold victory banner. Likewise it is bedecked with gold ornaments and covered with gold netting. [16] Its magical powers enable it to fly through the sky and transform itself. This king of elephants is known as Bodhi.

"When the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class wishes to examine the precious elephant, he will mount it at daybreak and travel throughout this great earth, which is surrounded by oceans. After returning to the royal palace, he will fondly resume his governance. In this manner the universal monarch comes to possess the precious elephant.

3.8 "How is it that a universal monarch comes to possess the precious horse? The precious horse of the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class appears just as before. The precious horse has a blue body and a black head with a braided mane. It is bridled, bearing a gold victory banner and gold ornaments, and it is covered with gold netting. With its magical powers, it can fly through the sky and transform itself. This king of horses is known as Bālāhaka.

"When the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class wishes to examine the precious horse, he will mount it at daybreak and travel throughout this great earth, which is surrounded by oceans. After returning to the royal palace, he will fondly resume his governance. In this manner the universal monarch comes to possess the precious horse.

3.9 "How is it that a universal monarch comes to possess the precious jewel? The precious jewel of the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class appears just as before. [F.11.b] It is a lapis lazuli gem of pure blue color, with eight facets and very fine craftsmanship. With the light emitted from the precious jewel, the entirety of the female quarters are bathed in light.

"When the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class wishes to examine the precious jewel, then, at midnight, in complete darkness, he will affix it to the tip of a victory banner and venture out in the gardens [17] to observe the sublime grounds. The light emitted by the precious jewel will illuminate the surrounding area for an

entire league, including all four divisions of the king's army. The people who dwell in the vicinity of the precious jewel will be illuminated by its radiance. Seeing and recognizing each other, they will say to one another, 'Wake up, friends. Start your work and get to the market. The sun is up and the day has begun.' In this manner the universal monarch appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class comes to possess the precious jewel.

3.10 "How is it that the universal monarch appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class comes to possess the precious wife? The precious wife of the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class appears just as before. In accord with tradition, the precious wife has been born into the warrior class. She is not too tall or short, too fat or thin, too dark or fair. Indeed she is beautiful in form, pleasant in manner, and pleasing to the eye. She is in the full bloom of life, and every pore of her body gives off the scent of sandalwood, while from her mouth wafts the fragrance of utpala flowers. Her body is as soft to the touch as kācilindika cloth; in cold weather her body is warm to the touch, and in warm weather it is cool. Her mind, let alone her body, desires no one other than the universal monarch. In this manner the universal monarch comes to possess the precious wife. [F.12.a]

3.11 "How is it that the universal monarch appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class comes to possess the precious steward? The precious steward of the king appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class appears just as before. Learned, lucid, and intelligent, the precious steward's divine sight will enable him to perceive treasures—both those that are owned and those that are not—in the surrounding area for up to an entire league. With those treasures that do not belong to anyone, he will cater to the material needs of the universal monarch. In this manner the universal monarch comes to possess the precious steward. [18]

3.12 "How is it that the universal monarch appointed to the highest rank of the ruling class comes to possess the precious minister? The precious minister of a king who has been properly consecrated by sprinkling his head appears just as before. The precious minister is learned, lucid, and intelligent. The universal monarch merely has to think of commissioning an army and it is done. In this manner the universal monarch comes to possess the precious minister. The universal monarch thus possesses these seven treasures.

3.13 "The universal monarch will also have one thousand sons. Brave, heroic, and supremely able in body, these sons will attain nothing but victory over the forces that oppose them. Without resorting to punishment or acts of violence,

the king will rule with the Dharma, bringing peace and order to the entire vast kingdom that extends all the way to the oceans.

"If, however, he leaves his family behind and becomes a monk, he will become a buddha. Relinquishing the attachment of desire, and without relying on anyone else as a guide, he will become the teacher of gods and humans."

With these words, the gods inspired the priests to recite the Vedas.

3.14 In a similar manner, other gods arrived in Jambudvīpa to exhort the solitary buddhas. "Noble ones," they said. "Give up this buddha realm. In twelve years' time, the Bodhisattva will enter the womb of his mother."

Monks, at that time there was a solitary buddha named Mātaṅga who dwelt on Mount Golāṅgulaparivartana in the city of Rājagṛha. [F.12.b] Hearing the exhortation of the gods, he became as still as mud resting upon a boulder, then rose up into the sky to the height of seven tāla trees. Merging with the fire element, like a torch he passed into nirvāṇa. His bile and phlegm, ligaments and bones, and flesh and blood were completely consumed by fire, leaving nothing but a few relics on the ground. Even today, they are known as 'the footprints of the sage.'

3.15 Monks, at this same time five hundred solitary buddhas were assembled in a deer park outside Vārāṇasī. They too heard the exhortation of the gods, rose up into the sky to the height of seven tāla trees and, turning into fire, passed into nirvāṇa like a torch. [19] Their bile and phlegm, ligaments and bones, and flesh and blood were completely consumed by fire. Nothing was left behind, save a few relics that fell to the ground. From this point on, the area came to be known as Ṛṣipatana, or the Hill of the Fallen Sages. The area also came to be known as Mṛgadāva, or the Deer Park, since deer frolicked there without fear.

3.16 Monks, in this manner the Bodhisattva dwelt in the supreme realm of the Heaven of Joy, where he engaged in four great examinations. What were these four? He examined the time of his birth, the continent of his birth, the country of his birth, and the family of his birth.

3.17 And why, monks, did the Bodhisattva examine the time of his birth? Because a bodhisattva does not enter his mother's womb at the beginning of time when sentient beings are evolving. Rather it is when the world has formed and when birth, [F.13.a] old age, sickness, and death have become known that a bodhisattva enters his mother's womb.

3.18 And why, monks, did the Bodhisattva examine the continent of his birth? Because a bodhisattva is not born in an outlying continent, nor is he born on the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha, on the western continent of Aparagodānīya, or on the northern continent of Uttarakuru. Rather a bodhisattva is born on the southern continent of Jambudvīpa.

3.19 And why, monks, did the Bodhisattva examine the country of his birth? Because a bodhisattva is not born in outlying lands where people are as stupid as sheep, with dull faculties, ignorant, and incapable of distinguishing right from wrong. Rather a bodhisattva is born in a central land. [20]

3.20 And why, monks, did the Bodhisattva examine the family of his birth? Because a bodhisattva is not born into an inferior family, like a family of outcastes, flutemakers, cartwrights, or servants. A bodhisattva is only born into one of two families—a priestly family or a family of the ruling class. When the priestly families are dominant in the world, the bodhisattva is born into a priestly family. When the ruling-class families are dominant in the world, the bodhisattva is born into a ruling-class family. Thus, monks, at this time the ruling-class families were dominant in the world, so bodhisattvas were born into such families.

For this reason, the Bodhisattva engaged in these four great examinations as he dwelt in the supreme realm of the Heaven of Joy. Having examined these points, he remained silent. [B2]

3.21 Monks, the gods and bodhisattvas then asked one another, "Into what precious family will the Bodhisattva be born? In what mother's womb will he be conceived?" [F.13.b]

Some said, "The Vaideha family in the land of Magadha is wealthy, prosperous, and happy. This is a fitting place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."

"This is not a worthy place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived," others responded, "for the mother's family is not pure, nor is the father's. The family's fortunes have come about from little merit, not a vast store of merit. They are impetuous, unstable, and fickle. The surrounding environs of their land are like a desert, with few groves, lakes, and ponds. This is a primitive land, like a remote village. Hence this is not a worthy place for the Bodhisattva to take birth."

3.22 Some said, "The Kośala family has a large retinue, many mounts, and great wealth. This is a fitting place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."

"This is not a worthy place, either," others replied. "The Kośala family descends from outcastes. Neither the father's nor the mother's families are pure. Their interests are base and their line is ignoble. Moreover, they have no limitless store of wealth and treasures. Hence this is not a worthy place for the Bodhisattva to take birth." [21]

3.23 Some said, "The family of the king of Vatsa is wealthy, prosperous, and happy. This is a fitting place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."
To this, others replied, "This is not a worthy place. The family of the king of Vatsa is base, violent, and lacking in nobility. They are illegitimate by birth, and their accomplishments have not resulted from the noble deeds of their parents. The king is a nihilist. Hence this is not a worthy place for the Bodhisattva to take birth, either."

3.24 Some suggested, "The city of Vaiśālī is wealthy, prosperous, and happy. Delightful and teeming with people, [F.14.a] it is like a heavenly palace, with terraces, balconies, architraves, skylights, cool pavilions, multistoried buildings, and palaces. This city is filled with blooming flowers, ringed with gardens, and encircled by forests. This is a worthy place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."
"This is not a worthy place, either," others replied. "They do not speak to one another with decorum. They have no Dharma practice, nor do they respect their superiors, elders, leaders, or those in between. Each thinks that he is king, never taking on the role of a student or accepting the Dharma. Hence this city is not worthy of the Bodhisattva, either."

3.25 Others said, "The Pradyota family in the city of Ujjayinī has a great army and many mounts. They have emerged victorious in battle over their foes. This is a fitting place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."
To this the response came, "This is not a worthy place, for these people are malicious and violent. They are uncivilized, wild, and impetuous, without any heed for the consequences of their actions. Hence this is not an appropriate place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."

3.26 Some said, "The city of Mathurā is rich, prosperous, and happy. It is populous, filled with people. [22] The royal palace of King Subāhu, who commands an army of brave warriors, is a fitting place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."
"This is not a worthy place," others replied. "This king was born into a family with wrong views. Indeed he is like a savage, so it is inappropriate for the Bodhisattva to take his final existence in a family with wrong views. [F.14.b] Hence this as well is not an appropriate place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."

3.27 Some suggested, "The king of the city of Hastināpura was born in the family descended from Pāṇḍu. This king is brave, courageous, and handsome. He has conquered opposing armies. Thus it is fitting for the Bodhisattva to be conceived in this family."

To this, others responded, "This family is also not worthy of the Bodhisattva. Those born into the Pāṇḍava family have confused their genealogy. They say that Yudhiṣṭhira is the son of Dharma, that Bhīmasena is the son of Vāyu, that Arjuna is the son of Indra, and that Nakula and Sahadeva are the sons of the two Aśvins. Hence it is not proper for the Bodhisattva to be conceived in this family."

3.28 Some said, "The city of Mithilā is extremely beautiful and prosperous. This is the land ruled by King Sumitra, who has many elephants, horses, chariots, infantry, and troops. He also has great material wealth, with great stores of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, beryl, conches, crystals, corals, fine gold, and many other riches and belongings. He is powerful, with an army unafraid of the kings from surrounding lands. He has many friends, and he delights in the Dharma. This family is a fitting place for the Bodhisattva to be conceived."

"This is not appropriate," others replied. "King Sumitra does indeed have these qualities. Yet he is extremely aged, so he does not even possess the ability to produce a son. Moreover, he already has many sons. It is not proper for the Bodhisattva to be conceived in this family."

In this manner the bodhisattvas and gods observed all the illustrious royal families to be found throughout the sixteen kingdoms of Jambudvīpa, [F.15.a] [23] and found them all to be inadequate.

3.29 As they considered this, a god named Jñānaketudhvaja, who was firmly established in the Great Vehicle and could not be turned away from awakening, spoke to the great assembly of gods and bodhisattvas: "Come, my friends. Let us go before the Bodhisattva himself and ask him what sublime qualities a precious family must have in order for a bodhisattva to take his final birth there."

"Excellent!" they replied. With palms joined, they all went before the Bodhisattva and asked him, "Sublime Being, what sublime qualities must a precious family have for a bodhisattva to take his final birth there?"

3.30 Looking upon the great assembly of bodhisattvas and the great assembly of gods, the Bodhisattva then addressed the gathering: "Friends, the family into which a bodhisattva takes his final birth must have sixty-four excellent qualities. What are these sixty-four qualities?

"This family must be noble and it must be known by all. It must not be petty or prone to violence. It must be of a good caste and good clan. It must have excellent marital unions, with excellent marital unions in the past, and marital unions between individuals who are pure. These marital unions must be between people who are both pure, well-known by all, and renowned for their great power. This family must have many men and women. It must be fearless, not base or cowardly. [F.15.b] It must not be greedy, but disciplined. It must be wise and watched over by ministers. This family

must be creative and thereby enjoy worldly pleasures. This family should be steadfast in its friendships and safeguard the lives of all the beings throughout the animal kingdom. [24] They must have gratitude and know how to conduct themselves appropriately. They must not be moved by ambition, anger, ignorance, or fear. They must be afraid of engaging in negative deeds. They must not dwell in ignorance. This family must be benevolent and industrious. It must be inspired to give, be generous, and remember the kindness of others. They must be physically strong, with great power and strength, indeed supreme strength. They must make offerings to the sages, to the gods, and to stūpas, and also pay homage to their ancestors. They must not hold grudges.

3.31 "This family must be renowned throughout the ten directions and have a vast retinue. It must not be divided. It must be peerless. This family must be the most senior and the most illustrious among all families. It must be powerful, and renowned as such. They must respect their fathers, mothers, mendicants, and priests. They must have great stores of treasure and grain. They must have a great deal of gold, and many jewels, gems, pearls, lapis lazuli, conches, crystals, corals, fine gold, silver, and many other riches and belongings. They must have many elephants, horses, camels, oxen, and [F.16.a] sheep. They must have many male servants, female servants, officials, and workers. This family must be difficult to defeat. It must accomplish all of its aims. It must be a family of universal monarchs. It must be aided, in great measure, by the root virtues accumulated in the past. It must be descended from a noble family, a family of bodhisattvas. [25] Indeed this family must be irreproachable when it comes to any accusations of faults related to one's birth, such as those found in this entire world with its gods, demons, and brahmās, mendicants and priests. Friends, the family of a bodhisattva in his final existence must have these sixty-four qualities.

3.32 "Friends, the woman in whose womb a bodhisattva is conceived in his final existence must have thirty-two qualities. What are these thirty-two qualities? A bodhisattva in his final existence must be conceived in the womb of a woman known by all and steadfast in conduct. She must come from a good caste and a good family. She must have an excellent figure, an excellent name, and excellent proportions. She must not have given birth previously, and she must have excellent discipline. She must be generous, cheerful, and adroit. She must also be clear-minded, calm, fearless, learned, wise, honest, and without guile. She must be free from anger, jealousy, and greed. She must not be coarse, easily distracted, or prone to gossip. She must be patient and good-natured, with a good conscience and sense of modesty. She should have little attachment, anger, and ignorance. She should be free from the faults of womankind [F.16.b] and be a devoted wife. In his final existence, a bodhisattva must be conceived in the womb of a woman with all of these excellent qualities.

3.33 "Friends, a bodhisattva is not conceived in his mother's womb while the moon is waning. A bodhisattva in his final existence must be conceived during a full moon. On the fifteenth day of the waxing moon, and in conjunction with the constellation Puṣya, the Bodhisattva will be conceived in the womb of a mother who is observing the poṣadha fast." [26] The bodhisattvas and gods, having heard the Bodhisattva explain the attributes of the pure family and the pure mother, thought to themselves, "Where can a family with the qualities described by this holy being be found?"

3.34 Pondering this question, they then thought, "The seat of the Śākyas is wealthy, prosperous, agreeable, and pleasant. It has bountiful harvests and is teeming with people. Its king, Śuddhodana, descends from pure families on both his mother's and father's side. His wife as well is pure. His deeds are not swayed by the afflictions, and he bears excellent physical characteristics. Extremely wise and endowed with brilliant merit, the king comes from an illustrious family and is descended from a line of universal monarchs. He has incalculable wealth and treasures and innumerable precious jewels. He believes in karma and does not hold negative views. He rules over all the lands of the Śākya clan and is honored and revered by all the merchants, householders, ministers, and people in his court. He is kind and handsome, neither too old nor too young. He has a fine body and every excellent quality. He is knowledgeable concerning crafts, astrology, the self, the Dharma, the truth, the world, and signs. Indeed he is a Dharma king who guides according to the Dharma. [F.17.a]

3.35 "The city of Kapilavastu is the abode of sentient beings who have generated basic virtues. All those who are born there are equal in fortune to the king. The wife of King Śuddhodana is Māyādevī, the daughter of Suprabuddhā, a ruler of the Śākya clan. She is wealthy and youthful. Indeed she is in the prime of life. She has an excellent figure and has not given birth. She has no sons or daughters. With a beautiful form, as pleasing to the eye as a finely drawn picture, she is bedecked with jewelry like a celestial maiden, free from the faults of womankind. She speaks the truth, with words that are soft, gentle, dependable, and altogether beyond reproach. Her voice is like that of the cuckoo; she is demure and speaks only sweet and pleasant words.

3.36 "Māyādevī is reserved, free of anger, pride, conceit, and arrogance. She does not get indignant or jealous; rather what she says is timely, and she gives generously. She is disciplined and devoted to her husband, unconcerned with other men. Her head, ears, and nose are perfectly symmetrical. Her hair, as black as a bee, frames a fine forehead and a beautiful brow. Always smiling, she speaks with sincerity, her words measured and pleasing to the ear. [27] She is quick to learn, honest and straightforward, free from guile, artifice, and deceit. She is modest and decent, constant and dependable, and not prone to idle or frivolous chatter. She has little attachment, anger, and ignorance; rather she is patient and of good character, carefully guarding her limbs, eyes, and mind. The movement of her

limbs is gentle, and her skin is as soft as kācilindika cloth. Her eyes are as pure as the petals of a newly blossomed lotus flower. Her nose is well formed with a beautiful complexion. Her limbs are firm and gently curved like the arch of a rainbow. [F.17.b] Every part of her body is beautiful and free of faults. She is attractive, with lips as red as the bimba fruit, a tapered neck bedecked with jewelry, and teeth as white as jasmine and sumana flowers. She has sloping shoulders, tapering arms, a waist curved like the arch of a bow, perfect sides, and a deep navel. Her hips are smooth, wide, round, and firm. Her body is as firm as a vajra. She has thighs that are as well proportioned as an elephant's trunk, and calves like an antelope's. The palms of her hands and the soles of her feet are like liquid lac. She is attractive to others, with faultless eyes. Alluring to the mind and pleasing to the eye, her form is superior even when compared with other beautiful women. Indeed she is without peer. Since her form is like a magical emanation, the word *māyā*, meaning 'magically emanated,' was included in her name. She is also skilled in all the arts. Like a celestial maiden in the garden of Indra, Māyādevī lives in King Śuddhodana's female quarters. She is fit to be the mother of the Bodhisattva. Thus it appears that the purity of the family described by the Bodhisattva can be seen only in the Śākya clan."

3.37 On this topic, it is said:

In the Dharmoccaya Palace, the Pure Being
Sat upon the lion throne called Sublime Dharma.
Bodhisattvas of great renown and gods
Equal in fortune to himself gathered around the Sage.

3.38 Seated there, they entertained this thought:
"What family is known to be pure
And fitting for the Bodhisattva to take birth in?
And where are the father and mother with pure qualities?"

3.39 Looking throughout all Jambudvīpa,
All the major royal families and royal lines
Were found to be flawed. Considering this,
The Śākya clan alone was seen to be free of faults. [28]

3.40 "King Śuddhodana belongs to a royal family. [F.18.a]
He descends from a pure line of monarchs,
Wealthy, prosperous, and free from conflicts.
A holy being, he is righteous and has gained respect.

3.41 "All the other beings in the city of Kapilavastu
Are righteous and pure in mind.
The city is filled with gardens, groves, and palaces;
The beautiful city of Kapilavastu is the most suitable birthplace.

3.42 "All its inhabitants are mighty and powerful,
With the strength of two or even three elephants.
They have perfected their training in archery and weapons
And do not harm others, even to protect their own lives.

3.43 "King Śuddhodana's wife is supreme
Among one thousand other sublime women.
Enchanting in appearance, like a magical emanation,
She is aptly named Māyādevī, 'Magically Emanated Goddess.'

3.44 "Her body is as beautiful as a celestial maiden,
With a shapely silhouette and perfectly formed limbs.
Any being, whether a god or a human,
Could never see enough of Māyā.

3.45 "She harbors no attachment or hatred;
She is gentle and tender, and her speech honest and mellifluous.
Neither harsh nor abrasive, she is extremely tranquil,
Never frowning and always with a smile on her face.

3.46 "With a good conscience and a sense of modesty, she observes the Dharma.
She is free of pride and conceit, and not prone to overexuberance,
Just as she has no envy and is free of guile and artifice.
She delights in giving and is always loving in her thoughts.

3.47 "Believing in karma and abandoning misguided deeds,
She adheres to what is true, controlled in body and mind.
She is free from the multitude of faults
That are commonly found in women the whole world over.

3.48 "Indeed Māyādevī is without rival,
For no other woman in the realm of humans can match her,
Nor so in the realm of gandharvas, or even in the heavenly realms.
She is worthy of being the mother of the Great Sage.

3.49 "For five hundred lifetimes, she alone
Has been the mother of the Bodhisattva,
Just as King Śuddhodana has been his father.
She thus has all the qualities of a worthy mother.

3.50 "As disciplined as an ascetic, she follows a strict code of conduct,
And while following her own conduct, she shares in her husband's duties.
She has fulfilled her vow, given to her by the king,
For she has abstained from sexual activity for thirty-two months. [29] [F.18.b]

3.51 "Wherever she may be, whether sitting or standing,
Lying down or in motion, those places
Become filled with the brilliant light
Given off by her dedication to virtuous deeds.

3.52 "No being, whether god, demigod, or human,
Is able to look upon her with a lustful mind.
They all look upon her as a mother or a daughter,
For she follows the right conduct and is endowed with noble qualities.

3.53 "Due to the virtuous deeds of Māyādevī,
The king's vast empire increases in prosperity.
Unmatched by the neighboring kings,
The ruler's renown and fame also continue to increase.

3.54 "In this way Māyā is a suitable vessel;
In this way the Holy Being is supremely beautiful.
Thus, since these two are endowed with supreme qualities,
One will be the son, and one is worthy to be the mother.

3.55 "Other than Devī, who is endowed with the most supreme of qualities
And has the strength of ten thousand elephants,
No woman would be able to carry
The supreme man of Jambudvīpa."

3.56 With these words of praise, the gods
And bodhisattvas, with their vast knowledge,
Proclaimed the sublime Māyā to be the mother,
Saying, "She is fit to give birth to the joy of the Śākya family."

3.57 *This concludes the third chapter, on the purity of the family.*

4.

Chapter 4

THE GATEWAYS TO THE LIGHT OF THE DHARMA

4.1 Monks, while the Bodhisattva was seeing the family of his birth, he dwelt in the Heaven of Joy in Uccadhvaja, a great celestial palace measuring sixty-four leagues around, where he taught the Dharma to the gods of the Heaven of Joy. The Bodhisattva had come to this great celestial palace where he now addressed all the gods of the Heaven of Joy. "Come, gather here," he said. "Come listen to the Bodhisattva's final teaching on the Dharma, a recollection of the Dharma entitled 'The Application of Passing.' " [30]

4.2 Hearing these words, all the gods in the Heaven of Joy, along with the assembly of goddesses, gathered together in the great celestial palace. [F.19.a] There the Bodhisattva blessed the surrounding area, which was as vast as the entire world with its four great continents. The area was so splendid, so beautiful to behold, so filled with ornaments, and so enchanting that all the gods of the desire and form realms came to think that their own homes seemed like charnel grounds in comparison.

4.3 The Bodhisattva was seated upon a lion throne that was utterly resplendent as a result of the ripening of his merit. The base of the throne was bedecked with various precious jewels, and piles of cushions covered in celestial cloth sat upon it. Scented with the fragrant smells of various celestial perfumes and the finest of incense, the throne was covered with colorful and fragrant flowers. It was magnificent indeed, glittering with the light of many hundreds of thousands of precious jewels, draped with nets of priceless gems, and giving off the sound of strings from jeweled chimes. Delightful to behold, the throne radiated the sounds of hundreds of thousands of jeweled bells, and it was covered with many hundreds of thousands of nets made of precious jewels. Hanging from it were many hundreds of thousands of silk streamers, and it was ornamented with many hundreds of thousands of silk tassels and garlands.

4.4 Hundreds of thousands of goddesses sang, danced, and played instruments, proclaiming hundreds of thousands of sublime qualities. Hundreds of thousands of guardians of the world stood watch, while hundreds of thousands of Śakras offered prostrations, and hundreds of thousands of Brahmās bowed down before the throne. Billions upon billions of bodhisattvas surrounded it, and billions upon billions of buddhas from the ten directions, infinite in number, focused their attention on it. This throne came about due to the force of the ripening of merit amassed through the perfections carried out over billions upon billions of eons, indeed incalculable eons.

4.5 Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva sat upon a grand lion throne with these qualities and spoke to the great gathering of gods. "Friends," he said, [F.19.b] "look upon the body of the Bodhisattva, adorned as it is with the signs of a hundred merits. Look upon those innumerable and uncountable [31] bodhisattvas who dwell in the ten directions, in the east, south, west, and north, above, below, and all around, and who are now in the sublime realm of the Heaven of Joy. They are all approaching their final existence and, surrounded by an assembly of gods, they each delight the gods with the appearance of their passing, demonstrating the gateway to the light of Dharma. Look upon them, countless, innumerable, and incalculable such as they are."

4.6 Then, through the blessings of the Bodhisattva, the entire assembly of gods saw all these bodhisattvas. Observing them, they faced the Bodhisattva, joined their palms, and bowed down before him. Prostrating with their entire bodies, they exclaimed, "How wondrous! The blessings of the Bodhisattva are indeed inconceivable, for we can see all these bodhisattvas by merely directing our gaze."

4.7 The Bodhisattva then addressed the great assembly of gods with the following words: "Friends, please listen to the gateways to the light of the Dharma that delight the gods, which these bodhisattvas teach the gods by the way

in which they pass away. There are 108 gateways to the light of the Dharma, and they must be taught without fail to a gathering of gods by a bodhisattva at the time of his passing. What are these 108 gateways? They are as follows:

4.8 Faith, my friends, is a gateway to the light of Dharma, for with it one's mind is unshakable.
Inspiration is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it the mind is divested of impurities.
Supreme joy is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it the body becomes extremely pliable.
Contentment is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it the mind becomes pure.

4.9 Physical restraint is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it the three physical faults are purified.
Verbal restraint is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it the four verbal faults are relinquished.
Mental restraint is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it covetousness, malice, and misguided views are abandoned. [F.20.a]

4.10 Recollection of the Buddha is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the pure perception of the Buddha.
Recollection of the Dharma is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the pure teaching of the Dharma.
Recollection of the Saṅgha is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it stops one from transgressing the rules.
Recollection of giving is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to let go of all material things.
Recollection of discipline is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the fulfillment of aspirations.
Recollection of the divine is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to a vast mindset. [32]

4.11 Love is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it surpasses all things created by merit based on material things.
Compassion is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to take up nonviolence.
Joy is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it clears away all displeasure.
Equanimity is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to contempt for desire.

4.12 Investigating impermanence is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the transcendence of the attachment of the desire, form, and formless realms.
Investigating suffering is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the cessation of misguided goals.
Investigating the absence of self is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it eliminates overt fixation on the self.
Investigating peace is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it dampens the flames of passion.

4.13 Having a good conscience is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it brings complete inner peace.
Modesty is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it brings complete peace in others.
Truth is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it gods and humans are not deceived.
The authentic is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it one is not deceived.

4.14 Dharma practice is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it one relies upon the Dharma.
Going to the Three Jewels for refuge is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to transcend the three lower realms.
Acknowledging the kindness of others is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it ensures that the basic virtues one has engaged in do not go to waste.
Gratitude is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, [F.20.b] for it leads one to not condemn others.

4.15 Knowing oneself is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to not praise oneself.
Knowing sentient beings is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to not belittle others.
Knowing the Dharma is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to apply the Dharma assiduously and in the correct manner.
Knowing the right time is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it ensures that seeing will be meaningful.

4.16 Conquering pride is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the perfection of wisdom.
A mind free from vindictiveness is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it allows one to protect both oneself and others.
Not holding grudges is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it allows one to be free from regret.
Sincere interest is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to make great effort and be free from doubt.

4.17 Investigating repulsiveness is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to dispense with thoughts about what one desires.
Absence of malice is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to dispense with vengeful thoughts. [33]
Absence of stupidity is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it clears away ignorance.

4.18 Pursuit of the Dharma is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to rely upon the meaning.
Desiring the Dharma is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to connect to the light of the Dharma.
Seeking to listen is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to investigate the Dharma precisely and in the correct manner.
Correct application is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the right conduct.

4.19 Knowledge of names and forms is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to transcend all attachment.
Conquering views about causes is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the attainment of awareness and complete liberation.
The elimination of attachment and aversion is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it eliminates judgmental thoughts.
Expertise concerning the aggregates is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to thorough understanding of suffering.

4.20 Equality of the elements is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the relinquishment of the source of suffering.
Withdrawal of the senses is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to meditate on the path. [F.21.a]
Acceptance of nonarising is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the actualization of cessation.

4.21 Mindfulness of the body is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to physical isolation.
Mindfulness of sensations is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the cessation of all sensations.
Mindfulness of the mind is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to a precise understanding of the mind's illusory nature.
Mindfulness of phenomena is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to unimpaired wisdom.

4.22 The four thorough relinquishments are gateways to the light of the Dharma, for they enable one to relinquish all nonvirtuous qualities and to perfect all virtuous qualities.
The four bases of miraculous power are gateways to the light of the Dharma, for they lead to lightness of body and mind.

4.23 The faculty of faith is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to not depend on the guidance of others.
The faculty of diligence is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it endows one with the wisdom of realization. [34]
The faculty of mindfulness is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to engage in wholesome deeds.
The faculty of absorption is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the liberation of mind.
The faculty of knowledge is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the wisdom of direct perception.

4.24 The power of faith is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the thorough transcendence of the power of Māra.
The power of diligence is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it one will not turn back.
The power of mindfulness is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it one will not be led astray.
The power of absorption is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it one will relinquish all discursive thinking.
The power of knowledge is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for with it one will not be easily deceived.

4.25 The branch of awakening of complete mindfulness is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to understand the Dharma as it is.
The branch of awakening of the complete discernment of the Dharma is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to accomplish all Dharmas.
The branch of awakening of complete diligence is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it endows one with the intelligence of perfect realization. [F.21.b]
The branch of awakening of complete joy is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to accomplish absorption.
The branch of awakening of complete agility is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to accomplish one's endeavors.
The branch of awakening of complete absorption is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to comprehend the equality of all phenomena.
The branch of awakening of complete equanimity is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to distaste for all births.

4.26 Right view is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it prevents one from transgressing the rules.
Right resolve is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to relinquish all thoughts, concepts, and ideas.
Right speech is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to realize that all words, sounds, language, and speech are like echoes.
Right action is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the absence of karma and the absence of ripening.
Right livelihood is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to cease all pursuits.
Right effort is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to reach the other shore.
Right mindfulness is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the absence of mindlessness and mental engagements.
Right absorption is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the attainment of the absorption of an undisturbed mind.

4.27 The mind of awakening is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it ensures the continuity of the line of the Three Jewels.
Intention is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to a lack of desire for the Lesser Vehicle.
Superior intention is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to a distinct focus on the vast Buddhadharma.
Application is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the perfection of all virtuous qualities.

4.28 The perfection of generosity is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the sublime marks and signs, to the complete purity of the buddha realms, and to the thorough ripening of those sentient beings that are greedy.
The perfection of discipline is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, [F.22.a] for it enables one to transcend all the restricted and lower states of existence and to ripen [35] those sentient beings with lax discipline.
The perfection of patience is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to relinquish malice, aggression, anger, pride, arrogance, and conceit, and to ripen those sentient beings that harbor malice.
The perfection of diligence is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to practice all virtuous endeavors and to ripen those sentient beings that are lazy.
The perfection of concentration is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to give rise to all states of equipoise and superknowledge and to ripen those sentient beings that are distracted.
The perfection of knowledge is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to relinquish the dark fog of ignorance and stupidity, to abandon incorrect views, and to ripen sentient beings with incorrect knowledge.

4.29 Skillful means are gateways to the light of the Dharma, for they enable one to teach modes of conduct that accord with the interests of sentient beings and to practice all the teachings of the Buddha.
The four means of attracting disciples are gateways to the light of the Dharma, for they gather sentient beings and turn them into suitable recipients for the Dharma that comes from the discovery of awakening.
Ripening sentient beings is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to not be attached to one's own happiness and to be free from discouragement.
Grasping the true Dharma is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to eliminate the afflictions of all sentient beings.

4.30 The accumulation of merit is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to nurture all sentient beings.
The accumulation of wisdom is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it perfects the ten powers.
The accumulation of calm abiding is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the attainment of the absorption of the thus-gone ones.
The accumulation of insight is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the attainment of the eye of knowledge.

4.31 Accessing authentic discerning awareness is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the attainment of the eye of Dharma. [F.22.b]
Accessing the trustworthy is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the purity of the eye of the Buddha.

4.32 The attainment of dhāraṇī is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to retain everything said by the Buddha.
The attainment of confidence is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it enables one to satisfy all sentient beings by offering them clear explanations.

4.33 Acceptance of the concordant Dharma is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to being in accord with the entirety of the Buddhadharma.
Acceptance of the Dharma of nonarising is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the attainment of prophecy.

4.34 The ground of nonreturning is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to the complete perfection of the entirety of the Buddhadharma. [36]
The wisdom that evolves from ground to ground is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads to being empowered with the wisdom of omniscience.
The ground of empowerment is a gateway to the light of the Dharma, for it leads one to be conceived in the womb, to be born, to manifest in the world, to undergo austerities, to go to the seat of awakening, to tame Māra, to attain complete awakening, to turn the wheel of Dharma, and to manifest great parinirvāṇa.
"These, friends, are known as the 108 gateways to the light of the Dharma, which a bodhisattva must teach to the assembly of gods at the time of his passing."

4.35 Monks, when the Bodhisattva taught this chapter, "The Gateways to the Light of the Dharma," out of the assembly of gods, 84,000 gods gave rise to the mind of unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening. The 32,000 gods who had previously been trained gained acceptance that phenomena are nonarising. The 360 million gods gained the pure eye regarding phenomena, unblemished and untainted. The entire fine realm of the Heaven of Joy was covered knee deep in celestial flowers.

4.36 Monks, at that time the Bodhisattva uttered these verses in order to bring even more joy to the assembly of gods: [F.23.a]
At the time that the Guide, the Lion of Men, passes away
And descends from the supreme realm of the Heaven of Joy,
He proclaims these words to the gods:
"Abandon all forms of mindlessness!

4.37 "The multitude of divine pleasures,
All wonderful things conjured up by the mind,
All of this is caused by virtuous actions.
So listen now to learn about these actions.

4.38 "Acknowledge the kindness done to you.
Do not fall back into the three lower realms
After exhausting your previous stores of merit;
There is only unhappiness and suffering there.

4.39 "Once you develop respect for me,
Apply yourselves earnestly to practicing
The teachings that you have heard,
And you will inevitably attain boundless joy.

4.40 "All desirable things are impermanent and unstable;
Nothing is eternal, not even the eons. [37]
Everything is like a mirage or an illusion,
And as fleeting as lightning or a water bubble.

4.41 "The pleasure brought about by the qualities
Of desirable things is as unsatisfying as drinking salt water,
But those with noble pristine knowledge
That transcends the world are satisfied.

4.42 "Goddesses, companions, and beautiful songs
Are like the audience of a play.
They are like a crowd of people who assemble
And then go their own separate ways.

4.43 "In the realm of the conditioned, there are no allies,
No friends, no relatives, and no retinue.
And besides, the karma that results from good deeds
Also binds one, and ever follows behind one's back.

4.44 "Therefore be harmonious with one another;
Act with a loving and benevolent mind.
Engage in wholesome activities,
For actions done well bring no torment.

4.45 "Please recall the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha,
And do not slip into heedlessness.
Those who delight in study, discipline, and generosity
Are endowed with patience and gentleness.

4.46 "Investigate suffering, impermanence, and lack of self;
Examine these three phenomena thoroughly.
They occur in connection to causes and conditions;
They are void of life and have no owner. [F.23.b]

4.47 "Whatever miraculous powers you see in me,
And whatever eloquence, wisdom, and qualities I may have,
All of this is caused by virtuous deeds
Arising from study, discipline, and conscientiousness.

4.48 "For the welfare, benefit, and love of sentient beings,
You should emulate me with your discipline, study,
Conscientiousness, generosity,
Restraint, and self-control.

4.49 "For you will not be able to accomplish the auspicious teachings
By the mere sound of your voice and speech.
Please adopt the right conduct
And practice what you teach.

4.50 "Do not simply follow what other people say;
Exert yourself with continuous concentration.
When acting, one takes the opportunity;
Without acting, one does not accomplish anything.

4.51 "Recall all the suffering you have experienced
Circling through cyclic existence until now. [38]
If you fall prey to distortions,
Nirvāṇa and freedom from attachment will not be achieved.

4.52 "Therefore, having now obtained freedom,
A spiritual guide, and a conducive environment,
And having met with the superior teaching of Dharma,
You should pacify attachment and the other afflictions.

4.53 "Freed from pride, arrogance, and conceit,
Always flexible, upright, and honest,
Dedicate yourself to reaching the transcendence of suffering
And apply yourself to realizing the path.

4.54 "Disperse all the darkness and turbidity of ignorance
With the lamp of knowledge.
Tear the net of error, with its latencies,
Using the vajra of wisdom.

4.55 "What need is there to say many things?
It is in your interest to follow this teaching.
If you do not abide by this teaching,
Then it is not the fault of the teaching.

4.56 "When I attain awakening
And shower down the teaching that leads to immortality,
You, who have pure minds, should come
And listen to the true Dharma."

4.57 *This concludes the fourth chapter, on the gateways to the light of the Dharma.*

5.

Chapter 5

SETTING OUT

5.1 Monks, in that way the Bodhisattva taught this Dharma discourse to the large congregation of gods, [F.24.a] instructed them, inspired them, delighted them, and caused them to be receptive. He then said to that assembly of fortunate gods: "Friends, I will now proceed to Jambudvīpa. In the past when I practiced the conduct of a bodhisattva, I attracted sentient beings through the four activities of giving, pleasant speech, beneficial activity, and demonstrating consistency in speech and aims. But friends, I would be acting without gratitude, and it would be inappropriate, if I were not now to achieve unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening."

5.2 Hearing that, the gods of the Heaven of Joy wept and embraced the feet of the Bodhisattva. They said, "Virtuous One, without you, this Heaven of Joy will [39] lose its splendor."
To this, the Bodhisattva replied to the great retinue of gods, "The bodhisattva Maitreya will teach you the Dharma." He then took the crown from his own head and placed it on the head of the bodhisattva Maitreya, saying, "You, virtuous one, shall awaken to perfect and complete buddhahood after me."

5.3 Thus it was that the Bodhisattva enthroned the bodhisattva Maitreya in the Heaven of Joy. Then he again spoke to the great retinue of gods: "Friends, in what form should I enter the womb of a mother?"

5.4 Some replied, "As a human in the form of a young brahmin." But other gods suggested, "In the form of Śakra, or Brahmā, or a great king, or Vaiśravaṇa, or a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a mahoraga, or Maheśvara, or the moon god, [F.24.b] or the sun god, or a garuḍa."

5.5 There was also one of the gods of the Brahmā realm present, who was called Ugratejā. Having been a sage in his previous life, he had taken rebirth among the gods, where his progress toward unexcelled and perfect awakening had become irreversible. He now spoke: "The priests' mantras and the treatises of the Vedas mention the proper form for a bodhisattva to take when descending into the womb of his mother. How should it be?

5.6 "In the glorious form of an excellent, great,
Six-tusked elephant, covered with golden netting,
Its head intensely red and very handsome,
With glistening wet cheeks:

5.7 "Priests who are truly learned in the Vedas
Will recognize such features,
And will correctly foresee and announce
The advent of one with the thirty-two marks."

5.8 Monks, while the Bodhisattva was still residing in the sublime Heaven of Joy, he considered the time for his birth. At that time he manifested eight omens at the sublime residence of King Śuddhodana. What were these eight?

5.9 The residence was immaculate since all weeds, stumps, brambles, small pebbles, and gravel had been removed. It was [40] well watered and very clean. It was undisturbed by wind and free from soot and dust. There were no mosquitoes, flies, bees, or snakes. It was covered with flowers, and the area became level, like the palm of a hand. This was the first omen.

5.10 Flocks of birds came to the palace from the Himālayan mountains, the king of mountain ranges. There were pattraguptas, parrots, mynas, cuckoos, swans, curlews, peacocks, wild geese, kunālas, nightingales, pheasants, and many others. The birds had beautiful and delightful wings in many colors and sang in melodious sounds. They perched upon the verandas, turrets, doorways, pavilions, and [F.25.a] upper terraces of King Śuddhodana's sublime residence. The birds were joyful and content, and they each sang happily. This was the second omen.

5.11 In all of King Śuddhodana's delightful parks, woodlands, and gardens, the various trees blossomed and carried fruits of all seasons. This was the third omen.
In each of King Śuddhodana's lotus ponds and reservoirs, there appeared lotuses the size of cartwheels, each with many trillions of petals. This was the fourth omen.

5.12 In that sublime residence of King Śuddhodana, all the provisions of butter, sesame oil, honey, raw sugar, and sugar-cane juice were never depleted and appeared to be full even though they were used abundantly. This was the fifth omen.

5.13 Inside the women's quarters of King Śuddhodana's excellent residence, all the instruments, such as the great kettledrums, the clay and wooden kettledrums, the flutes, lutes, reed pipes, three-stringed lutes, bells, and cymbals suddenly emitted wonderful music by themselves without being played. This was the sixth omen. [41]
In that most excellent residence of King Śuddhodana, all the containers of different types of precious substances, such as gold, silver, jewels, pearls, beryl, shells, crystals, and corals, opened their lids and displayed their flawless perfection and abundance. This was the seventh omen.
A pure and immaculate light, much brighter than those of the sun and the moon, appeared and produced mental and physical pleasure. This was the eighth omen. [F.25.b] [B3]

5.14 Queen Māyā bathed and applied perfumes to her body. She ornamented her arms with many bracelets and dressed in the softest and most beautiful garments. Joyful, happy, and rapturous, accompanied and encircled by ten thousand women, she went to where King Śuddhodana was seated comfortably in the music hall. She seated herself to his right side on the fine, precious throne draped with jeweled latticework. With a smiling and trusting face free from anger, she spoke to King Śuddhodana in these verses:

5.15 "Your Majesty, master of the earth, good lord, I pray that you hear me!
Your Highness, please grant me a favor!
Please listen and rejoice in your heart
Concerning these wishes on which my mind is set.

5.16 "Lord, out of compassion for all beings, I will adopt the eight precepts,
Which include disciplined and moral conduct, as well as fasting.
Without harming any living creature and always with pure feelings,
I will love others in the same way that I love myself. [42]

5.17 "I have renounced any thievish thoughts and given up attachment and arrogance;
Your Majesty, I will not act immorally.
I will remain truthful, not slander others, and abandon harsh words;
I will never use idle or nonvirtuous words.

5.18 "I renounce all anger, aggression, stupidity, and conceit;
Renouncing all covetousness, I will be content with my own wealth.
I will act properly and renounce flattery, hypocrisy, and envy;
I will travel this path of the ten virtuous actions.

5.19 "I am joyfully engaged in strict disciplined conduct;
So, sovereign master of men, do not act lustfully because of attraction to me.
Your Majesty, may nonvirtue not arise in you for a long time;
Please rejoice as I am nearby you in strict discipline.

5.20 "Your Highness, I beseech you, quick, say yes today!
Inside the cool pavilion at the top of the palace where the swans roost,
On a soft and sweetly scented bed scattered with flowers, [F.26.a]
I would like to live happily, always surrounded by my female friends.

5.21 "May no male servants, boys,
Or even common women attend me.
May I hear only pleasant and harmonious talk,
And may there be nothing unpleasant to hear or see.

5.22 "I ask that you release all those held in prisons
And that you endow the poor with wealth. [43]
For one week, for the sake of people's happiness,
Please give food, drink, clothing, chariots, palanquins, and horses.

5.23 "May each and every man, woman, and child in this palace
Be free from quarreling and angry words.
May their minds be full of mutual affection,
And may they enjoy themselves together, like gods in pleasure groves.

5.24 "May no persecution, beating, or malicious threats take place.
May there be no royal retribution or unjust punishment.
Lord, please look upon all beings as if upon an only child;
Think benevolently and lovingly with a composed mind."

5.25 When the king heard this speech, he rejoiced and proclaimed:
"Let everything you wish come to pass!
Whatever you seek and wish,
That request I shall grant you."

5.26 The excellent king commanded his entourage,
"Make the finest preparations in the upper quarters of the palace.
Decorate them with beautiful flowers and use the best incense and perfume;
Adorn them with parasols, banners, and rows of palms trees.

5.27 "Place on guard twenty thousand brave fighting men in armor,
Brandishing swords, arrows, spears, and lances.
Let them guard the quarters where the swans call out melodiously;
Let them guard the queen with loving care so that she is not afraid." [44]

5.28 Bathed, perfumed, well dressed, and with her arms bejeweled,
Surrounded by her female attendants, like a goddess,
Accompanied by the pleasant sounds of thousands of cymbals,
The queen ascended and rested like a divine maiden.

5.29 The legs of her bed were embellished with costly divine jewels;
It was a pleasing bed bestrewn with flowers.
There she unfastened her tiara of precious jewels, [F.26.b]
Like a goddess in the Miśraka Garden.

5.30 Monks, in the meantime the gods were gathering. There were the Four Great Kings; Śakra, lord of the gods; and the gods of Suyāma, Santuṣita, Sunirmita, and Paranirmitavaśavartin.
There were also Sārthavāha, the officer son of Māra; Brahmā, the lord of the Sahā World; the divine priest Brahmottara; the divine priest Subrahmā; and Prabhāvyūha, Ābhāsvara, Maheśvara, and the gods living in the pure realms of Niṣṭhāgata and the Highest Heaven, as well as many hundreds of thousands of others as well. They spoke to one another in these words:

5.31 "Friends, if we were to allow the Bodhisattva to depart alone, without expressing our gratitude to him, it would be inappropriate. Friends, who among us will have the courage to serve the Bodhisattva constantly and ceaselessly as he travels to the womb of his mother? Who will serve him as he is in the womb, when he is born, as he grows and plays as a young child? Who will serve him when he is in the female quarters watching the musical performances, and when he renounces his home and is practicing austerities? Who will serve him as he proceeds to the seat of awakening, tames the demons, attains perfect and complete awakening, and turns the wheel of the Dharma? Who will serve him until he demonstrates passing into great parinirvāṇa? Who can keep him company with a kind, affectionate, friendly, loving, and noble attitude?"

5.32 Then they sang these verses: [45]
"Who among us has the courage to follow joyfully
This being, one with such perfect appearance?
Who would like to increase
His merit, splendor, power, and renown? [F.27.a]

5.33 "Whoever lives in these divine palaces
And wishes to enjoy the divine pleasures
Of the goddesses and the divine delights,
Let him serve the one with a face like an immaculate moon.

5.34 "Whoever wishes to enjoy the charming Miśraka Garden,
With the celestial palace, the birthplace of the gods,
Full of golden-hued flowers,
Let him serve the immaculate brilliant one.

5.35 "Whoever wishes to frolic together with goddesses
In a splendid chariot, or in the pleasure groves
Carpeted with petals of māndārava flowers,
Let him serve this great being.

5.36 "Whoever aspires to be the ruler of the Heaven Free from Strife
Or to be the lord of the Heaven of Joy,
Someone worthy of worship by all beings,
Let him serve the one of unlimited renown.

5.37 "Whoever desires to enjoy himself in a beautiful mansion
In the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations
And wants to enjoy all the mentally created illusions,
Let him serve this one possessing excellent qualities.

5.38 "Whoever is a master over demons, but whose mind has no hatred,
Who has attained complete mastery of all types of power,
Who is the master of his senses and has surpassed others,
Let him go with this benefactor.

5.39 "Similarly whoever wishes to pass beyond the desire realm
And reside in the realm of Brahmā,
Let him serve today the great being
Resplendent with the four immeasurables.

5.40 "Whoever longs to take birth among humans
In the vast realm of a supreme universal monarch,
Let him serve the One with Abundant Merit,
The Jewel Mine, the One Who Bestows Fearlessness and Bliss.

5.41 "Whoever wants to be a ruler or the son of a wealthy merchant,
Rich and happy with great wealth,
Surrounded by an army able to conquer enemies,
Let him go with this benefactor.

5.42 "Whoever desires beauty, luxuries, and power,
And wishes for fame, courage, and good qualities,
And would like to speak agreeably with words that are heeded,
Let him attend upon that learned lord who speaks with the voice of Brahmā. [46]

5.43 "Whoever desires the divine and human enjoyments,
Or all the happiness of the three realms of existence,
Or the bliss of concentration and the happiness in solitude,
Let him follow the Dharma Lord.

5.44 "Whoever yearns to abandon attachment and anger,
And wants to clear away the darkness of the afflictions, [F.27.b]
Let him, with his mind calm, tranquil, and totally at peace,
Quickly follow the One Who Has Tamed His Mind.

5.45 "Whoever wishes for the wisdom of learners, masters, and solitary buddhas,
As well as the wisdom of omniscience,
And hopes to roar like a lion through the ten powers,
Let him follow the learned one with an ocean of qualities.

5.46 "Whoever desires to close the path to the lower realms,
And open the path to the fortune of deathlessness,
And travel on the eightfold path,
Let him follow the One Who Has Completed All Paths.

5.47 "Whoever wishes to make offerings to the Thus-Gone One,
And listen to the Dharma from that lord of compassion,
And attain the qualities of the saṅgha,
Let him follow this ocean of qualities.

5.48 "Whoever hopes to exhaust the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness, and death,
And be free from the shackles of cyclic existence,
And enjoy purity equal to limitless space,
Let him follow this pure being.

5.49 "Whoever wishes to liberate himself as well as others,
Desiring beauty that is pleasing to all,
Supreme bodily marks, and the blossoming of qualities,
Let him attend the learned one who is beautiful to behold.

5.50 "The learned one who wishes for
Discipline, absorption, and knowledge,
Who wants liberation that is profound, hard to see, and difficult to fathom,
Let him quickly follow the king of physicians.

5.51 "Whoever desires many such qualities,
And the happiness of existence as well as nirvāṇa,
And wants to utterly perfect all qualities,
Let him follow the learned one who masters disciplined conduct."

5.52 When they heard these verses, the gods assembled. There were 84,000 gods from the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, 100,000 gods from the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, 100,000 gods from the Heaven Free from Strife, 100,000 gods from the Heaven of Joy, 100,000 gods from the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, 100,000 gods from the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations, 60,000 gods from the realm of Māra who were born there because of their former virtuous actions, 68,000 [47] gods from the realm of Brahmā, and many hundreds of thousands of gods assembled from all the realms up to the highest heaven.
Moreover, many hundreds of thousands of gods came together from the east, the south, the west, and the north. [F.28.a]
The foremost among the gods then spoke these verses to the great assembly of gods:

5.53 "Immortal lords, please listen to these words
That express what is on our minds!
We give up our sensual enjoyments and the perfect bliss of concentration
In order to serve this sublime pure being.

5.54 "As he enters the womb, abides in the womb, and is born,
We will make offerings to the Great Being, so worthy of worship.
We shall protect the Sage, who is well guarded by merit;
No one shall cause him any problems through a hostile mind.

5.55 "In songs and with the melodious sounds of cymbals,
We will praise the qualities of the one with an ocean of qualities.
Whoever hears this will engender the excellent mind of awakening
And thus delight all gods and humans.

5.56 "We shall fill the king's palace with flower petals
And light the finest incense of black aloe.
With that aroma, gods and humans will become very content;
It will free them from sickness and fever and make them happy.

5.57 "We will fill the entire city of Kapilavastu
With blossoms of māndārava flowers, beautiful jasmine, and hibiscus,
In order to make offerings to him,
Who appears due to virtuous activities.

5.58 "As long as he is in his mother's womb, untainted by the three stains,
And until he is born in order to bring an end to aging and death,
We will serve him devotedly.
Our wish is to make offerings to the great intelligent one. [48]

5.59 "It will be a great blessing for gods and humans
To witness the newborn taking seven steps,
To see him received by Śakra and Brahmā,
And to see the Pure Being bathed with perfumed water.

5.60 "While he behaves in accord with the world,
And conquers the afflictions of desire inside the women's quarters,
And as he abandons his entire kingdom,
Throughout that time, we will serve him devotedly.

5.61 "When he acquires grass and travels to the seat of awakening,
And as he conquers the demons and gains awakening, [F.28.b]
And is entreated to turn the wheel of the Dharma by a billion Brahmā gods,
Throughout that time, we will make vast offerings to the Well-Gone One.

5.62 "While he tames trillions of beings for the deathless state,
Performing enlightened activity in the trichiliocosm,
And until he passes into cool and peaceful nirvāṇa,
For that long, none of us will abandon the greatly renowned sage."

5.63 Monks, the goddesses who sport in the desire realms saw the perfection of the Bodhisattva's bodily form and wondered, "What is she like, that maiden who will conceive this sublime and supreme pure being?"
Filled with curiosity, they gathered the finest and best flowers, incense, lamps, perfumes, garlands, ointments, powders, and cloths. Then, blessed as they were with supernatural powers from the ripening of merit and with divine bodies that are mentally created, they instantaneously disappeared from that celestial palace.

5.64 By means of their celestial powers, they traveled to Kapilavastu, that sublime city with a hundred thousand gardens, [49] and arrived at King Śuddhodana's residence, known as the Home of the Swans, the great mansion that resembled the palaces of the ruler of the gods.
The goddesses, wearing loose gowns, were well adorned by the splendor of their immaculate merit, and their arms and hands were full of divine ornaments. They saw Queen Māyā resting on her fine bed. They pointed her [F.29.a] out to each other and, hovering in midsky, they sang these verses to one another:

5.65 "We goddesses who live in divine abodes
Saw the attractive body of the Bodhisattva.
At that time we considered,
'What will the mother of the Bodhisattva be like?'

5.66 "Our curiosity aroused, we approached the royal palace
With garlands of flowers in our hands.
Bearing aloft flowers as well as ointments,
We bowed with folded hands.

5.67 "We beauties with revealing garments
Stretched our hands and pointed out
Queen Māyā resting in her bed,
Saying, 'Oh! Behold the beauty of that human woman!'

5.68 "Because of pride we thought
That goddesses had the most attractive bodies.
Yet when we saw the body of the king's wife,
We saw that her splendor outshines our divine bodies.

5.69 "She will be the mother of the Supreme Being;
Full of charms, she is like Rati herself.
Just as a precious jewel rests within a fine vessel,
This queen will be such a vessel for the god of gods.

5.70 "From the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet,
Her attractive limbs surpass the divine.
When you look at her, your eyes will not be sated,
And she will only thrill your heart and mind more and more.

5.71 "Her attractive face and body
Shine like the beautiful moon in the sky
And blaze like the stainless fire of the sun.
Her body shines with an excellent light.

5.72 "The complexion of this queen is resplendent,
Shining like the purest gold.
Her hair is soft, clean, and sweetly scented,
Black like the excellent bee and arranged in braids.

5.73 "Her eyes are like lotus petals;
Her teeth are like stars in the sky.
Her waist is curved like a bow and her hips are ample;
Her shoulders are raised and her joints are smooth. [50]

5.74 "Her thighs and calves are like the trunk of an elephant,
And her knees have a shapely form.
The palms of her hands and the soles of her feet are smooth and red;
Surely she can only be a goddess."

5.75 Thus they examined her in many ways,
Tossed flowers, and circumambulated her.
Then, praising the renowned mother of the Victorious One,
They instantly returned to the divine realm.

5.76 The four guardians of the four directions,
Śakra, the gods free from strife, the gods enjoying emanations,
Other gods, demigods, kumbhāṇḍas, rākṣasas,
Kinnaras, and mahoragas spoke:

5.77 "Go before the Supreme Being;
Protect him, the best of men.
Do not be hostile to beings;
Do no harm to any person."

5.78 As Queen Māyā resided in the palace,
They all assembled with their retinues. [F.29.b]
Holding bows and arrows, swords, spears, and weapons,
They remained in the middle of the sky, keeping watch.

5.79 The gods, who know the time of passing,
Came joyfully before Queen Māyā.
They held flowers as well as ointments;
With folded hands, they paid homage.

5.80 "Lion of Speech, your time is now!
Generate compassion and kindness for the entire world;
Lord of Men, Pure Being, demonstrate passing away.
We pray that you grant the gift of the Dharma."

5.81 Monks, as the Bodhisattva was about to pass away and take rebirth, many hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas, who were bound by just one more birth, came to him from the east of the sacred abode of the Heaven of Joy. They approached the Bodhisattva in order to make offerings to him. Likewise many hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas, all of them bound by just one more birth, came from all ten directions within the sacred abode of the Heaven of Joy, also approaching the Bodhisattva in order to make offerings to him.
There were eight million four hundred thousand goddesses from the Heaven of the Four Great Kings who approached the Bodhisattva, making offerings to him accompanied by music and singing. Similarly, eight million four hundred thousand goddesses from each of the realms of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Heaven Free from Strife, [51] the Heaven of Joy, the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, and the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations approached the Bodhisattva. Singing songs and playing musical instruments of all types, they made offerings to the Bodhisattva.

At that time the Bodhisattva had taken his seat on the Glorious Essence lion throne inside his great palace. This throne had come about through all his merit and was visible to all the gods and nāgas. Then, as the bodhisattvas and many millions of gods, nāgas, and yakṣas assembled around him, he began his departure from the sublime realm of the Heaven of Joy.

5.82 Monks, [F.30.a] as he started to move, the Bodhisattva's body began to shine with a brilliant and dazzling light that surpassed any other celestial light. This unprecedented light illuminated all the vast and enormous realms of the great trichiliocosm. Even the darkest regions of the world, filled with negativity and obscurity, where even the renowned great power and magical ability of the sun and the moon are unable to produce light, colors, or heat, were bathed in light. In those realms, the unfortunate beings normally cannot even see their own hands. But even there, the dazzling light shone. Due to the light, the beings in those realms now recognized one another and remarked, "Listen, friends! Other beings have also been born here!"

Then the whole billionfold world system shook in six ways and exhibited eighteen great signs. It began to quiver, tremble, quake, move, make sound, and roar, each in three degrees of intensity. [52] The world shook so violently that its center and edge, east and west, as well as north and south, all bounced around, so that when one side was up, the other was down.

5.83 At that point one could hear all sorts of pleasant and cheerful sounds. There were sounds that inspired love and made everyone serene. There were inviting and refreshing sounds that were impossible to describe or imitate, agreeable sounds that do not produce fear. [F.30.b] At that moment there was not a single being anywhere that felt hostile, frightened, or anxious. At that moment even the light of the sun and moon and the splendor of the gods, such as Śakra, Brahmā, and the world protectors, was eclipsed. All beings who were living in the hells, along with those born as animals and all those in the realm of the lord of death, became instantaneously free from suffering and filled with every happiness. No being had any painful emotion, such as anger, delusion, envy, jealousy, pride, hypocrisy, arrogance, wrath, malice, or burning anguish. At that moment all sentient beings felt love for each other, wished each other well, and saw each other as parents and children.

Trillions of divine and human musical instruments played sweet sounds without even being touched or played. Hundreds of millions of gods lifted and carried that great mansion using their hands, shoulders, and the crowns of their heads. Hundreds of thousands of goddesses each sang songs. From all around they praised the Bodhisattva with the sounds of their tunes: [53]

5.84 "You previously accumulated virtuous actions;
You have appeared through virtue gathered over a long time.
You have purified the mode of all phenomena;
Today we bring forth a great offering to you.

5.85 "In the past, for billions of eons,
You gave up your dear sons and daughters.
This shower of celestial flowers
Is the fruition of that generosity.

5.86 "Lord, you cut off your own flesh, [F.31.a]
Kindheartedly exchanging it to release a bird.
The fruition of that practice of giving
Is that those in the world of pretas obtain food and drink.

5.87 "In the past, for billions of eons,
You preserved unbroken, uncorrupted discipline.
By the fruition of the practice of that discipline,
Those in the lower realms without all the freedoms are purified.

5.88 "In the past, for billions of eons,
You cultivated patience as the basis for attaining awakening.
The result of your practice of patience
Is that gods and humans develop loving minds.

5.89 "In the past, for billions of eons,
You cultivated supreme and unwavering diligence.
The result of your practice of diligence
Is that your body is beautiful like Mount Meru.

5.90 "In the past, for billions of eons,
You trained in concentration to purify the afflictions.
The result of your practice of concentration
Is that beings are not harmed by afflictions.

5.91 "In the past, for billions of eons,
You trained in knowledge that destroys the afflictions.
The result of your practice of knowledge
Is that you emit sublime and beautiful light.

5.92 "With the armor of compassion, you have destroyed the afflictions
And developed great compassion for all beings.
You have attained perfect delight and excellent equanimity;
Well-Gone One, Great Being, homage be to you!

5.93 "You are exalted by the splendor of the light of the lamp of knowledge
And have cleared all darkness of delusion.
Homage to you, Able One Who Shows the Path—
The leader, the eye in the trichiliocosm.

5.94 "Skilled in the higher knowledge of the bases of miraculous powers,
You see the truth and have trained in the sacred meaning.
Having crossed over, you liberate others;
Homage to you, the Well-Gone One Who Liberates.

5.95 "Skilled in means and higher knowledge,
You show a passing away that is devoid of death and rebirth.
Although you act harmoniously in accord with worldly law,
You are in no way attracted to the world. [54]

5.96 "Inconceivably excellent gains come to anyone
Who merely comes to hear or see you. [F.31.b]
So how about those who actually listen to the Dharma
And develop faith and joy?

5.97 "The entire realm of the Heaven of Joy is gloomy,
But the sun has risen in Jambudvīpa.
You will awaken inconceivable trillions of creatures
Who are asleep due to their afflictions.

5.98 "Today the palace will be filled with wonders:
It will be crowded with trillions of deities;
It will resound with the music played by divine maidens;
In the king's mansion, sweet music will be heard.

5.99 "The lady is endowed with supreme beauty,
Nourished by the brilliance of her merit and virtuous actions.
This perfect son of hers will outshine
The three worlds with his splendor.

5.100 "The splendorous appearance of this perfect man
Will henceforth prevent any greed and quarrels
Among beings in this sublime palace.
All shall be lovingly reverential.

5.101 "With the birth in the family of a universal monarch,
The royal line will surely prosper.
Likewise this city of Kapilavastu will become prosperous
And replete with treasures.

5.102 "Hosts of yakṣas, rākṣasas, kumbhāṇḍas, guhyakas,
Gods, and asuras, together with their leaders—
All those who stand guard over the supreme man
Will soon attain liberation.

5.103 "Guide, whatever merit accumulates
As we praise you with respect and reverence,
We dedicate it all to awakening.
Best of Men, may we quickly become like you!"

5.104 *This concludes the fifth chapter, on setting out.*

6.

Chapter 6

ENTERING THE WOMB

6.1 Monks, the cold season had passed and it was the third month of spring. It was the finest season, when the moon enters the constellation Viśākhā. The leaves of trees unfurled and the most exquisite flowers blossomed. It was neither cold nor hot, and there was no fog or dust in the air. Fresh green grass covered the grounds everywhere.

6.2 The Lord of the Three Worlds, [55] revered by all the worlds, now judged that the time had come. On the fifteenth day, during the full moon, while his future mother was observing the poṣadha precepts during the constellation of Puṣya, the Bodhisattva moved, fully conscious and aware, from the fine realm of the Heaven of Joy to the womb of his mother. [F.32.a]

6.3 He entered through his mother's right side in the form of a baby elephant, white in color with six tusks. His head was the color of a reddish insect, and the tusks were blazing gold. He had all his limbs intact and his full faculties. As he entered, he stayed only at the right side of the womb and never on the left. As this occurred, Queen Māyā was sleeping on her pleasant bed and saw the following in her dream:

6.4 A snowy-silver colored elephant with six tusks,
Beautiful feet, exquisite trunk, and a pretty red head,
Moving in a fine gait with joints as stable as a diamond—
That perfect elephant entered her womb.

6.5 She had never seen, heard of, or experienced
Such a rare happiness.
Feeling this physical and mental bliss,
She became absorbed in concentration.

6.6 As she awoke, Queen Māyā first adorned herself with ornaments and flowing garments. Refreshed in body and mind, she felt affectionate, joyful, and calm. She then arose from her bed and made her way down from the upper floors of the palace, surrounded by her female attendants. She proceeded to the aśoka-tree forest, where she felt at ease. Once there, she sent a message to King Śuddhodana: "Your Majesty, please come, the queen would like to see you."

6.7 When King Śuddhodana heard this message, he became very elated, and immediately he rose from his throne. Surrounded by his ministers and townspeople, attendants and relatives, he went to the aśoka forest. However, as he arrived, his body suddenly felt very heavy and he was unable to enter the forest. In this way he just stood at the entrance to the aśoka forest. Reflecting a little, he then spoke these verses: [F.32.b]

6.8 "I do not remember my body ever feeling this heavy, [56]
Even as I led my army of warriors into battle.
Now I cannot even enter my own property;
Can anyone tell me what has happened?"

6.9 Some gods of the pure realms had settled in the middle of the sky. Now they revealed half their bodies and spoke these verses to King Śuddhodana:

"Your Majesty, a bodhisattva, a great being,
With qualities of austerity and discipline, honored by the three worlds,

Loving and compassionate, and empowered by merit and wisdom,
Has left the Heaven of Joy for the womb of Queen Māyā in order to become your son."

6.10 Then, joining his palms and bowing his head,
The king went into the forest, overwhelmed by reverence and awe.
Without pride or arrogance, he looked at Queen Māyā
And asked, "What may I do for you? Tell me what to do."

6.11 The queen replied:

"A fine and beautiful elephant, white as snow or silver,
More dazzling than the sun and the moon, well proportioned,
With beautiful legs, six great tusks, and joints as firm as diamond,
Entered my womb—please listen to this story.

6.12 "In my sleep I saw this trichiliocosm illuminated, its darkness gone,
While ten million gods were praising me.
I felt no anger, aggression, hatred, or confusion;
I felt peaceful and full of the bliss of concentration. [57]

6.13 "I wonder if this dream of mine shows happiness or sorrow for our family?
Is my dream a genuine prediction?
Your Majesty, quickly summon the priests
Who are specialists in the Vedic treatises on dreams."

6.14 Hearing these words, the king instantly summoned the priests
Who were experts in the Vedas and their treatises.
When the priests stood before Queen Māyā, she said,
"Listen to my story; this is what I dreamed."

6.15 The brāhmins replied, "Your Majesty, please speak. When we hear what you saw in your dream, we will explain." [F.33.a]
The queen replied:

6.16 "A fine and beautiful elephant, white as snow or silver,
More dazzling than the sun and the moon, well proportioned,
With beautiful legs, six great tusks, and joints as firm as diamond,
Entered my womb—please listen to this story."

6.17 As they heard these words, the priests remarked,
"Your clan shall meet no sorrow but only extensive delight.
A son will be born to you, his limbs adorned with the marks;
He will belong to the lineage of kings, a great universal monarch.

6.18 "If he renounces his pleasures, his kingdom, and his palace,
And goes forth as a monk, unattached, full of compassion and love for the world,
He will become a buddha worthy of offerings in the three worlds.
He will satisfy the world with the supreme taste of the nectar of immortality." [58]

6.19 Following this positive prediction,
The priests had their meal in the royal palace,
Accepted an offering of gifts,
And subsequently departed.

6.20 Monks, when King Śuddhodana heard that message from the priests who understood how to analyze marks and signs and who knew the scriptures related to dreams, he was satisfied. Impressed, delighted, and joyful, he felt blissful and happy. He pleased the priests by offering them delicious food and drink. When they were all full, he entertained them and presented them with gifts before they departed.

6.21 At the same time, as an offering to the Bodhisattva, alms were distributed at the four gates of the city of Kapilavastu and at all its crossroads and junctions. The king offered food to those who were hungry, and drink to those who were thirsty. He offered clothes to those who needed clothing, carriages to those who required transportation, perfumes to those who desired perfume, garlands to those who wished for garlands, oils to those who wanted ointments, sheets to those who longed for bedding, shelter to the homeless, and necessities to those who yearned for provisions.

6.22 Then, monks, [F.33.b] King Śuddhodana considered, "I wonder in which residence Queen Māyā can stay happily and without affliction?"
At that very instant the Four Great Kings approached King Śuddhodana and spoke to him: "Your Majesty, do not worry; remain happily in equanimity. We will prepare a palace for the Bodhisattva."
Then Śakra, lord of the gods, approached King Śuddhodana and spoke to him:

6.23 "The palaces of the protectors are no good;
Those of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three are better.
I will give the Bodhisattva a palace
Equal to my Vaijayanta."

6.24 Then a god from the Heaven Free from Strife approached King Śuddhodana and spoke to him:
"When ten million gods of Śakra's realm
See my mansion, they marvel. [59]
This glorious house, the best of the Heaven Free from Strife,
I give to the king's son."

6.25 Then a god from the Heaven of Joy approached King Śuddhodana and spoke to him:

"Previously this renowned being
Dwelt in a delightful palace
When he was in the Heaven of Joy.
That palace I will now offer to the Bodhisattva."

6.26 Then a god from the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations approached King Śuddhodana and spoke to him:

"A glorious, mentally created mansion
That is made of jewels,
I will give to the Bodhisattva, king,
As an act of worship."

6.27 Then a god from the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations approached King Śuddhodana and spoke to him:

"The resplendence of my mansion
Eclipses the light and colors
Of any beautiful mansion
Anywhere in the desire realm.

6.28 "So let me give that glorious mansion
As an offering to the Bodhisattva.
Your Majesty, I will bring
My beautiful jewel palace.

6.29 "It is strewn with divine flowers
And scented with divine perfumes.
I will offer this spacious palace;
There the queen may remain."

6.30 Monks, in this way each of the eminent gods of the desire realm [F.34.a] individually presented their respective residences as an offering to the Bodhisattva, right there in the fine city of Kapilavastu. King Śuddhodana also provided an excellent mansion. It far surpassed those built by other humans, although it could not match the divine palaces.

However, by the power of the Bodhisattva resting in the absorption known as the great array, Queen Māyā appeared in all of those residences.

6.31 During the period when the Bodhisattva stayed in Queen Māyā's womb, he remained on the right side of the womb, seated in a cross-legged posture. [60]
In addition all the chief gods believed that the mother of the Bodhisattva remained only in the residence they had given her, and not anywhere else.

6.32 On this topic, it is said:
While the Bodhisattva remained in the absorption known as the great array,
He emanated inconceivable magical displays,
Which perfectly fulfilled the wishes of all the gods.
The wishes of the king, too, became fulfilled.

6.33 Then some gods among the assembly began to wonder, "Even the gods in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings turn back when they approach human habitations. So what about the gods of the highest order—those in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Heaven Free from Strife, or the Heaven of Joy? How could the pure Bodhisattva, who is free from bad-smelling odors, superior to the entire world, a jewel among beings, transmigrate from the divine realm of the Heaven of Joy and remain for ten months in the foul-smelling human body inside his mother's womb?"

6.34 Then at that time, by the power of the Buddha, venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "O Blessed One, the Thus-Gone One has taught how the female body is inferior and enjoys desire. That was astonishing. But, Blessed One, it is even more astonishing that when you, who are superior to all worlds, were a bodhisattva in the past, you moved from the divine realm of the Heaven of Joy and entered your mother, remaining in a human body on the right side of the womb! [F.34.b] Blessed One, you have mentioned how it all happened, and yet it is simply beyond me!"

6.35 The Blessed One asked, "Ānanda, would you like to see the jeweled structure that the Bodhisattva delighted in? The one that became the Bodhisattva's delight as he stayed in his mother's womb?"
Ānanda replied, "Yes please, Blessed One, right away. Well-Gone One, now would be a perfect time! If the Thus-Gone One should reveal the Bodhisattva's delight, it would be a great pleasure to witness it." [61]

6.36 Then, through the Blessed One's doing, Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, disappeared from the Brahma Realm together with six million eight hundred thousand gods of that same realm. They all appeared in the presence of the Blessed One, where they prostrated at the feet of the Blessed One and circled him three times. Then Brahmā stood to one side, bowing to the Blessed One.

Although the Blessed One knew already, he asked Brahmā, the lord of the Sahā world, "Brahmā, did you remove the structure that delighted me in the past when I was a bodhisattva and stayed for ten months in my mother's womb?"

Brahmā replied, "Yes, Blessed One. Indeed, Well-Gone One." "Well, Brahmā," the Blessed One inquired, "where is it now?" Brahmā responded, "Blessed One, it is in the Brahma realm."

"In that case, Brahmā," directed the Blessed One, "fetch this structure that delighted me as a bodhisattva for ten months and show it to everyone so they can know how it was constructed."

6.37 Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, now spoke to the gods of the Brahma realm, saying, "Please wait here until I bring the jeweled structure that delighted the Bodhisattva." Then Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, [F.35.a] prostrated with his head at the feet of the Blessed One before disappearing from the presence of the Blessed One. In that very instant he reached the Brahma realm. There he spoke these words to the god Subrahmā:

"Friend, go from this Brahma realm up to the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and tell them, 'We are bringing the jeweled structure that delighted the Bodhisattva and we are taking it into the presence of the Blessed One. Those among you who would like to see it should come quickly!' "

Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, together with 84 trillion gods, lifted the jeweled structure that had delighted the Bodhisattva and placed it atop a great mansion in the Brahma realm that was three hundred leagues high. Surrounded by all these many trillions of gods, he then descended back down to Jambudvīpa. [62]

6.38 At that time there was a great gathering of gods from the desire realm who wished to serve the Bodhisattva. These gods further embellished the jeweled structure that had delighted the Bodhisattva, using divine fabrics, garlands, perfumes, flowers, music, and other divine delights. The most eminent among the gods all surrounded the structure.

At the same time Śakra, lord of the gods, was standing far away on top of Mount Sumeru in the middle of the ocean. Shielding his face with his palm, he turned his head and stared out unblinking and completely transfixed, but he was unable to see the jeweled structure. Why was that? Among the gods, those of the Brahma realm have the greatest ability, and the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Heaven Free from Strife, the Heaven of Joy, the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, and the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations are inferior in comparison to them. So what need is there to speak of Śakra, master of the gods?

6.39 At that moment the Blessed One quieted the divine music because the humans in Jambudvīpa would all go insane merely from hearing such music. [F.35.b]
The Four Great Kings now came before Śakra, lord of the gods, and asked him, "Lord of the gods, what can we do? We are unable to see this jeweled structure that delighted the Bodhisattva."
"Friends, what can I do?" Śakra responded. "I also cannot see it right now. Nevertheless, friends, when it is brought into the presence of the Blessed One, we should be able to see it."
The Four Great Kings pleaded, "Lord of the gods, for that reason let us quickly do whatever is necessary to see it!"
"Friends," replied Śakra, "wait until the best of the superior gods come into the presence of the Blessed One and delight him."
Thus they stood aside, turned their heads, and gazed intently at the Blessed One. [63] Suddenly Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, arrived together with 84 trillion gods, carrying the jeweled structure that had delighted the Bodhisattva and bringing it in front of the Thus-Gone One.

6.40 The jeweled structure that had delighted the Bodhisattva was finely shaped, exquisite and beautiful to behold. It was square in form and had four pillars. At the top was a beautifully adorned upper floor scaled to fit a six-month-old fetus. Inside that upper chamber was a throne with a sitting area that was likewise scaled to fit a six-month-old fetus.
There is nothing whatsoever in the world, including the realms of gods and Brahma gods, that is similar in color and shape to the jeweled structure that delighted the Bodhisattva. When the gods saw it, their eyes were dazzled and they were amazed. When it was placed in the presence of the Thus-Gone One, it gleamed, radiated heat, and shone brightly. This multistoried structure was as resplendent as gold that has been smelted twice by an expert goldsmith [F.36.a] so that it has become perfectly refined and free of any impurity.

6.41 Likewise nothing whatsoever in all the divine realms can compare to the size and shape of the throne inside the structure that had delighted the Bodhisattva, except perhaps the neck of the Bodhisattva, which resembles a conch in shape and color. Even the garments worn by the great Brahmā lost their beauty in front of the Bodhisattva's throne, causing them to resemble cast-off black blankets that have been beaten by wind and rain. The temple was made from uraga sandalwood, which is so precious that a single mote of its dust is equal in value to a thousand universes. Furthermore the temple was surrounded on all sides by more such uraga sandalwood.

6.42 Inside that temple hovered an identical second structure, which did not touch the first structure. Inside this second temple hovered [64] an identical third structure, which also did not touch the second structure. Within that third temple made of incense was a throne with cushions. The color of the uraga sandalwood was like the finest blue beryl. Around the temple of incense were all types of flowers that surpassed even those of the gods. They had not been planted there, but appeared solely because of the maturation of the Bodhisattva's previous basic virtue.

That precious structure that delighted the Bodhisattva was like a diamond—solid, firm, and indestructible. Yet it was also pleasant to the touch, like kācilindika cloth. Moreover, the precious structure that delighted the Bodhisattva clearly reflected all that is found within the abodes of the gods of the desire realm.

6.43 On the evening in which the Bodhisattva entered the womb, a lotus appeared from below the waters, piercing the earth and rising up six million eight hundred thousand leagues, as far as the Brahma realm. [F.36.b] Only the best of charioteers and the great Brahmā, who is master of a thousand powers, were able to see that flower. To everyone else, it was invisible. In that great lotus appeared a drop of nectar, which embodied the extracted essence and vitality of the entire great trichiliocosm. The great Brahmā placed this drop into a beautiful vessel of beryl and offered it to the Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva accepted the gift and, out of affection for the great Brahmā, he drank it. Apart from a bodhisattva in his final existence, who has completed all the bodhisattva stages, no other being is able to digest such a drop of vital energy.

6.44 What were the previous actions that prepared the Bodhisattva for digesting this drop of vital energy? [65] When the Bodhisattva was practicing the conduct of a bodhisattva for extended periods in the past, he gave medicine to the sick, fulfilled the wishes of those who had aspirations, and never abandoned those who came to him for refuge. He always offered the finest flowers, the best fruits, and the most delicious foods first to the thus-gone ones, the memorials of the thus-gone ones, the saṅgha of hearers of the thus-gone ones, and his parents. Only then would he cater to his own needs. It was as a result of this activity that the great Brahmā offered the Bodhisattva this drop of nectar.

6.45 Within that temple all the most excellent and exquisite pleasures and amusements came together, manifesting due to the maturation of the Bodhisattva's previous actions. Moreover, within the precious structure that delighted the Bodhisattva, a set of garments appeared, known as *the ornament of a hundred thousand*. Apart from a bodhisattva in his final existence, [F.37.a] no other being anywhere could ever receive such garments. In fact all possible sublime and perfect forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures were present within that peaked structure. [B4]

In this way the temple that delighted the Bodhisattva was completely perfect and finely constructed both inside and outside. It was also pleasant to touch, like silk from Kaliṅga. This is merely an example, for in reality nothing could compare to it.

6.46 Because of the previous aspirations of the Bodhisattva, his intentions were accomplished. It is the nature of things that a great bodhisattva is born into the human world. Having renounced his home, he attains perfect and complete awakening and turns the wheel of Dharma. Yet before he enters his mother's womb, a temple of precious materials is manifested on the right side of the mother's womb. Then as a bodhisattva transmigrates from the Heaven of Joy, he remains seated in a cross-legged position in that tiered chamber. The body of a bodhisattva in his last existence is free from the four stages [66] of embryonic development. Instead he appears seated, with all his limbs, organs, and characteristics fully formed. As such Queen Māyā saw the arrival of an elephant in her dream.

6.47 Now Śakra, lord of the gods, as well as the Four Great Kings, the twenty-eight great commanders of the yakṣas, and the master of the guhyakas, who are the type of yakṣa from which Vajrapāṇi came, all knew that the Bodhisattva had entered the womb of his mother, and they constantly stayed close to him. The Bodhisattva also had four goddesses named Utkhalī, Samutkhalī, [F.37.b] Dhvajavatī, and Prabhāvatī serve him. When these four goddesses knew that the Bodhisattva had entered the womb of his mother, they kept a constant guard over him. In addition, when Śakra, lord of the gods, discovered that the Bodhisattva had entered the womb of his mother, he brought along five hundred gods to constantly follow the Bodhisattva.

6.48 The body of a bodhisattva who has entered the womb of his mother develops certain features. For example, it is like a great fire burning on a mountaintop during the darkest night, visible from a league or even five leagues away. The body of the Bodhisattva as he entered the womb of his mother was just this way. It was radiant, well formed, handsome, and pleasing to see. As he sat with crossed legs inside that peaked structure, he was exceedingly beautiful. He appeared to have a golden hue, shining like refined gold adorned with precious beryl. The mother of the Bodhisattva could also see the Bodhisattva within her womb.

6.49 In the same way that a lightning bolt illumines everything as it emerges from a mass of clouds, so the Bodhisattva dwelling in his mother's womb also illuminated the innermost chamber of the precious temple through his splendor, brilliance, and color. When that was illuminated, he illuminated the middle chamber of the fragrant temple. When the second level [67] of the fragrant temple was illuminated, the light went farther and illuminated the outer chamber of

the fragrant temple. Then, as the third level of the fragrant temple was bathed in light, his mother's entire body became filled with light. The light then went farther and illuminated the seat upon which his mother was seated. Gradually the light streamed forth and brightened the entire palace. The light rays rose beyond the palace and illuminated the east. Likewise, while the Bodhisattva was residing in the womb of his mother, the glory, brilliance, and color of the Bodhisattva illuminated the south, the west, and the north, below and above. In fact all the ten directions [F.38.a] were bathed in light for several miles in each direction.

6.50 Monks, in the early morning the Four Great Kings and the twenty-eight great commanders of the yakṣas together with five hundred yakṣas arrived to meet the Bodhisattva and to offer him their respect and veneration, and also to listen to the Dharma. At that time the Bodhisattva, who was aware of their arrival, extended his right hand and pointed out their seats. The guardians of the world and the other guests sat down on the arranged seats. They perceived the Bodhisattva, who was in the womb of his mother, in the form of a child who has already taken birth, extending his hand and moving it in various positions. Upon seeing this they prostrated to the Bodhisattva and were filled with joy, devotion, and well-being.

6.51 When the Bodhisattva saw that they were settled, he taught them a Dharma teaching and instructed them, inspired them, and delighted them. When they wished to go, the Bodhisattva, who knew full well their thoughts, extended his right hand as a farewell greeting. As he retracted his hand, there was no harm done to his mother. The Four Great Kings understood the greeting and thought, "We have been dismissed by the Bodhisattva." [68] Then they circled around the Bodhisattva and his mother three times before departing. This was the circumstance and the reason why the Bodhisattva, in the quiet of the night, would extend his right hand and draw it back. Finally he would let the hand rest while maintaining mindfulness and carefulness.

6.52 At other times when people came to see the Bodhisattva, be they women or men, [F.38.b] boys or girls, he would first joyfully welcome them, and then his mother would do the same. Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva became very skilled at initiating delightful salutations as he dwelt in his mother's womb. There was no one, whether god, nāga, yakṣa, human, or nonhuman, who was ever able to greet the Bodhisattva first with a delightful salutation. Instead the Bodhisattva would initiate the salutations, and afterward the mother of the Bodhisattva would joyfully welcome the guests.

6.53 When the morning had passed and the noon hour arrived, Śakra, the lord of the gods, along with the most eminent gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, came to meet the Bodhisattva and to offer him their respect and veneration, and also to listen to the Dharma. The Bodhisattva, who saw them coming from a distance, extended his golden-colored right hand and, to the delight of Śakra, lord of the gods, and the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, pointed out their seats. Monks, at that moment Śakra, lord of the gods, was unable to resist the Bodhisattva's request, and so he and the gods all settled down on the seats that had been arranged for them.

When the Bodhisattva knew that they were settled, he taught them a Dharma teaching and instructed them, inspired them, and delighted them. In whichever direction the Bodhisattva would extend his hand, the mother of the Bodhisattva would turn to face that way. Then the gods reflected, "The Bodhisattva is having a heartwarming conversation with us." And each one of them thought, "The Bodhisattva is speaking directly to me; to me alone he extends a friendly welcome." All the while the images of Śakra, lord of the gods, [F.39.a] and those of the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three were reflected within the temple. Thus nowhere else were the Bodhisattva's enjoyments as perfectly pure as in the womb of his mother.

Monks, when Śakra, lord of the gods, and the other gods wished to depart, the Bodhisattva, who knew full well their thoughts, extended his right hand as a farewell greeting. As he retracted his hand, there was no harm done to his mother. At that time Śakra, lord of the gods, and the other gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three reflected, "We have been dismissed by the Bodhisattva." [69] Then they circled around the Bodhisattva and his mother three times before departing.

6.54 Monks, noontime passed, and it was now evening when Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, surrounded by many hundreds of thousands of gods, approached the Bodhisattva carrying a drop of the vital force of the divine realms. They came to meet the Bodhisattva and to offer him their respect and veneration, and also to listen to the Dharma.

Monks, the Bodhisattva knew that Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, was arriving together with his retinue, and again he raised his golden-colored right hand. He cordially greeted Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, and those gods of the pure realms, and pointed out their seats to them. Monks, again it was not possible [70] for Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, to resist the Bodhisattva's command. Thus Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, as well as the other gods of the pure realms, settled on those seats that had been arranged. When the Bodhisattva knew that they were settled, he taught them a Dharma teaching and instructed them, [F.39.b] inspired them, and delighted them. In whichever direction the Bodhisattva would extend his hand, the mother of the Bodhisattva would turn to face that way. Then the gods reflected, "The Bodhisattva is having a heartwarming conversation with us." And each one of them thought, "The Bodhisattva is speaking directly to me; to me alone he extends a friendly welcome."

6.55 Monks, when Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, and those gods of the pure realms wished to depart, the Bodhisattva, who knew full well their thoughts, extended his right hand as a farewell greeting. As he retracted his hand with mindfulness and carefulness, there was no harm done to his mother. Then Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, and those gods of the pure realms reflected, "We have been dismissed by the Bodhisattva." Then they circled around the Bodhisattva and his mother three times before departing. Finally the Bodhisattva let his hand rest while maintaining mindfulness and carefulness.

6.56 Monks, from everywhere, such as the east, the south, the west, the north, above and below, many hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas came to meet the Bodhisattva and to offer him their respect and veneration, and also to listen to the Dharma and correctly proclaim that Dharma. Once they had arrived, the Bodhisattva's body began emitting light, which manifested into lion thrones. The Bodhisattva then indicated to the bodhisattvas to take their seat on these thrones. When he knew that they were settled, the Bodhisattva questioned and examined the bodhisattvas [71] regarding the divisions pertaining to the Great Vehicle. However, with the exception of the gods who were of equal fortune, no one else perceived this. [F.40.a] Monks, this was the circumstance and the reason why the Bodhisattva projected light from his body in the quiet of the night.

6.57 Monks, while the Bodhisattva was dwelling in the womb of his mother, Queen Māyā did not feel any heaviness in her body. On the contrary she felt light, supple, and happy, and she did not experience any uncomfortable pains in her belly. She was not afflicted by attachment, anger, or delusion. She did not entertain any desirous thoughts, nor any thoughts of ill will or harm. She neither experienced nor witnessed any heat, cold, hunger, thirst, gloom, uncleanliness, or fatigue. No unpleasant forms, sounds, smells, tastes, or textures appeared to her, and she also had no bad dreams. There was no female deception, guile, envy, or feminine disturbing emotions to trouble her.

At that time the mother of the Bodhisattva observed the five basic precepts. She was disciplined and followed the path of the ten virtuous actions. The mother of the Bodhisattva never desired any man whomsoever, and neither did any man feel lust in the presence of the mother of the Bodhisattva.

6.58 Merely by seeing the mother of the Bodhisattva, any woman, man, boy, or girl in the city of Kapilavastu and its surrounding areas who had been possessed was cured and regained consciousness immediately, regardless of whether they had been possessed by gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, or bhūtas. Those nonhuman beings quickly departed for other places.

All those who had been struck by illness were freed from their disease as soon as the mother of the Bodhisattva placed

her right hand on the top of their head. In this way she would cure those who suffered from any illness or ailment that arises from disharmony among wind, bile, or phlegm. [F.40.b] She would cure illnesses related to the eyes, [72] ears, nose, tongue, and lips, as well as toothaches, throat diseases, goiters, lumps, various forms of leprosy, tuberculosis, madness, dementia, fevers, swellings, boils, rashes, scabs, and other illnesses. Once they were freed from their disease, these people could then return to their homes. Queen Māyā would also pick herbs and distribute them to the sick, who would immediately regain their health and vigor.

6.59 When Queen Māyā looked inside her belly, she saw the Bodhisattva resting on the right side of her womb. She could see this as clearly as if she was looking at her own face in a spotless mirror. Seeing him in that way, she was satisfied, elated, and delighted. She felt extremely happy, buoyant, and joyful.

Monks, through the blessings of the Bodhisattva staying in his mother's womb, the sounds of divine musical instruments arose constantly without interruption both day and night, and a rain of divine flowers fell. The gods sent timely rains, and the winds blew at appropriate moments. The seasons and the stars all moved in a balanced manner. The kingdom was joyful and the harvests were bountiful. There were no disturbances or animosity anywhere.

6.60 In the city of Kapilavastu, the clan of the Śākyas and everyone else had plenty to eat and drink, and they enjoyed themselves with various amusements. They were generous and created merit. They happily amused themselves just as one does during the autumn festival at the end of the fourth month. King Śuddhodana devoted himself purely to religious practice. Setting aside all his kingly work, he lived in complete purity as if he had entered an ascetic's grove. [F.41.a] With great delight, he followed the Dharma. [73] Monks, such were the miraculous marvels that occurred while the Bodhisattva remained in his mother's womb.

6.61 At this time the Blessed One asked venerable Ānanda, "Ānanda, would you like to see the jeweled structure that delighted the Bodhisattva when he stayed in his mother's womb?"

Ānanda replied, "Yes, Blessed One. I would love to, Well-Gone One!"

The Blessed One then showed the jeweled structure to venerable Ānanda as well as to Śakra, lord of the gods; the four guardians of the world; and many other gods and humans. As they saw the structure, they were satisfied, uplifted, and full of rejoicing. In a joyful mood, they were happy and delighted.

Then once again, Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, lifted up the jeweled structure and brought it with him to the Brahma realm, where he installed it as an object of worship.

Then the Blessed One again addressed the monks: "Monks, in this way, while the Bodhisattva dwelt in his mother's womb, he ripened 36 million gods and humans within the Three Vehicles."

6.62 On this topic, it is said:

When the Victors' Son, the Great Being, settled in his mother's womb,
The earth with its forests shook in six ways.
Golden light shone forth and all the lower realms were purified;
All the gods joyfully proclaimed, "He will be a Dharma king!"

6.63 Well shaped and resplendent with many jewels is the great mansion
Where the Hero, the Perfect Guide, has ascended and remains.
It is resplendent, filled with exquisitely fragrant sandalwood,
A few grams of which is worth the whole trichiliocosm filled with jewels.

6.64 Bursting forth from beneath the great trichiliocosm,
A lotus, which is a mine of good qualities, emerged with a drop of vital energy. [74] [F.41.b]
Within seven days, it reached the world of Brahmā through the power of merit;
Brahmā collected the vital drop and offered it to the Victors' Son.

6.65 Apart from the Bodhisattva, a mighty hero,
No being anywhere could digest the drop.
This drop of vital energy is imbued with the merit of many eons;
Whoever consumes it becomes pure in body, mind, and consciousness.

6.66 Śakra, Brahmā, and the guardians of the world paid the Bodhisattva three visits
In order to make offerings to the Guide.
They prostrated, made offerings, and listened to the sublime Dharma,
Then they circled around him and returned to their abodes.

6.67 From all worlds and realms came bodhisattvas desiring the Dharma;
Sitting on seats of light, they illumined each other.
Because they heard the sacred Dharma of the Supreme Vehicle,
They all could leave with joy, proclaiming songs of praise.

6.68 Any woman or child afflicted by suffering,
Possessed by spirits, with troubled mind, naked and covered with dust,
Recovered their senses upon seeing Queen Māyā.
With intelligence and mindfulness restored, they returned to their homes.

6.69 Those afflicted by illness caused by disorders of wind, bile, or phlegm,
And those with body and mind tormented by diseases of the eyes and ears,
And all those stricken by many different kinds of ailments,
Were freed from illness when Queen Māyā placed her hand on their heads. [75]

6.70 Moreover, gathering herbs from the ground,
Māyā gave them to the sick, who all became cured.
Happy and healthy, they returned to their homes,
While the King of Physicians, the remedy itself, dwelt in the womb.

6.71 Whenever Queen Māyā examined her body,
She saw the Bodhisattva in her womb.
Like the moon in the sky encircled by stars,
The Bodhisattva [F.42.a] was ornamented by marks.

6.72 She was untroubled by attachment, anger, or delusion,
Had no sexual desires, nor envy or ill will.
With a joyful and elated mind, she was blissful,
Never bothered by hunger and thirst, or heat and cold.

6.73 The sounds of divine instruments constantly arose without being played.
Excellent sublime flowers, fragrant with divine perfumes, fell like rain.
Gods and humans beheld this, and none of them
Felt any resentment or ill will toward one another.

6.74 Beings rejoiced and played, and made offerings of food and drink;
They uttered cries of joy, content and delighted as they were.
The kingdom was at peace, undisturbed and with well-timed rain;
Grasses, medicinal herbs, and flowers grew in a timely manner.

6.75 Over the royal palace, a rain of jewels fell for seven days;
Impoverished beings brought them home and enjoyed the bounty. [76]
At that time there were no impoverished or suffering beings;
Everyone was as joyful as the beings in the pleasure grove atop Mount Meru.

6.76 The king of the Śākyas observed the mending and purification ritual;
Leaving his royal duties, he only practiced the Dharma.
He went into the grove of the ascetics and said to Māyādevī,
"How blissful your body must be, bearing the Perfect Being!"

6.77 *This concludes the sixth chapter, on entering the womb.*

7.

Chapter 7

THE BIRTH

7.1 Monks, in this way ten months passed, and the time came for the Bodhisattva to take birth. At that time thirty-two omens occurred in King Śuddhodana's parks:
All flowers budded and blossomed. In the ponds, all the blue, red, and white lotus flowers also budded and blossomed. New fruit and flower trees sprung from the earth, budded, and came into blossom. Eight trees of precious gems appeared. Twenty thousand great treasures emerged and remained on the grounds. [F.42.b] Inside the women's quarters, jeweled shoots sprouted forth. Scented water, saturated with fragrant oils, flowed forth. Lion cubs descended from the snow mountains. They joyfully circled the sublime city of Kapilavastu and then rested by the gates without harming anyone. Five hundred young white elephants arrived, stroking King Śuddhodana's feet with the tips of their trunks, and then settling down next to him. Divine children, wearing sashes, [77] were seen moving back and forth between the laps of the women in the retinue of King Śuddhodana's queen.

7.2 Nāga girls could be seen holding aloft various offerings, revealing the upper half of their bodies as they moved about in the sky. Ten thousand celestial maidens were seen hovering in the sky, holding up peacock feathers. Ten thousand full

vases appeared in a ring around the city of Kapilavastu. Ten thousand celestial maidens appeared with vases of scented water on their heads. Ten thousand celestial maidens appeared holding up parasols, flags, and banners. Many hundreds of thousands of celestial maidens appeared holding conch shells, drums, clay drums, and cymbals adorned with bells.

7.3 The winds became still and ceased to blow. All streams and rivers stopped their flow. The sun, the moon, the celestial chariots, the planets, and the stars all stood still. The constellation of Puṣya appeared. King Śuddhodana's residence became adorned with a net of jewels. [103] All fires were extinguished. The palace, temples, gateways, and doorways were decorated with tassels of jewels and gems. The doors to the storehouses of cloths and gems appeared wide open. [F.43.a] The calls of crows, owls, vultures, wolves, and jackals ceased to be heard. Instead many delightful sounds were heard. All people stopped their work. The ground became level without any bumps or hollows. All crossroads, junctions, roads, and marketplaces became as even and smooth as the palm of a hand and were beautifully bestrewn with flower petals. All pregnant women birthed their babies with comfort and ease. All the gods in the sāl forest revealed half their bodies from among the trees' leaves and remained there, bowing. Such were the thirty-two omens that occurred. [78]

7.4 Then Māyādevī, due to the magnificence and strength of the Bodhisattva, knew that it was time for her to give birth. During the first watch of the night, she came to King Śuddhodana and spoke these words:

7.5 "Lord, please listen to what is on my mind:
For a long time now, I have thought about the pleasure grove.
If you will not be upset, displeased, or envious,
I should quickly go to that pleasure grove.

7.6 "You are also weary from austerities and diligently contemplating the Dharma;
I myself have carried a pure being within me for a long time now.
The sāl, that most wonderful of trees, is now in blossom.
O Lord, it is therefore fitting for us to go to the pleasure grove!

7.7 "Spring, that excellent season, is a joyous time for women;
The bees are humming and the cuckoos singing.
Fresh and sweet, the fragrance of flowers drifts through the air—
Please issue an order, and let us go there right away!"

7.8 The king heard Māyādevī's words, and then,
Delighted and elated, he spoke to his retinue:
[F.43.b] "Arrange my horses, elephants, and chariots!
Decorate the excellent garden at Lumbinī!

7.9 "Quick, prepare twenty thousand elephants,
Dark blue like mountains or storm clouds. [79]
Ornament the lordly six-tusked elephants with bells attached to their flanks;
Decorate them with gold and gems and cover them with lattices of gold.

7.10 "Quick, harness twenty thousand royal steeds,
Fast as the wind, strong and excellent steeds,
With silvery snow-colored tails, manes that are beautifully plaited,
And lattices of golden bells hung on their flanks.

7.11 "Quick, gather twenty thousand brave men,
Heroes who long for the battlefield and combat.
Let them brandish sharp weapons—bows and arrows, swords, spears, and lassos—
To carefully guard Māyādevī and her retinue.

7.12 "Have Lumbinī bestrewn with gold and jewels;
Adorn all the trees with many types of cloths and jewels.
Quick, plant many flowers, like in the gardens of the gods.
Arrange all of this, and then swiftly report to me."

7.13 Hearing this, the retinue immediately arranged
All the conveyances and ornamented Lumbinī.
They then called out, "Victory! Victory! Long live the king!
Your command is fulfilled and all is ready. Please look, O lord!"

7.14 The sublime lord of men, with a joyous mind,
Entered the palace and spoke thus to the women:
"Those of you to whom I am dear and who would like to bring me joy,
Follow my command and adorn yourselves. [80]

7.15 "With colorful clothes, beautiful and soft,
And fragrant with enchanting perfume,
Adorn your chests with necklaces of pearls;
Today everyone should wear all their ornaments! [F.44.a]

7.16 "Bring hundreds of thousands of delightful instruments:
Hand drums, flutes, lutes, clay drums, and cymbals.
Hearing the melodious sound of these instruments, even the gods will be pleased!
You make the goddesses similarly joyful!

7.17 "In the supreme chariot, only Māyādevī shall sit;
None of the ladies nor the men shall join her.
This chariot shall be led by a host of bright young women;
No one shall mention anything unpleasant or unfitting!"

7.18 Māyādevī then left her palace and went to the door of the king.
When she arrived, the divisions of horses, elephants, chariots, and foot soldiers
All called out with a deafening roar,
As loud as the waves on a great turbulent ocean.

7.19 At this moment, auspiciously, a hundred thousand bells rang out.
The king himself decorated the chariot,
And a thousand gods prepared a divine throne.
The four precious trees were complete with flowers and leaves.

7.20 Peacocks, cranes, and swans sounded their delightful calls; [81]
Parasols, flags, and banners of all sizes were hoisted;
The chariot was covered with a beautiful lattice of tinkling bells and divine cloth.
From up in the heavens, celestial maidens looked down at the chariot;
They called out in divine melodious tones, offering words of praise.

7.21 When Māyādevī sat upon the lion throne,
The earth of the trichiliocosm trembled in six ways.
The gods waved cloths and scattered a rain of flowers:
"Today at Lumbinī, a sublime being is to be born!"

7.22 The four guardians of the world led the supreme chariot;
Śakra himself, lord of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, cleared its path.
Brahmā, going ahead, expelled all untamed creatures;
Hundreds of thousands of gods joined their hands and bowed down.

7.23 The king, with a joyful heart, surveyed what had been prepared, [F.44.b]
Thinking, "This child must be the god of gods!
When the four guardians, Brahmā, and the gods, led by Śakra, make such offerings,
He will surely become a buddha!

7.24 "None of the gods, nor the nāgas, Śakra, Brahmā, or the guardians of the world,
Nor any other being in the trichiliocosm could accept such offerings as these,
For their heads would burst asunder or their lives be lost.
Yet he, supreme among gods, can accept all offerings."

7.25 Monks, Māyādevī now set forth, surrounded and protected by 84,000 richly ornamented horse-drawn chariots, 84,000 richly ornamented elephant-drawn chariots, [82] and 84,000 brave, heroic, and handsome foot soldiers wearing excellent and solid armor. She was escorted by 60,000 Śākya maidens. She was guarded by 40,000 elders, youths, and middle-aged men from King Śuddhodana's Śākya clan. She was also surrounded by 60,000 women from King Śuddhodana's retinue, who sang songs and played music, bells, and cymbals. Some 84,000 celestial maidens followed her, as did 84,000 nāga maidens, 84,000 gandharva maidens, 84,000 kinnara maidens, and 84,000 female demigods. All of them were lavishly ornamented and sang her praise in melodic voices accompanied by music.

All of Lumbinī Grove was sprinkled with droplets of perfumed water and strewn with celestial flowers. Every tree in that perfect grove had leaves, flowers, and fruits, even though it was out of season. Even the gods had done their best to decorate the forest. They had, in fact, made it appear like the gods' Miśraka Garden. [F.45.a]

7.26 When Māyādevī arrived at the Lumbinī Grove, she stepped down from her fine chariot. As human and divine maidens encircled her, she wandered from tree to tree and from grove to grove. She looked among all the trees and eventually arrived beneath a very special and exquisite fig tree. Its branches spread out, full of lush leaves and clusters of blossoms, and further adorned with numerous flowers from the realms of both humans and gods. Richly scented cloths of many colors were draped across its branches. It was sparkling with the light of many gems and jewels. Its roots, trunk, branches, and leaves were all adorned with jewels. Its branches were long and spread out spaciously. The ground where the fig tree stood was smooth like the palm of a hand, beautiful and open, and it was full of dark blue grass, the color of a peacock's neck. The earth was pleasant to the touch, like soft kācilindika cloth. This tree had supported the mothers of previous victorious ones, and it had been praised in the poetry of the gods. [83] It was a tree to which the wholesome and peaceful gods of the pure realms would bow down and touch with their heads, including their topknots and diadems. Now the queen and her retinue had arrived at this pure and stainless fig tree.

7.27 However, at this moment the Bodhisattva's magnificence and power caused the fig tree itself to bow down and pay homage to him. Māyādevī stretched out her right arm, like a flash of lightning appearing in the middle of the sky, and grasped a branch of the tree. She auspiciously directed her gaze into the open sky and stretched her body. At that point sixty thousand goddesses from the desire realm approached Māyādevī to assist and venerate her.

Such were the miracles that occurred while the Bodhisattva was in his mother's womb. Now, as the ten months had been completed, [F.45.b] he emerged from his mother's right side, fully aware and mindful. In this way he was unstained by any impurities of the womb, which otherwise are said to stain everyone else.

7.28 Monks, at that time Śakra, lord of the gods, and Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, appeared before the Bodhisattva. As they remembered and recognized who he was, they were full of veneration for the Bodhisattva and wrapped him up in divine silk. The temple in which the Bodhisattva had dwelt while in his mother's womb was carried off by Brahmā, lord of the Sahā World, and the other gods of the Brahma realm up into their realm, where they enshrined the temple in a memorial and made it an object of worship. Thus the Bodhisattva was first received by the gods rather than by any humans.

7.29 As soon as he was born, the Bodhisattva stepped onto the ground. Wherever his feet touched the ground, a large lotus immediately sprung from the earth. Then the great nāga kings Nanda and Upananda revealed their upper bodies in the sky and produced two streams of cool and warm water to rinse the Bodhisattva's body. [84] Śakra, Brahmā, the guardians of the world, and many hundreds of thousands of gods then bathed the Bodhisattva in perfumed water and scattered flower petals over him. A parasol of precious gems and two yak-tail whisks also appeared from midair.

7.30 The Bodhisattva stood on a large lotus and surveyed the four directions with his lion's gaze, the gaze of a great being. At that time the Bodhisattva, with unhindered higher knowledge, which he manifested due to the ripening of previous roots of virtue, saw the entire great trichiliocosm. He saw all the cities, towns, [F.46.a] estates, kingdoms, royal cities, and lands, as well as all gods and humans. He also perfectly knew the minds of all sentient beings and carefully surveyed them, looking to see if there was anyone similar to himself in terms of virtuous conduct, discipline, meditative absorption, or knowledge. However, in the entire great trichiliocosm, the Bodhisattva did not see anyone like himself.

7.31 At that point the Bodhisattva felt a lion-like fearlessness, free of anxiety or apprehension. Without any hesitation or wavering, he reminded himself of his good motivations. Because he had examined the minds of all sentient beings, he now knew their thoughts. Unsupported, he took seven steps toward the east and declared, "I will be the cause of all virtuous practices."
Wherever the Bodhisattva took a step, a lotus sprouted forth. He then took seven steps toward the south and said, "I am worthy of the offerings of gods and humans." Next he took seven steps toward the west and, pausing on the seventh step, he proclaimed these satisfying words in lion-like fashion: "I am the Supreme Being [85] on this earth. This is my last birth, where I shall uproot birth, old age, sickness, and death!" He then took seven steps toward the north and said, "I will be supreme among all sentient beings!" Next he took seven steps downhill, saying, "I will subjugate Māra and his army! I will cause great rain clouds of the Dharma to shower down on all hell beings, extinguishing the fires of hell

and filling the beings there with happiness." Finally he took seven steps uphill, lifted his gaze, and said, "All sentient beings will look up to me." [F.46.b]

7.32 As the Bodhisattva spoke in this way, his words were immediately heard throughout the entire great trichiliocosm. Such was the nature of the foreknowledge that sprang from the ripening of the Bodhisattva's previous actions. Whenever a bodhisattva takes birth into his final existence, and as he awakens to perfect and complete buddhahood, various miracles unfold.

7.33 Monks, at that time all beings were so delighted that the hairs on their bodies shivered. There was also a terrifying quaking of the earth, which caused the hairs on their bodies to stand on end. The cymbals and musical instruments of gods and humans sounded without being played by anyone. At that time all the trees in the great trichiliocosm—whether in season or not—blossomed and bore fruit. From the expanse of pure space, the sound of thunder rang out, and from the cloudless sky, a fine mist of rain showered down ever so gently, mixed with divinely colored flowers, cloths, ornaments, and powdered incense. Deliciously scented breezes blew, delightful and cooling. In all directions there was no darkness, dust, smoke, or mist to be seen, and everything appeared bright and beautiful.

7.34 Also, from the empty space above, the great melodious and profound sounds of the realm of Brahmā were heard. All the light of the sun, the moon, Brahmā, Śakra, and the guardians of the world [86] was eclipsed by an otherworldly light of a hundred thousand colors, which filled the entire great trichiliocosm and brought pleasure and happiness, both physical and mental, to everyone that it touched. At the very moment when the Bodhisattva was born, all beings became filled with bliss. All types of attachment, anger, delusion, pride, [F.47.a] dislike, dejection, fear, greed, jealousy, and stinginess subsided, and everyone abandoned all forms of unwholesome conduct.

7.35 The illnesses of the sick were cured. The hungry and the thirsty were relieved of their hunger and thirst. The drunk and intoxicated were freed from their intoxication. The mad had their sanity restored. The blind could see. The deaf could hear. The crippled had their capacities restored. The destitute gained wealth. The imprisoned were freed. All ailments and sufferings of those in the hell realms, starting with the Hell of Ultimate Torment, ceased at that moment. The suffering of those born into the animal realm, such as the fear of being eaten by one another, was also pacified. Likewise the sufferings experienced by beings in the realm of the lord of death, such as hunger and thirst, were also pacified.

7.36 The newborn Bodhisattva had already practiced good conduct for countless trillions of eons, and he possessed great diligence and strength. As such, when he took his first seven steps, he had already attained the state of reality. Therefore all the buddhas, the blessed ones, in all the realms in the ten directions blessed the earth at that spot of vajra nature so that it would not be destroyed by his steps. Monks, such was the awesome strength of the newborn Bodhisattva's first seven steps.

7.37 At that time the entire world was filled with a bright light, and the sounds of singing and dancing were heard. A rain of flowers, powders, incense, garlands, jewels, ornaments, and cloths [F.47.b] showered down from innumerable clouds. All beings were filled with perfect joy. [87] In short, when the Bodhisattva, who is more exalted than anyone in all the worlds, came into this world, many inconceivable events took place.

7.38 Venerable Ānanda now stood up from his seat, removed his robe from one shoulder, and kneeled, placing his right knee on the ground. He joined his palms in the direction of the Blessed One, bowed, and addressed these words to him: "The Blessed One, the Thus-Gone One, is truly more amazing than anyone else. The Bodhisattva possessed incredible qualities, but how much more so the One Who Has Awakened to Perfect and Complete Buddhahood? O Blessed One, I therefore take refuge in Lord Buddha four times, five times, ten times, fifty times, a hundred times, or rather many hundreds of thousands of times!"

7.39 The Blessed One responded to these words from Ānanda by proclaiming: "In the future there will be some monks who do not train their bodies and minds and do not acquaint themselves with discipline and knowledge. Like unskilled children, they will be highly proud, wild, arrogant, unrestrained, distracted, hesitant, doubting, and without trust. They will bring stains on the monastic order and not live like proper monks. When they hear about the Bodhisattva entering his mother's womb in such a pure way, they will not believe it. Instead they will gather and gossip, saying, 'Listen, all of you, just listen to this nonsense! The Bodhisattva supposedly entered into his mother's womb, where he mixed with impure fluids. And yet he is said to have had such enjoyments. Moreover, it is said that when he was born, he emerged from his mother's right side without being sullied by any stains of the womb. [F.48.a] But how could this be possible?'

7.40 "Such fools will not understand that the bodies of those who have engaged in excellent actions are not begotten from unclean fluids. Monks, such sublime beings enter into and abide in the womb in the finest manner. [88] It is due to their love and compassion for sentient beings that bodhisattvas are born into the world of humans, since gods do not turn the

wheel of Dharma. Why is this? Ānanda, it is because beings would otherwise have been discouraged, thinking, 'The Blessed One, the Thus-Gone One, the Worthy One, the completely perfect Buddha is a god. We are just human beings, so we are not able to achieve that state.'

7.41 "It will not occur to these foolish beings, such thieves of the Dharma, to think, 'This being is inconceivable and we cannot judge him.' Ānanda, these future people will also not believe in the Buddha's miracles, let alone the miracles displayed by the Thus-Gone Bodhisattva. Ānanda, these foolish beings will be overcome with desire for wealth, respect, and praise. They will sink into filth and be overcome with their lust for honor. In this way these impertinent beings will abandon the Buddha's teachings. Just consider how much nonvirtue they will accumulate!" [B5]

7.42 Ānanda asked, "Blessed One! In the future will there really be such monks who reject excellent sūtras like this one, and who speak poorly of them?"
"Ānanda," replied the Blessed One, "not only will there be those who reject the sūtras and speak poorly of them, [F.48.b] there will also be monks who perform many negative deeds and leave aside their obligations as monks."

7.43 Ānanda then asked, "Blessed One, please tell me how life will turn out for those wicked beings? What will happen as they move from one life to the next?"
The Blessed One replied, "They will share the fate of those who deny the Buddha's awakening and those who insult and defame the buddhas, the blessed ones, of the past, present, and future." [89]
Venerable Ānanda's hairs stood on end as he exclaimed, "I pay homage to the Buddha!" He then said to the Blessed One, "Blessed One, when I hear about the conduct of those wicked beings, it almost makes me faint!"

7.44 "Ānanda," said the Blessed One, "the behavior of such people will not be proper, but base. Ānanda, through their improper conduct, these beings will fall into the great hell of incessant pain. Why is this? Ānanda, there are some monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen who do not feel inspired when they hear sūtras like this one. Instead they do not trust these sūtras and they reject them. As soon as they die, they will all fall into the great Hell of Ultimate Torment. Ānanda, one should never attempt to measure the thus-gone ones. Why not? Because, Ānanda, the thus-gone ones are immeasurable, profound, vast, and difficult to judge.

7.45 "Ānanda, when some beings hear sūtras like this one, they become joyful, elated, and full of faith. Those beings obtain something wonderful. Their lives become meaningful and their humanity serves a purpose. Their conduct is excellent and they take hold of what is truly essential. They are freed from the three lower realms. [F.49.a] They become heirs of the thus- gone ones and obtain all that they need. Their trust is meaningful and they will receive their fair share of the provisions of the kingdom. They will trust deeply in noble beings and cut through Māra's snares. They will cross over the wastelands of saṃsāra and remove the thorns of misery. They will reach a place of supreme joy and genuinely take refuge. As appropriate objects for others' generosity, they are worthy recipients of offerings. These beings appear in the world only rarely, and when here they are to be held as proper objects of generosity. Why is that? It is because they have faith in the teachings of the thus-gone ones, which go against all worldly conventions.

7.46 "Ānanda, those beings do not possess any inferior forms of roots of virtue. [90] Ānanda, those beings are not just companions who befriend me for a few lifetimes only. And why is that? Because, Ānanda, some beings are pleased and delighted to hear me, but not to see me. Some, Ānanda, are pleased and delighted to see me, but not to hear me. Still others, Ānanda, are pleased and delighted both to see me and to hear me. Ānanda, whatever the case, when beings are pleased and delighted to see me or hear me, you can be certain that they are friends who have accompanied me for multiple lifetimes. The Thus-Gone One sees them, and the Thus-Gone One will liberate them. They have the same qualities as the Thus-Gone One. They have gone for refuge in the Thus-Gone One. The Thus-Gone One has accepted them.

7.47 "Ānanda, even during earlier times when I was practicing the conduct of a bodhisattva, [F.49.b] others came to see me, desperate and bound by fear, begging me to protect them from their fears, which I did. So now that I have awakened to perfect and complete buddhahood, I will certainly do the same. Ānanda, strive in faith; the Thus-Gone One urges you thus! Ānanda, the task before you has already been completed by the Thus-Gone One. The Thus-Gone One has pulled out the thorn of pride.

7.48 "Ānanda, if a person is willing to travel for hundreds of miles just to receive news of a friend and is delighted to hear that news, then how about if they actually meet their friend? Whoever relies on me and generates the roots of virtue will be recognized by the future thus-gone ones, the worthy ones, the completely perfect buddhas, who will think, 'Those beings are the old friends of the thus-gone ones. They are also our friends.'
"Why is that? Ānanda, it is because friends please and delight each other. Whoever is dear to one's friend is also dear and delightful to oneself. Therefore, Ānanda, have trust and understand it to be so. Develop trust and think, 'I also

entrust myself to the thus-gone ones, the worthy ones, the completely perfect buddhas [91] of the future. They are also my friends.' Think like this, and your wishes will be fulfilled.

7.49 "Ānanda, think of this example: Consider a man who is strong and well-regarded but has only one son. Now, if that father has many friends, then even if he should pass away, the friends of the father will still accept the son and not reject him. Ānanda, in the same way, whoever has faith in me, I will accept as my friend. They will take refuge in me. The Thus-Gone One has many friends. [F.50.a] And because those friends of the Thus-Gone One speak genuinely and tell no lies, I entrust those friends of the Thus-Gone One to those who speak the truth—the future thus-gone ones, the worthy ones, the completely perfect buddhas. Therefore, Ānanda, strive to have faith! That is what I ask of you!"

Thus, monks, when the Bodhisattva was born, many trillions of goddesses resting in the center of the sky showered divine flowers, incense, garlands, scented oils, cloths, and jewels upon Māyādevī.

7.50 On this topic, it is said:

At that time sixty thousand goddesses with melodious voices,
Glowing with virtuous, stainless, pure golden light, resplendent like the sun and moon,
Arrived at Lumbinī and spoke to Māyādevī:
"Do not be displeased but filled with joy! We are your servants.

7.51 "Please tell us what to do, what you wish to be done;
We are your capable servants, with loving intentions.
We beg you to be joyful and abandon all sorrow;
Today, queen, you shall give birth with ease
To the sublime physician who will overcome sickness and death! [92]

7.52 "The trees' buds open, and the sāl trees blossom;
Thousands of gods stand before you, bowing their arms.
The earth and the sea tremble in six different ways;
Thus your son will be known here and in heaven as the Transcendent One.

7.53 "A pure light beautifies everything, glowing golden;
Hundreds of fine instruments resound from the empty sky without being played.
A hundred thousand pure, clean gods free from desire joyfully pay homage;
Today the One Who Will Benefit the Entire World shall be born.

7.54 Śakra, Brahmā, the guardians of the world, and other gods
Stand by, joyfully and happily, with folded hands." [F.50.b]
The Lion-like Being, with disciplined conduct, emerged from Māyādevī's right side;
Like a golden mountain, glowing with purity, the Guide was born.

7.55 Śakra and Brahmā held out their hands, receiving the Sage;
A hundred thousand realms trembled and were suffused with light.
The beings of the three lower realms were joyful, their sufferings freed;
A hundred thousand gods scattered flowers and waved banners.

7.56 From the solid earth sprung beautiful lotuses, the nature of vajra.
They appeared auspiciously where the Guide placed his wheel-marked feet.
He took seven steps and spoke with a melodious voice like Brahmā's,
"I will be a perfect being, a sublime physician who cures old age and death!" [93]

7.57 Brahmā and Śakra, the supreme gods, hovered in the center of space;
They bathed the body of the Guide with pure, clean, and fragrant water.
Two nāga kings, dwelling in space, spouted forth two streams of cool and warm water;
As well, one hundred thousand gods bathed the Guide's body with fragrant water.

7.58 The guardians of the world, with deep respect, held him in their fine hands;
The trichiliocosm, with all its animate and inanimate contents, shook.
As dazzling light streamed forth, even the lower realms were pacified;
When the Guide of the World was born, all suffering and afflictions ceased.

7.59 Upon the Victorious Guide of Men,
The gods showered a cooling rain of flowers.
Then the strong and diligent being
Took seven steps.

7.60 Wherever he placed his feet on the ground,
A beautiful lotus,
Adorned with many jewels,
Sprouted forth from the earth.

7.61 Thus, having taken seven steps,
With the melodious voice of Brahmā, he proclaimed,
"The sublime physician, dispeller of old age and death,
Has now arrived!"

7.62 Fearlessly he looked in all directions
And then spoke meaningfully,
"I am the leader of the world;
Supreme in this world, I am its guide.

7.63 "This is my last birth."
Saying this, the Guide of Men smiled. [F.51.a]
Śakra and the world protectors felt strong faith
And bathed the benefactor of the world with the finest scented water.
The nāga kings, too, followed suit,
Bathing his body with streams of scented water.

7.64 Ten billion other gods suspended in the sky
Also cooled his self-arisen body with streams of delightful scented water. [94]
They held aloft vast white parasols and beautiful yak-tail fans;
Hovering in space, the gods bathed the body of the leader of men.

7.65 One man swiftly related the joyful news to Śuddhodana:
"O King, great fortune! Your son has been born, adorned with signs!
He will certainly be a universal monarch, the jewel of your family lineage;
Uniting the victory banners of Jambudvīpa under one umbrella, he will have no enemies."

7.66 Then a second man came and presented himself before Śuddhodana.
"O King, great fortune! Now, just as the prince has been born into the Śākya clan,
There were 25,000 sons born to the Śākya house.
All are invincible, strong, and powerful."

7.67 Yet another man came and said, "O King, listen to my joyful news!
Eight hundred children, headed by Chanda, have been born to the servants.
Kaṇṭhaka's mare birthed ten thousand foals,
Perfect horses, glowing golden, with plaited manes and tails.

7.68 Twenty thousand kings from the borderlands
Came before the king, saying, "O King, may you be victorious!
We have come. Now tell us, king, what shall we do?
Your Majesty, you are the master and we are the subjects. King, may victory be yours!

7.69 "Twenty thousand fine elephants adorned with golden lattices
Have quickly marched to Kapilavastu, trumpeting out their cries. [95]
Headed by Gopā, six thousand black-spotted calves have been born; [F.51.b]
As the supreme god is born, so are these other beings. How excellent for the kingdom!

7.70 "Go, king, look upon all that is yours! Lord of shining merit!
As thousands of joyous gods and humans see the qualities of the newborn,
They set out for perfect awakening beyond suffering
And call out, 'May all be successful!' "

7.71 Monks, at the time of the Bodhisattva's birth, a great show of generosity was instigated. Moreover, five hundred children of noble family were born. Ten thousand girls, headed by Yaśovatī, were also born, as well as eight hundred female servants and five hundred male servants, headed by Chanda.
Likewise ten thousand mares and ten thousand colts, headed by Kaṇṭhaka, were born. Finally five hundred female elephants and five hundred male elephants were born following the Bodhisattva's birth. These births were all recorded in registers by King Śuddhodana and given to his young son for entertainment.

7.72 Through the power of the Bodhisattva and for his enjoyment, a bodhi tree grew at the center of the four billion regions, while a sandalwood-tree forest grew at the inner region. Also for the Bodhisattva's enjoyment, five hundred parks sprang forth in the area surrounding the city. The entrances to five thousand treasures became visible as they broke forth from the earth. Thus all of King Śuddhodana's intentions were perfectly fulfilled.

Then the king wondered, "Now, what shall I name my young son? Well, immediately when my son was born, all of my aims were fulfilled, so I will name him Sarvārthasiddha, Fulfiller of All Aims." Then King [96] Śuddhodana arranged a great naming ceremony and announced, "This child's name is Sarvārthasiddha."

7.73 [F.52.a] Monks, although the Bodhisattva had now been born, his mother's right side was not torn or damaged but had returned to its usual state. Moreover, Trita's wells manifested with flowing waters, and three ponds of scented oil sprang forth. Then five thousand celestial maidens came before the Bodhisattva's mother, bringing fragrant oils perfumed with the scent of celestial perfumes. They wanted to know how the birth had gone and whether she was feeling weary. Likewise five thousand celestial maidens bearing unguents came before the Bodhisattva's mother and asked how the birth was and whether she was weary. Then five thousand celestial maidens bearing vases filled with water scented with celestial perfumes came before the Bodhisattva's mother and asked how the birth was and whether she was weary. Next five thousand celestial maidens bearing divine children's clothing came before the Bodhisattva's mother and asked how the birth was and whether she was weary. Then five thousand celestial maidens bearing divine children's ornaments came before the Bodhisattva's mother and asked how the birth was and whether she was weary. Finally five thousand celestial maidens singing and playing divine instruments came before the Bodhisattva's mother and asked how the birth was and whether she was weary.

7.74 All of the extremist sages from Jambudvīpa who possessed the five extraordinary abilities came flying through the sky and arrived before King Śuddhodana. They called out, "May the king thrive!"

Monks, for seven days following the Bodhisattva's birth, he was honored with celestial and human music, respected, revered, [F.52.b] and given various offerings in the Lumbinī Grove. Food, drink, and enjoyments were proffered. The entire Śākya clan gathered, and everyone called out with delight, practiced generosity, [97] engaged in merit, and satisfied the needs of 32,000 priests each day. They gave anything that was desired to whoever desired it. Śakra and Brahmā also manifested themselves in the form of young priests within that gathering of priests and, sitting at the head of the line, they sang these verses of auspiciousness:

7.75 "As the lower realms are pacified,
As all beings feel joy,
He Who Will Establish Beings in Happiness,
The Bringer of Joy, has been born!

7.76 "As the unclouded lights
Of the gods, the sun, and the moon
Are outshone and disappear,
A light of merit has certainly appeared!

7.77 "The blind can see again;
The deaf can hear again;
The insane have had their sanity restored.
He will become an object of worship for the world!

7.78 "Since, unharmed by negative emotions,
The minds of beings are filled with love,
It is certain, without a doubt,
That he will become worthy of the offerings of ten million Brahmās.

7.79 "As sāl trees blossom
And the earth is even,
Certainly he will become omniscient,
The recipient of offerings of all the world.

7.80 "Since the world is calm
And great lotuses have sprouted forth,
Certainly this splendorous one
Will be the protector of the world!

7.81 "Since gentle fragrant breezes
Perfumed with divine incense
Pacify the illnesses of beings,
He will become the king of physicians.

7.82 "As the hundred gods living in the form realm,
Who are free of desire,
Join their palms and bow down,
He will become worthy of veneration!

7.83 "Humans can see the gods,
And gods can see humans,
Yet they are without animosity toward one another;
Thus he will become the great leader! [98]

7.84 "Since all fires have died out,
And all flowing rivers are still, [F.53.a]
And the earth sways gently,
He will be one who sees the truth!"

7.85 Monks, seven days after the Bodhisattva was born, the time came for Māyādevī to pass away. Upon her death, she was born among the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three.
Monks, you may think that it was because of the Bodhisattva that Māyādevī died. But you should not look upon things that way, since she had reached the maximum extent of her lifespan. Monks, seven days after the bodhisattvas of the past were born, their mothers also died. And why is that? Because once a bodhisattva is born and has grown up, it would destroy his mother's heart if he were to renounce his home.

7.86 Monks, seven days earlier Māyādevī had gone in great pomp from the city of Kapilavastu to the pleasure grove. However, with a splendor one trillion times greater than that, the Bodhisattva now entered the city of Kapilavastu. When he entered, five thousand vases filled with scented water were carried ahead of him. Likewise five thousand maidens carrying fans made of peacock feathers walked ahead. Five thousand maidens waving palm fronds preceded them, and farther ahead came five thousand maidens holding golden vases of scented water, who sprinkled this water upon the path. They were preceded by five thousand maidens holding various fresh garlands of wildflowers, as well as five thousand maidens carrying various boxes. Then came five thousand maidens holding fine jewels and sweeping the path. Farther ahead walked five thousand maidens carrying beautiful cushions, and [99] five thousand priests carrying bells and ringing out sounds of auspiciousness. In front of them there were five thousand beautifully decorated elephants. Then came twenty thousand horses covered with golden ornaments and full of jewels. [F.53.b]

7.87 Following the Bodhisattva were eighty thousand chariots beautifully outfitted with lattices of golden bells, and with parasols, victory banners, and flags hoisted. Then came forty thousand imposing foot soldiers and heroes wearing strong armor. Uncountable billions of gods of the desire and form realms, hovering in the sky, made various types of offerings to the Bodhisattva and followed after him. The Bodhisattva himself rode in a chariot, which the gods of the desire realm had decorated with a great array of ornaments. Twenty thousand celestial maidens with ornate jewelry held up jewel garlands and guided the chariot. Between every two of the celestial maidens was a human maiden, and between every two human maidens was a celestial maiden. However, because of the power of the Bodhisattva, the celestial girls did not find the smell of the human girls displeasing. Nor were the human maidens overwhelmed by the sight of the beautiful celestial maidens.

7.88 Monks, in the city of Kapilavastu, five hundred Śākyas had constructed five hundred homes for the Bodhisattva. When the Bodhisattva entered the city, they stood in front of these houses with their hands folded. Bowing reverentially, they invited the Bodhisattva:

"Sarvārthasiddha, please come here! God of Gods, please come here! Pure Being, please come here! Sublime Captain, please come here! Bringer of Pleasure, Joy, and Rapture, please come here! [100] You Who Are Renowned as Being beyond Reproach, please come here! All-Seeing One, please come here! Peerless One beyond Equal, with your splendor, qualities, and [F.54.a] body adorned with the major and minor signs, please come here!"

King Śuddhodana wanted to make everyone happy, so he took the Bodhisattva into all the houses. In this way it took four months before the Bodhisattva entered his actual residence, the palace known as Display of Gems.

7.89 Then the eldest of the elders of the Śākya clan gathered to discuss who among their women should be responsible for the upbringing, care, and nurturing of the Bodhisattva. They agreed that it should be a skilled and kind person who could care for him in a loving and altruistic atmosphere. Five hundred Śākya women came to volunteer, saying, "I will care for the prince! Please let me take care of the prince."

The eldest male and female Śākyas then argued, "All of these women are impetuous young girls, who are vain and proud because of their beauty and youth. Such women are incapable of caring for the prince and his needs. However, the prince's maternal aunt Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī would be able to raise the prince so that he is happy and well. She will also be able to please King Śuddhodana."

Since everyone agreed with this suggestion, they encouraged Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī to take on this task. And indeed Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī raised the prince well. At that time thirty-two additional nurses were appointed to serve the Bodhisattva. Of these, eight would carry him, eight were nursemaids, eight were playmates, and eight were appointed to bathe him.

7.90 King Śuddhodana then gathered all of the Śākyas for a council and asked, "Will this prince be a universal monarch or will he instead depart from here as a renunciant?" [F.54.b] [101]

At that time the great sage Asita, who had the five extraordinary powers, was residing on the slopes of Himavat, the king of mountains, together with his sister's son Naradatta. When the Bodhisattva was born, he saw many amazing miraculous displays and he perceived many gods who joyfully hovered in the sky, waving banners and calling out, "Buddha!" Witnessing this, he thought to himself, "Excellent! I must see this!" With his divine eye, he looked all over Jambudvīpa and saw that a prince had been born to King Śuddhodana in the city of Kapilavastu. It was a prince who shone with the light of merit, who was worshiped by everyone, and whose body was beautifully adorned with the thirty-two marks of a great being. He said to the young priest Naradatta,

7.91 "Young priest, listen! A jewel has come into this world! In the city of Kapilavastu, in the household of King Śuddhodana, a prince has been born. He shines with the light of merit, is worshiped by everyone, and is beautifully adorned with the thirty-two marks of a great being. If he remains in his palace, he will become a universal monarch who commands the four armies. He will be a victorious and pious Dharma king with the necessary strength to govern. He will also have seven precious possessions, which are the precious wheel, the precious elephant, the precious horse, the precious wife, the precious jewel, the precious steward, and the precious minister. He will beget one thousand sons, who will all be heroic, brave, handsome, and triumphant. By his innate strength, he will subdue and conquer the entire world and its oceans without using force or weapons, and in a way that accords with the doctrine. [F.55.a] In this way the entire world will be his kingdom. If, however, he leaves his home and goes forth as a renunciant, he will become a thus-gone one, a worthy one, a completely perfect buddha. He will become a teacher and a guide who is independent of others and renowned throughout the world. So come, let us go and see him." [102]

7.92 Just like the king of swans, the great sage Asita, accompanied by his nephew Naradatta, soared through the sky to the city of Kapilavastu. When he arrived, he concealed his magical powers and entered the city on foot. He went to the palace of King Śuddhodana and walked right up to the palace gates where, monks, he saw many hundreds of thousands of animals gathered.
The sage Asita went to the gatekeeper and told him, "Sir! Go and tell King Śuddhodana that a sage has come to see him."
The gatekeeper went before King Śuddhodana with folded hands and said, "Your Majesty! There is an old, elderly, and decrepit sage at the gate, who says that he wishes to see the king."
King Śuddhodana had a seat prepared for the sage Asita and said to the gatekeeper, "Let the sage enter."

7.93 The gatekeeper returned from the king's quarters and told the sage Asita to enter the palace. The sage Asita went before King Śuddhodana and told him, "Great King, may you be victorious! May you be victorious! May you live long! May you rule in accord with the Dharma!" [F.55.b]
King Śuddhodana first honored the sage by giving him water to bathe his feet and rinse his mouth. He then very respectfully seated him on a cushion. Once he saw that the sage was sitting comfortably, he respectfully addressed him, "Sage, I do not recall having seen you before. Why have you come here?" [103]
The sage Asita replied to King Śuddhodana, "Great King, I have come to see the son who was born to you."
The king said, "Great Sage, the child is sleeping now. Please wait for a short while until he wakes."
The sage replied, "Great King, a great being like this does not sleep long. Great beings like him usually remain awake."

7.94 Monks, out of affection for the sage Asita, the Bodhisattva now showed signs of having awakened. King Śuddhodana carefully lifted Prince Sarvārthasiddha with both hands and carried him before the sage Asita. When the sage Asita looked at the Bodhisattva, he saw that his body was wonderfully adorned with the thirty-two marks and eighty signs of a great being. His body was superior even to that of Śakra, Brahmā, and the guardians of the world. It was even more splendorous than hundreds of thousands of suns, and all of its parts were perfectly beautiful.

The sage exclaimed, "Oh! An amazing being has been born in this world! An exceptional and amazing being has been born in this world!" He stood up from his seat, joined his palms, prostrated to the Bodhisattva's feet, and circumambulated him.

7.95 He then took the Bodhisattva on his lap and remained pensive. He saw that the Bodhisattva's body bore the thirty-two marks of a great being, and he knew that these marks could only indicate one of two possibilities. [F.56.a] He saw that if the Bodhisattva was to stay in the palace, he would become a universal monarch who commands the four armies. He would be a victorious and pious Dharma king with the necessary strength to govern. He would also have the seven precious possessions of the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the wife, the jewel, the steward, and the minister. He would beget one thousand sons, who would all be heroic, brave, handsome, and triumphant. By his innate strength, he would subdue and conquer the entire world and its oceans without using force or weapons, and in a way that accords with the doctrine. In this way the entire world would be his kingdom. On the other hand, if he were to leave his home and go forth as a renunciant, he would become a thus-gone one, renowned as the completely perfect Buddha, a peerless leader. As the sage saw this, tears streamed down his face and he sat there sobbing. [104]

7.96 Seeing the sage crying, shedding tears and sobbing, the king became afraid and distressed, and he very quickly inquired of the great sage, "Sage! You shed tears, you cry, and you sigh deeply. What is wrong? Is some misfortune to befall the prince?"

The great sage Asita replied to the king, "Great King, I am not crying for sake of the prince, and no misfortune will befall him. I cry for myself because, Great King, I am elderly, old, and decrepit. Prince Sarvārthasiddha, however, will awaken to perfect and complete buddhahood and turn the wheel of the unexcelled Dharma in a way that cannot be done by any ascetic, priest, god, demon, or anybody else who follows worldly teachings. He will teach in a way that is beneficial and brings happiness to the world, including the gods. He will share a teaching of pure conduct, which is good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. It will be a teaching with excellent meaning and excellent words. It will be unique, perfect, pure, purifying, and consummate. [F.56.b]

"When those who are bound within the caste system hear his teaching, those who are not free from birth will be liberated. Likewise those who are afflicted by old age, sickness, death, grief, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and irritation will be liberated from old age, sickness, death, grief, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and irritation. The rain of the sublime teaching will refresh those who are tormented by the flames of desire, anger, and stupidity.

7.97 "He will lead onto the straight path to nirvāṇa those beings who are veiled by a variety of mistaken views and who have entered mistaken paths. He will free from bondage those who are trapped in the cage and prison of saṃsāra and who are bound by the fetters of disturbing emotions. In those beings who are blinded by darkness, clouded vision, and the cataract of ignorance, he will engender the eye of insight. For those beings who are wounded by the thorn of disturbing emotions, he will pull out that thorn. [105] Great King, an uḍumbara flower sometimes, though rarely, blooms in the world. Great King, in the same way, rarely, once in many millions of years, a blessed buddha is born in the world. And this great prince will certainly awaken to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood.

"Once he awakens to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood, he will liberate many billions of beings, bringing them across the ocean of saṃsāra and establishing them in immortality. Yet I shall not live to see this jewel of the Buddha. This is why, Great King, I cry and sigh so sadly. [F.57.a] I will not be able to venerate him, even if I remain healthy.

7.98 "Great King, if you look in our scriptures, you will see that the prince Sarvārthasiddha will not stay at home. The reason is, Great King, that the prince Sarvārthasiddha bears the thirty-two marks of a great being. And what are these marks?

7.99 "(1) Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha has a crown extension. That, Great King, is the first mark of a great being found on Prince Sarvārthasiddha. (2) Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha's hair is deep blue like the neck of a peacock or kohl powder, and curls to the right. (3) His forehead is even. (4) Great King, at the place between Sarvārthasiddha's eyebrows, there is a ringlet of hair the color of snow or silver. (5) Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha's eyelashes are like those of a bull. (6) His eyes are of a deep blue color. (7) He has forty teeth. (8) He has even teeth. (9) His teeth are without gaps between them. (10) His teeth are perfectly white. (11) Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha has the voice of Brahmā. (12) His experience of taste is unexcelled. (13) His tongue is very long and slender. (14) His jaw is like that of a lion. (15) His shoulders are well-rounded. (16) Seven of his body parts are well-rounded. (17) His chest is broad. (18) His skin is smooth and golden. (19) When standing up straight, his hands reach his knees. (20) His torso is like that of a lion. (21) Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha's arm span and height are identical, like the banyan tree. (22) Each of his hairs grows individually, and their tips curl to the right and upward. (23) His private parts are well sheathed. (24) His thighs are well-rounded. (25) His calves are like those of the black antelope, the king of deer. (26) His fingers are long.

(27) His heels are broad. (28) [F.57.b] [106] His arches are high. (29) His palms and the soles of his feet are soft. (30) His fingers and toes are webbed. (31) Great King, on the palms of his long-fingered hands and on the soles of his long-toed feet, there are beautiful thousand-spoked wheels with both center and rim. (32) Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha has even and well-placed feet.

"Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha possesses these thirty-two marks of a great being. Great king, marks of this type are not found on the body of a universal monarch; these are the marks found on the body of a bodhisattva.

7.100 "Great King, the body of Prince Sarvārthasiddha is adorned with eighty minor marks. Because he has these signs, Prince Sarvārthasiddha will not stay at home, but will certainly develop renunciation and depart from his home. Great King, what are these eighty minor marks? Well, Great King, (1) Prince Sarvārthasiddha's fingernails are rounded, (2) copper colored, and (3) glossy. (4) His fingers and toes are rounded, (5) long, and (6) well proportioned. (7) His veins are not visible. (8) His anklebones are not visible. (9) His joints are not visible. (10) His feet are even, rather than uneven. (11) His heels are broad. Great King, (12) Prince Sarvārthasiddha has markings on his hands that are even, (13) clear, (14) deep, (15) straight, and (16) well arranged. (17) His lips are red like the bimba fruit. (18) His voice is not loud. (19) His tongue is supple, soft, and copper colored. (20) His voice is melodious like the trumpeting of an elephant, or the roll of thunder. [F.58.a]

7.101 "Moreover, (21) his arms are long. (22) He is excellently clean. (23) His body is soft. (24) His body is not subject to fear or hesitancy. (25) His body is well proportioned, (26) heroic, (27) beautiful, and (28) well composed. (29) His kneecaps are broad, large, and well-developed. Great King, (30) Prince Sarvārthasiddha's body is rounded, (31) very smooth, (32) straight, and (33) well structured. (34) His navel is deep, (35) not crooked, and (36) tapering. [107] (37) Like a sage, he is very pure in his conduct. (38) He is exceedingly attractive, (39) of pure appearance, and (40) shines with a light that dispels all darkness.

7.102 "Great King, (41) Prince Sarvārthasiddha moves with the serene gait of an elephant, (42) the stride of a lion, (43) the step of a great bull, (44) the swoop of a swan. (45) His steps always make beautiful circles to the right. (46) His sides are rounded, (47) well proportioned, and (48) straight. (49) His waist is slight like the curve of a bow. (50) His body is free of any blemishes or dark spots. Great King, (51) Prince Sarvārthasiddha has rounded canines. (52) His canines are sharp and well spaced. (53) His nose is elegantly high. (54) His eyes are clear, (55) stainless, (56) warm, (57) elongated, (58) large, and (59) resemble blue lotuses.

7.103 "Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha has (60) even eyebrows that are (61) thick, (62) dark, (63) continuous, and (64) tapered. (65) His cheeks are plump, (66) even, [F.58.b] (67) unblemished, and (68) free from the flush of aggression. (69) His sense organs are clearly apparent. Great King, (70) Prince Sarvārthasiddha has a perfect tuft of hair between his brows. (71) His face and forehead are proportional. (72) His head is large. (73) His hair is black, (74) even, (75) fragrant, (76) soft, (77) well kempt, (78) well arranged, and (79) curly. Great King, (80) Prince Sarvārthasiddha has hair that curls into the forms of the endless knot, the mark of auspiciousness, the mark of eternal happiness, and the mark of prosperity. Great King, Prince Sarvārthasiddha has all of these eighty marks.

"Great King, these eighty marks that Prince Sarvārthasiddha bears mean that Prince Sarvārthasiddha will not remain in his home, but will certainly leave the palace in order to live the life of a renunciant."

7.104 When King Śuddhodana heard the sage Asita's prophecy about the prince, he rejoiced and felt satisfied, elated, joyful, and blissful. He rose from his seat, prostrated at the feet of the Bodhisattva, and spoke this verse:

"All the gods prostrate to you. The sages give you offerings,
And the entire world worships you,
So I will also offer you my homage." [108]

7.105 And so, monks, King Śuddhodana satisfied the sage Asita and his nephew Naradatta appropriately with a banquet, offered them fine garments, and circumambulated them. Then the great sage Asita returned to his own abode by magically flying through the air. Once there, the great sage Asita told the young priest, "Naradatta, when you hear that a buddha has appeared in this world, [F.59.a] you must go immediately to see him and take ordination with that teacher. This will have a long-lasting purpose and bring you benefit and happiness."

7.106 On this topic, it is said:

Seeing the hosts of gods, suspended in space calling out, "Buddha!"
The divine sage Asita, who lived on the mountain slopes, was filled with joy.
"What is this word *Buddha*, which brings such joy to all beings?
It fills my body with pleasure, my mind with joy, and brings supreme peace.

7.107 "Is he a god, a demigod, a garuḍa, a kinnara, this *Buddha*?
That word, which I never heard before, brings joy and trust."
He looked with divine vision over the ten directions, mountains, earth, and oceans,
And looking again saw many amazing sights on the earth, mountains, and oceans.

7.108 "This beautiful light glows brilliantly, bringing physical bliss.
As coral shoots spring forth on the mountaintops,
The trees burst into blossom and are laden with fruits—
It is clear that a sublime jewel will soon appear in the three realms. [109]

7.109 "The earth appears even and stainless like the palm of a hand,
The gods joyfully wave banners in midair,
Marvelous gems float in the abode of the ocean's nāga king—
Certainly a victorious jewel, a source of the doctrine, will appear in Jambudvīpa!

7.110 "The lower realms are pacified, suffering removed, and beings find joy,
Hosts of devas move about the sky with delight
As the pleasing and melodious songs of the gods resound—
These are certainly signs that here in the three realms, a jewel will appear."

7.111 Here in Jambudvīpa, the sage Asita looked with the divine eye
To the city of Kapilavastu, King Śuddhodana's sublime city.
There he saw a person born who was as strong as Nārāyaṇa, with signs and splendorous merit;
He rejoiced, his mind became joyful, and he gained strength. [F.59.b]

7.112 Amazed, he went quickly with his disciple
And arrived at the gate of Kapilavastu, the king's supreme city,
Where he saw many trillions of living beings thronging.
He asked the gatekeeper to quickly say that a sage was at the gate.

7.113 The gatekeeper hurriedly entered the palace and told the king,
"Your Majesty, there is an old sage, a great ascetic, at the palace gates;
That supreme sage asks to enter the king's palace.
Great King, shall I let him in or not? Please let me know."

7.114 The king made a seat for the sage and said, "Go and bring him here."
When the sage Asita heard the doorman's words, he was happy and joyful. [110]
Like a thirsty man wishes for cool water, or one tormented by hunger hopes for food,
The sublime sage was overjoyed at the prospect of seeing this excellent being.

7.115 He joyously exclaimed, "King, may you be victorious and live long!"
With these pleasing words and with calm mind and senses, he took his seat.
The king respectfully addressed the sage with these words:
"Please tell me, sage, why have you come to the royal palace?"

7.116 "A son was born to you, supreme, transcendent, and splendorous,
Ornamented by thirty-two excellent signs, and with the power of Nārāyaṇa.
Your Majesty, I would be delighted to see your son, Sarvārthasiddha;
That is why I have come here, O King. I have no other wish."

7.117 "Excellent, you are welcome. Tired or not, I am delighted to see you.
The Boon-Granting Prince is sleeping, so this is not the time to see him.
Wait a while and you will see the Perfect One,
Who is like a stainless full moon adorned with a crown of stars."

7.118 When the Supreme Guide awoke, glowing like the full moon,
The king took that blazing being, whose light outshone the sun, onto his lap.
"Sage, behold the Golden One, worshiped by gods and humans." [F.60.a]
The sage Asita saw his beautiful feet, ornamented by the mark of wheels.

7.119 Then the sage stood up, joined his palms, and prostrated to the prince's feet;
The learned sage held the child and gazed upon him, deep in thought.
He saw the child with the strength of Nārāyaṇa, ornamented by supreme marks;
Skilled in the Vedas and commentaries, the sage shook his head as he saw two possibilities: [111]

7.120 The child would be a powerful universal monarch or a buddha, supreme in the world.
Terribly sad in body and mind, the sage shed tears and sighed deeply.
The supreme king became afraid and asked, "Why does the priest weep?
Does the sage Asita see some obstacle for my Sarvārthasiddha?

7.121 "O Sage, why do you weep? Tell me the truth, what good or evil do you see?"
"There is no misfortune or obstacle for your son, Sarvārthasiddha;
I myself am old and infirm, and thus I grieve for myself.
This prince will be a buddha, revered by the world, who will teach the genuine doctrine.

7.122 "And because I will not see this delightful sight, I cry.
Your Majesty, his stainless body is marked by thirty-two excellent signs,
Thus he has only one of two destinies, and no third choice:
Either he will be a universal monarch, or he will be a buddha, supreme on this earth.

7.123 "Yet, since he will not desire sense pleasures, he will certainly become a buddha."
Hearing the sage's prophecy, the king was delighted and overjoyed;
He stood up, joined his palms, and prostrated at the prince's feet.
"Powerful One, the gods worship you, the sages praise you.

7.124 "Supreme Leader of All Beings in the Three Realms, I prostrate to you!"
The sage was delighted and spoke to his nephew, "Listen to my instructions!
When this prince awakens as a buddha and turns the wheel of Dharma,
You must immediately take ordination and follow the Able One, and then you shall attain nirvāṇa."

7.125 The sublime sage prostrated at the prince's feet, circled him, and told the king, [F.60.b]
"You have very good fortune to have a son like this! [112]
He will satisfy the world, with its gods and humans, through the doctrine."
The great sage then left Kapilavastu and returned to his hermitage. [B6]

7.126 Monks, as soon as the Bodhisattva was born, the god Maheśvara called out to the gods of the pure abodes, "Friends, there is a bodhisattva, a great being, who has excellently and diligently practiced purification, generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, knowledge, methods, studies, conduct, ascetic practices, and austerities for countless trillions of eons. He has great love, great compassion, and great joy, and is possessed of a noble mind by virtue of its equanimity. He strives for the benefit of all beings and is shielded by the armor of diligence. He has appeared out of the roots of virtue that were brought about by previous buddhas.

7.127 "He is adorned with the marks of a hundred merits and is full of a determined resolve. He conquers the enemy's army and has a joyful and excellent mind without stains. He bears the crowning banner of great wisdom. He uproots the strength of the demons. He is the great leader of the trichiliocosm and is worshiped by gods and humans. He has performed great sacrifices and possesses an exceedingly excellent accumulation of merit. Since he has his mind set on deliverance, he will uproot birth, old age, and death. He is wellborn and will bring beings to awakening. Born into the family of King Ikṣvāku, he has come to the world of humans. He will soon awaken to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood. [F.61.a] Let us go and pay homage to him, serve him, respect him, and praise him. The other gods who are overcome by their pride will see us paying homage to the Bodhisattva, and they will cast aside their pride, haughtiness, and arrogance. They will also go to pay homage, service, and respect to the Bodhisattva. This will bring lasting purpose, benefit, and happiness to those gods, until they attain immortality. The might and prosperity of King Śuddhodana will become renowned. Let us make a true prophecy about the Bodhisattva, and then return." [113]

7.128 After the god Maheśvara had said this, he took off for the palace of King Śuddhodana surrounded by one million two hundred thousand gods, bathing the entire city of Kapilavastu in light. The gatekeeper informed the king of their arrival, and Maheśvara entered the palace with the king's permission. He prostrated, touching his head to the Bodhisattva's

feet, drew his robe over one shoulder, and circled the Bodhisattva many hundreds of thousands of times. He then took the Bodhisattva onto his lap and spoke these joyful words to King Śuddhodana: "Great King, you should be supremely delighted! The reason, Great King, is that the Bodhisattva's body is beautifully ornamented with the major and minor marks of a great being, and he outshines the world of gods, humans, and demigods with his color, magnificence, renown, and glory. Great King, it is therefore certain that the Bodhisattva will awaken to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood."

[F.61.b] Monks, in this way the god Maheśvara, together with the many gods of the pure realms, made offerings to the Bodhisattva and showed him great respect. As they had now given the true prophecy, they returned to their own abodes.

7.129 On this topic, it is said:

Learning of the birth of He Who Has Crossed the Ocean of Qualities,
Maheśvara, overjoyed, spoke to the gods,
"For many millions of eons, it is so rare even to hear of this;
So come, let us go and worship the Lord of Men."

7.130 Thus all the twelve thousand pure gods, beautifully ornamented with jeweled crowns,
Excellently comported, and with their lovely hair flowing,
Quickly traveled to the supreme city of Kapilavastu
And stood before the king's gate. [114]

7.131 They spoke politely to the gatekeeper,
"Go to the palace and make our arrival known to the king."
The gatekeeper went inside as they asked,
Joined his palms, and spoke to the king.

7.132 "Your Majesty, may you always be victorious and live long!
Pure luminescent beings with great merit stand by your door,
Beautifully ornamented with jeweled crowns and excellent conduct.
Their faces are like the full moon; their luster is pure like that of the clear moon.

7.133 "King, wherever they go, they cast no shadow;
When they walk, their steps make no sound.
When they step on the earth, they raise no dust,
And beings never tire of gazing upon them.

7.134 "Their bodies radiate great clear light.
Their words are beautiful; those of humans cannot compare!
Their speech is profound, soft, and melodious.
These are not humans; I think they must be gods.

7.135 "They wait respectfully, each of them holding in his hands
The choicest flowers, garlands, unguents, and silk.
King, it is certain that they have come
To see and worship the prince, the God of Gods."

7.136 The king, hearing these words, was delighted and said,
"Go invite them all into the palace. [115]
The qualities and behavior you have described,
Such miracles are not made by humans."

7.137 The gatekeeper joined his palms and spoke to the gods, [F.62.a]
"The king invites you all to come inside."
The gods with garlands in their arms were overjoyed
And entered the king's palace, which was similar to the god realm.

7.138 Seeing these supreme gods enter his palace,
The king rose from his seat and joined his palms.
"These thrones with jeweled legs have been arranged here.
Please, with your great benevolence, kindly take your seats."

7.139 Then, without pride or haughtiness, the gods took their seats.
"King, please listen to our reason for coming here.
A child, whose body is pure and who has great merits, has been born to you;
We wish to see his honored person.

7.140 "We know the significance of excellent marks;
We know what they mean, their course and their application.
Thus, sublime king, do not feel sad;
We wish to see the one who has these many marks.

7.141 The king, surrounded by the women of the palace, was filled with joy,
And he took the prince, blazing like a fire, on his lap.
The supreme gods, with flowing hair, approached;
Just when they emerged from the door, the whole trichiliocosm trembled. [116]

7.142 When the supreme gods saw the Leader's feet and nails,
Copper colored, stainless, pure, and majestic,
Those gods with their flowing hair quickly stood and prostrated,
Placing their heads at the feet of the one with stainless brilliance.

7.143 Because of these marks and the glory that they show,
As well as the splendor of merit and the unseen crown of his head,
And also because of the light that shines from the tuft of hair on his forehead,
It is certain that he will conquer Māra and find awakening.

7.144 The gods praised the prince, saying,
"He is free from the darkness of disturbing emotions;
He is full of qualities and is able to see things, just as they are.
This jewel among men has finally appeared—
The one who has conquered the enemies of birth, old age, death, and disturbing emotions.

7.145 "Stirred by objects of desire and imagination, three fires are born,
Setting the three existences ablaze and causing deep torment. [F.62.b]
Yet you, a heroic cloud of Dharma, will aid the tormented by filling the trichiliocosm
With a rain of the nectar of immortality to calm the suffering of negative emotions.

7.146 "With a loving voice and soft, compassionate speech,
You will call out with the delightful strains of Brahmā's voice,
Heard in all three realms and by all beings.
Blessed One, quickly call out with the great speech of a buddha!

7.147 "You will conquer the evil hordes of extremists with mistaken views,
Who are caught up in worldly desire and who remain on the peak of existence. [117]
Hearing your doctrine of emptiness and interdependent causality,
They will scatter like jackals before a lion!

7.148 "You clear away the obscuration of ignorance, the haze of the great disturbing emotions;
You appear and manifest for the sake of beings.
You, the shining light of wisdom, the light rays of insight,
May you dispel the great darkness of all beings with your gaze!

7.149 "When such an amazing pure being as this appears,
Gods and humans acquire a tremendous boon.
This precious being, who grants awakening,
Will cut the path to the lower realms and open the paths of the gods!"

7.150 The gods strewed a rain of divine flowers over Kapilavastu,
Then they circled and praised the Bodhisattva,
Calling out, "This is the Buddha, the excellent Buddha!"
Before departing joyfully up through the sky.

7.151 *This concludes the seventh chapter, on the birth.*

8.

Chapter 8

GOING TO THE TEMPLE

8.1 Monks, on the very evening of the Bodhisattva's birth, there were twenty thousand girls born among the ruling class, the priestly class, the merchants, and the householders, such as the landowners. All of them were offered to the Bodhisattva by their parents to serve and honor him. King Śuddhodana also gave twenty thousand girls to the Bodhisattva to serve and honor him. His friends, his ministers, his [118] kinfolk, and his blood relatives also offered twenty thousand girls to serve and honor the Bodhisattva. [F.63.a] Finally the members of ministerial assemblies also offered twenty thousand girls to serve and honor the Bodhisattva.

8.2 Monks, at that time the male and female elders of the Śākya clan gathered and said to King Śuddhodana, "King, please pay heed. The prince should now worship in the temple."
King Śuddhodana replied, "Yes, it would be excellent for him to worship in this way. Therefore, let the city be decorated! Ornament the streets, crossroads, intersections, and marketplaces. Send away all the hunchbacks and all the blind, deaf, and mute people, as well as anyone who is deformed or crippled. Gather everything auspicious! Beat the drums of merit and ring the bells of auspiciousness. Ornament the gates of this excellent city. Play the most pleasant instruments,

cymbals, and drums. Assemble all the local lords and gather the merchants, householders, ministers, gatekeepers, and all the local people. Prepare chariots for the girls. Procure brimming vases. Gather the priests who are experts in recitation. Ornately decorate the temples."

8.3 Monks, everyone followed the commands issued by the king. Then King Śuddhodana went to his home and spoke to Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, saying, "The prince is to pray in the temple. Ornament him well."
Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī replied, "Of course," and dressed the prince lavishly.
While the prince was being dressed, with a slight smile and no hint of annoyance, he spoke these pleasant words to his maternal aunt: "Mother, where are you taking me?"
She replied, "Son, I am taking you to the temple." [F.63.b]

8.4 The prince then smiled, laughed, and spoke these verses to his maternal aunt:

"When I was born, this trichiliocosm trembled.
Śakra, Brahmā, the demigods, the mahoragas, [119]
Sūrya, and Candra, as well as Vaiśravaṇa and Kumāra,
All bowed their heads to my feet and paid homage to me.

8.5 "What other god is there who is superior to me,
Who my mother takes me to worship today?
I am superior to all the gods; I am the God of Gods.
There is no other god like me, so how could anyone be superior?

8.6 "Still, mother, I will follow worldly customs;
When beings see my miraculous displays, they will be pleased.
It will inspire them with great respect,
And gods and humans will know that I am the God of Gods."

8.7 Monks, once the main streets, crossroads, intersections, and markets had been richly ornamented, with praises and benedictions of all kinds posted around the city, a richly ornamented chariot was prepared for the prince in the inner courtyard. With all auspicious circumstances having been arranged in this manner, King Śuddhodana lifted the prince onto his lap. Surrounded by priests, townspeople, merchants, householders, ministers, local lords, gatekeepers, local people, friends, and kinfolk, they traveled through the richly ornamented roads, intersections, crossroads, and

marketplaces, which were enveloped in the fragrant scent of incense and strewn with flower petals, filled with horses, elephants, chariots, and foot soldiers, with parasols, victory banners, and flags held aloft, and resounding with many instruments. At that time a hundred thousand gods led the Bodhisattva's chariot. Many hundreds of millions of gods and maidens scattered flowers from the sky above and played cymbals.

8.8 Monks, King Śuddhodana, accompanied by the great royal procession, splendor, and ceremony, brought the prince to the temple. As soon as the Bodhisattva placed his right foot in the temple, [F.64.a] the insentient [120] statues of the gods, such as Śiva, Skanda, Nārāyaṇa, Kubera, Candra, Sūrya, Vaiśravaṇa, Śakra, Brahmā, and the guardians of the world, all stood up from their seats and prostrated at the Bodhisattva's feet. Right then a hundred thousand gods and humans cried out in amazement and delight. The fine city of Kapilavastu trembled in six ways. A rain of divine flowers fell, and a hundred thousand divine instruments sounded without even being played. Then the various statues in the temple all returned to their seats and spoke these verses:

8.9 "Mount Meru, the greatest and best of mountains, would never bow down to a mustard seed;
The great ocean, the nāga king's abode, would never bow down to a puddle;
The brilliant sun and moon would never bow down before a firefly.
So how could the Noble One, with merit and wisdom, bow down before the gods?

8.10 "The gods and humans of this trichiliocosm
Are like mustard seeds, puddles, and fireflies, and yet filled with pride.
If the world bows to He Who Is like Mount Meru, the Ocean, the Sun, and the Moon—
The self-arisen sublime one of this world—then they would attain heaven and nirvāṇa."

8.11 Monks, when the Bodhisattva entered the temple, three million two hundred thousand gods gave rise to the intention to attain unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening. Monks, these are the circumstances and causes related to the Bodhisattva's equanimity as he was brought to the temple.

8.12 *This concludes the eighth chapter, on going to the temple.* [121]

9.

Chapter 9

THE ORNAMENTS

9.1 Monks, at the time of the constellation of Citrā, after the constellation of Hastā had passed, the chief priest of the king, who was called Udayana, the father of Udāyin, [F.64.b] went before King Śuddhodana surrounded by some five hundred priests and said, "Your Majesty, please know that it is now proper for ornaments to be made for the prince."
The king replied, "Very well, then do it."

9.2 At that time King Śuddhodana had five hundred types of ornaments made by five hundred Śākyas. He commissioned bracelets, anklets, crowns, necklaces, rings, earrings, armbands, golden belts, golden threads, nets of bells, nets of gems, shoes bedecked with jewels, garlands adorned with various gems, jeweled bangles, chokers, and diadems. When the ornaments were completed the Śākyas went before King Śuddhodana at the time of the constellation of Puṣya and said, "King, please ornament the prince."
The king replied, "It is better if you ornament the prince and make these offerings to him, since I have commissioned the ornaments for the prince."
They replied, "The prince should wear these ornaments that we have made for seven days and nights. This will make our efforts meaningful."

9.3 At dawn, as the sun rose, the Bodhisattva entered the park known as Stainless Array, where Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī took him onto her lap. Eighty thousand women welcomed the Bodhisattva and gazed at his countenance. Ten thousand girls welcomed the Bodhisattva and gazed at his countenance. Ten thousand Śākyas welcomed the Bodhisattva and gazed at his countenance. Five thousand priests also arrived and [122] gazed at the Bodhisattva's countenance. [F.65.a] Then the ornaments that had been commissioned by the gracious king of the Śākyas were fastened onto the Bodhisattva's body.

9.4 As soon as the ornaments were placed on the Bodhisattva's body, the radiance of his body eclipsed their luster. They did not glitter or gleam, and they lost all their shine. They were just like a lump of coal that is placed next to gold from the Jambū River—it also does not glitter, gleam, or shine. In the same way, when the ornaments were struck by the light radiating from the Bodhisattva's body, they lost all their glitter, gleam, and shine. And thus it was that any ornament that was placed on the Bodhisattva's body lost its luster, like a lump of soot thrown before gold from the Jambū River.

9.5 Then the goddess of the pleasure grove, Vimala, revealed her vast body before the king and the group of Śākyas, and spoke these verses to them:

"Even if the entire trichiliocosm with its cities and towns
Were filled with stainless and beautiful gold,
A single coin of gold from the Jambū River would steal its splendor,
Leaving the other gold bereft of glory and brilliance.

9.6 "Even if this entire earth were filled with gold from Jambudvīpa,
The light radiating from the pores of the Glorious Guide would outshine it.
It would not shine or gleam, but lose its beauty and glow;
Before the Blissful Protector, it would appear just like soot.

9.7 "He is brimming with hundreds of qualities, adorned by his own magnificence;
Not beautified by ornaments, his body is perfectly stainless. [123]
The glows of the sun and moon, the stars, jewels, fire,
Śakra, and Brahmā are no longer bright in front of his intense glory.

9.8 "His body is adorned with signs, the result of previous virtue,
So why would he need ordinary ornaments made by someone else?
Remove the ornaments! Do not disturb the One Who Makes the Foolish Wise—
He, who brings supreme knowledge, does not wear artificial ornaments!

9.9 "Chanda was born at the same time as the son of the kingdom;
Give these beautiful spotless jewels to him, the servant." [F.65.b]
Reflecting that the Śākya clan would flourish and become supreme,
The Śākyas were delighted and amazed.

9.10 Having spoken these words, the goddess scattered divine flowers over the Bodhisattva and disappeared.

9.11 *This concludes the ninth chapter, on the ornaments.*

10.

Chapter 10

THE DEMONSTRATION AT THE WRITING SCHOOL

10.1 Monks, when the young child had grown a little older, he was taken to school. He went there amid hundreds of thousands of auspicious signs, and he was surrounded and attended by tens of thousands of boys, along with ten thousand carts filled with hard food, soft food, and condiments, and ten thousand carts filled with gold coins and gems. These were distributed in the streets and road junctions, and the entrances to the markets of the city of Kapilavastu. At the same time a symphony of eight hundred thousand cymbals was sounded, and a heavy rain of flowers fell.

Hundreds of thousands of girls, adorned with all kinds of jewelry, perched themselves on the balconies, turrets, arches, windows, [124] upper stories, and roofs of the homes. Gazing at the Bodhisattva, they tossed flowers. There were also eight thousand goddesses, who were adorned with loose hanging jewelry and carried bhadraṃkara gems. They went ahead of the Bodhisattva, cleansing his way. Gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas revealed the upper halves of their bodies, and festooned wreaths of flowers and woven silk from the sky. All the Śākya factions, with King Śuddhodana leading the way, went ahead of the Bodhisattva. With such an array as this, the Bodhisattva was taken to school.

10.2 As soon as the Bodhisattva arrived in school, the schoolmaster, who was called Viśvāmitra, was unable to withstand the Bodhisattva's splendor and radiance, and prostrated to him face-down on the ground. [F.66.a] A god from the Heaven of Joy called Śubhāṅga saw the schoolmaster collapsed on the ground and, grabbing him with his right hand, raised him up. Suspended in the sky, Śubhāṅga then spoke the following verses to King Śuddhodana and the crowd:

10.3 "Whatever topics of knowledge are circulating in this world of humans—
Numbers, scripts, mathematics, the permutations of the elements,
And all the immeasurable mundane techniques of craftsmanship—
This child already learned these things many tens of millions of eons ago.

10.4 "Nonetheless he acts solely in harmony with people.
The Well-Instructed One thus came to school for the sake of instruction,
In order to mature many children for the Highest Vehicle
And to bring a myriad other beings to immortality. [125]

10.5 "He knows the way of the path of the transcendent four truths.
He is adept in how things arise based on causes,
And how the cessation and termination of conditioned existence leads to the calm state.
When he knows all that, how could he not know the subject of scripts?

10.6 "There is no master superior to him throughout the three worlds;
Among all gods and humans, he alone is foremost.
All of you do not know even the names of the scripts
That he has learned before, many tens of millions of eons ago.

10.7 "This pure being knows in a single instant
The manifold, diverse thoughts of beings.
When he knows such invisible and formless things,
Why mention the visible forms of scripts?"

When he had spoken these verses, the god honored the Bodhisattva with celestial flowers and immediately thereafter disappeared.

10.8 The nannies and the entourage of maids were asked to stay at the school, while the remaining Śākyas, headed by Śuddhodana, departed. The Bodhisattva took up a writing board made of sandalwood. It was decorated with flecks of divine gold of prime quality and studded with precious gems on all sides. He then addressed the master Viśvāmitra:

10.9 "Which script, O master, will you be teaching me? [F.66.b] Will it be the Brāhmī script, the Kharoṣṭī script, or the Puṣkarasāri script? Will it be the Aṅga script, the Vaṅga script, the Magadha script, the Maṅgalya script, the Aṅgulīya script, the Śakāri script, the Brahmavali script, the Pāruṣya script, the Drāviḍa script, the Kirāta script, the Dākṣiṇya script, the Ugra script, the Saṃkhyā script, the Anuloma script, the Avamūrdha script, [126] the Darada script, the Khāṣya script, the Cīna script, the Lūna script, the Hūṇa script, the Madhyākṣaravistara script, the Puṣpa script, the Deva script, the Nāga script, the Yakṣa script, the Gandharva script, the Kinnara script, the Mahoraga script, the Asura script, the Garuḍa script, the Mṛgacakra script, the Vāyasaruta script, the Bhaumadeva script, the Antarīkṣadeva script, the Uttarakurudvīpa script, the Aparagoḍānī script, the Pūrvavideha script, the Utkṣepa script, the Nikṣepa script, the Vikṣepa script, the Prakṣepa script, the Sāgara script, the Vajra script, the Lekhapratilekha script, the Anudruta script, the Śāstrāvarta script, the Gaṇanāvarta script, the Utkṣepāvarta script, the Nikṣepāvarta script, the Pādalikhita script, the Dviruttarapadasaṃdhi script, the Yāvaddaśottarapadasaṃdhi script, the Madhyāhāriṇī script, the Sarvarutasaṃgrahaṇī script, the Vidyānulomāvimiśrita script, the Ṛṣitapastapta script, the Rocamāna script, the Dharaṇīprekṣiṇī script, [F.67.a] the Gaganaprekṣiṇī script, the Sarvauṣadhiniṣyanda script, the Sarvasārasaṃgrahaṇī script, or the Sarvabhūtarutagrahaṇī script? Master, which of those sixty-four scripts will you teach me?"

10.10 The schoolmaster Viśvāmitra was amazed, and he smiled. Setting aside pride, conceit, and arrogance, he replied with the following verses:

"How wonderful! Even though the Pure Being
Is learned in all the treatises, in the world
He follows the conventions of the world.
Thus he has come to school.

10.11 "He has learned scripts
Even the names of which
I have not heard,
Yet he has come to school.

10.12 "Although I indeed see his face,
The crown of his head is out of sight.
If his knowledge of scripts is already perfect,
How can I school him in that knowledge?

10.13 "This god, great god of gods,
Supreme divine scholar among all gods,
Is superior and without equal.
No person in the world is comparable to him. [127]

10.14 "Only because of his unparalleled expertise
In applying knowledge and means,
Will I teach this learned being—
The final refuge of all beings."

10.15 Monks, then the schoolmaster taught writing to the Bodhisattva, along with ten thousand other children. However, through the power of the Bodhisattva, as the schoolmaster was saying the alphabet to the children, he did it in the following manner:

10.16 "When he said the letter *a*, out came the statement: 'Every composite phenomenon is impermanent (*anityaḥ sarvasaṃskāraḥ*).'
When he said the letter *ā*, out came the statement: 'Beneficial to self and others (*ātmaparahita*).'
When he said the letter *i*, out came the statement: 'The vast development of the senses (*indriyavaipulya*).'
When he said the letter *ī*, out came the statement: 'The world is riddled with plague (*ītibahulaṃ jagat*).'
When he said the letter *u*, out came the statement: 'The world is rife with misfortune (*upadravabahulaṃ jagat*).'
When he said the letter *ū*, out came the statement: 'The world is of little substance (*ūnasattvaṃ jagat*).'
When he said the letter *e*, out came the statement: 'Faults come from desire (*eṣaṇāsamutthānadoṣa*).'
When he said the letter *ai*, out came the statement: 'The noble path is virtuous (*airyāpathaḥ śreyāniti*).'
When he said the letter *o*, out came the statement: 'The stream has been forded (*oghottara*).' [F.67.b]
When he said the letter *au*, out came the statement: 'Spontaneously generated (*aupapāduka*).'
When he said the letter *aṃ*, out came the statement: 'The emergence of what is efficacious (*amoghotpatti*).'[7]
When he said the letter *aḥ*, out came the statement: 'Reaching an end (*astaṃgamana*).'

10.17 "When he said the letter *ka*, out came the statement: 'Immersion in the full ripening of actions (*karmavipākāvatāra*).'
When he said the letter *kha*, out came the statement: 'All phenomena are like space (*khasamasarvadharma*).'
When he said the letter *ga*, out came the statement: 'Immersion in the profound Dharma of dependent origination (*gambhīradharmapratītyasamutpādāvatāra*).'
When he said the letter *gha*, out came the statement: 'Eradicating the darkness of delusion and the thick veils of ignorance (*ghanapaṭalāvidyāmohāndhakāravidhamana*).'
When he said the letter *ṅ*, out came the statement: 'The complete purification of factors (*aṅgaviśuddhi*).'

10.18 "When he said the letter *ca*, out came the statement: 'The path of the four noble truths (*caturāryasatyapatha*).'
When he said the letter *cha*, out came the statement: 'Abandoning the passion of lust (*chandarāgaprahāṇa*).'
When he said the letter *ja*, out came the statement: 'Transcending old age and death (*jarāmaraṇasamatikramaṇa*).'
When he said the letter *jha*, out came the statement: 'Vanquishing the forces of the god of love (*jhaṣadhvajabalanigrahaṇa*).'
When he said the letter *ña*, out came the statement: 'Making known (*jñāpana*).'

10.19 "When he said the letter *ṭa*, out came the statement: 'Severing the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭopacchedana*).'
When he said the letter *ṭha*, out came the statement: 'A question rejected out of hand (*ṭhapanīyapraśna*).'
When he said the letter *ḍa*, out came the statement: 'Vanquishing the evil one and those who cause discord (*ḍamaramāranigrahaṇa*).'
When he said the letter *ḍha*, out came the statement: 'The impure regions (*mīḍhaviṣayāḥ*).'
When he said the letter *ṇa*, out came the statement: 'Afflictions are subtle (*reṇukleśāḥ*).'

10.20 "When he said the letter *ta*, out came the statement: 'Suchness is undifferentiated (*tathatāsaṃbheda*).'
When he said the letter tha, out came the statement: 'Strength, power, force, and self-confidence (*thāmabalavegavaiśāradya*).'
When he said the letter *da*, out came the statement: 'Generosity, discipline, restraint, and gentleness (*dānadamasaṃyamasaurabhya*).'
When he said the letter *dha*, out came the statement: 'The wealth of the noble ones is sevenfold (*dhanamāryāṇāṃ saptavidham*).'
When he said the letter *na*, out came the statement: 'Full knowledge of name and form (*nāmarūpaparijñā*).'

10.21 "When he said the letter *pa*, out came the statement: 'The absolute (*paramārtha*).'
When he said the letter *pha*, out came the statement: 'The actualization of the attainment of the fruition (*phalaprāptisākṣātkriyā*).'
When he said the letter *ba*, out came the statement: 'Liberation from bondage (*bandhanamokṣa*).'
[128] When he said the letter *bha*, out came the statement: 'The destruction of existence (*bhavavibhava*).'
When he said the letter *ma*, out came the statement: 'The cessation of arrogance and pride (*madamānopaśamana*).'

10.22 "When he said the letter *ya*, [F.68.a] out came the statement: 'Understanding phenomena exactly as they are (*yathāvaddharmaprativedha*).'
When he said the letter *ra*, out came the statement: 'Dissatisfaction with pleasure is delighting in the absolute (*ratyaratiparamārtharati*).'
When he said the letter *la*, out came the statement: 'Severing the vine (*latāchedana*).'
When he said the letter *va*, out came the statement: 'The best vehicle (*varayāna*).'

10.23 "When he said the letter *śa*, out came the statement: 'Calm abiding and insight (*śamathavipaśyanā*).'
When he said the letter *ṣa*, out came the statement: 'Destroying the six sense bases and obtaining the superknowledges and wisdoms (*ṣaḍāyatananigrahaṇābhijñajñānāvāpti*).'
When he said the letter *sa*, out came the statement: 'Attaining the perfect awakening to omniscient wisdom (*sarvajñajñānābhisaṃbodhana*).'
When he said the letter *ha*, out came the statement: 'Destroying the afflictions and parting from desire (*hatakleśavirāga*).'
When he said the letter *kṣa*, out came the statement: 'Reaching the end of letters, all phenomena are ineffable (*kṣaraparyantābhilāpya sarvadharma*).' "

10.24 Thus, while the schoolmaster taught the children the alphabet, there emerged innumerable hundreds of thousands of excellent Dharma teachings due to the Bodhisattva's power. Moreover, while the Bodhisattva was attending school, 32,000 children gave rise to thoughts aimed at unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening. This is the circumstance and the reason why the Bodhisattva attended school, even though he was already so learned.

10.25 *This concludes the tenth chapter, on the demonstration at the writing school.*

11.

Chapter 11

THE FARMING VILLAGE

11.1 Monks, on another occasion when the prince had grown a little older, he went with the sons of the ministers and some other boys to visit a farming village. After seeing the village, he entered a park at the edge of the fields. The Bodhisattva wandered around there in complete solitude. As he was strolling through the park, he saw a beautiful and pleasant rose apple tree, and he decided to sit down cross-legged under its shade. Seated there, the Bodhisattva attained a one-pointed state of mind. [129]

11.2 He then settled into the first meditative concentration, which is free of factors connected with evil deeds and nonvirtues. It is accompanied by thought and analysis and is imbued with the joy and pleasure born of discernment.
He then brought about the cessation of thoughts and analysis [F.68.b] and became perfectly quiet. As his mind became concentrated, he settled into the second meditative concentration, which is free of thought and analysis and is imbued with the joy and pleasure born of meditative absorption.

Without any attachment to joy, he remained in equanimity with mindfulness and introspection and experienced physical pleasure. Aware and cognizant, he felt physically at ease. He had settled into the third meditative concentration, which is without joy: "impartial, aware, and abiding at ease," as the noble ones describe it.
He had already relinquished suffering and, as he now abandoned the feeling of comfort, both mental pleasure and displeasure vanished. Thus he settled into the fourth meditative concentration: perfectly pristine with impartiality and mindfulness, unconnected with pleasure or pain.

11.3 Right then five extremist sages, who had miraculous powers and the five superknowledges, were flying through the sky toward the north. Yet as they flew above this grove, they suddenly could not go any farther, and it felt as if they were being pushed back. With the hairs on their bodies bristling with anger, they spoke the following verse:

11.4 "Like an elephant tearing apart a fresh grove of mango trees,
We proceed and reduce to ashes even the enormous diamond peak of Mount Meru.
Even among gods we go unhindered, high above the realm of yakṣas and gandharvas,
Yet here at this grove, we are weak. Whose force dissolves our magical powers?" [130]

11.5 Dwelling in that grove was a goddess, who sang this verse to the sages:

"It is the Śākya prince, descendant of the best of kings, who shines like the dawn;
This wise, supreme man has a moon-like face with the beauty of a blooming lotus.
He, whom gods, nāga kings, gandharvas, and yakṣas revere, is in the park, concentrating;
His power, gained from merit in millions of lives, is thwarting your miracles."

11.6 When the sages looked down below, [F.69.a] they saw a child blazing with glory and splendor, and they thought, "Who is this seated here? Could it be Vaiśravaṇa, lord of wealth? Or is it Māra, lord of sense pleasures, or perhaps the lord of the mahoragas? Could it be Śakra, the vajra holder? Or is it perhaps Rudra, or the lord of kumbhāṇḍas? Could it be the mighty Kṛṣṇa, or perhaps the divine moon, or the thousand-rayed sun? Or will it turn out to be a universal monarch?" Then they spoke the following verse:

11.7 "This youth appears far more beautiful than Vaiśravaṇa.
So is he Rāhu, an image of the vajra holder, the sun, or the moon?
Or maybe he is an image of the supreme lord of sense pleasures, or Rudra, or Kṛṣṇa?
Or perhaps he is a perfect Buddha, adorned with glorious physical signs?"

11.8 Then the goddess of the grove addressed the sages with the following verse:

"All the splendor of Vaiśravaṇa and the thousand-eyed one,
All the splendor of the four guardians of the world and the lord of the demigods,
All the splendor of Brahmā, lord of the world, and Kṛṣṇa,
Is minuscule in comparison to that of the son of the Śākyas." [131]

11.9 Once the sages heard the goddess's words, they descended to the ground. There they saw the Bodhisattva practicing concentration, his body immovable and blazing with a mass of light. Reflecting on the Bodhisattva, they praised him with verses. One of the sages said:

11.10 "In a world tormented by the fire of afflictions,
This lake has appeared.
He will discover the Dharma
That will soothe beings."

11.11 Another sage said:
"In a world benighted with ignorance,
This torch has appeared.
He will discover the Dharma
That will illuminate beings."

11.12 Then the third sage remarked: [F.69.b]
"On a vast ocean of sorrow,
This sublime vessel has appeared.
He will discover the Dharma
That will ferry beings across."

11.13 The fourth sage said:

"To those bound by the fetters of afflictions,
A savior has appeared.
He will discover a Dharma
That will free beings."

11.14 Finally the last sage said:

"To those afflicted with old age and sickness,
The best of doctors has come.
He will discover a Dharma
That frees from birth and death."

Once the sages had praised the Bodhisattva with these verses, they circumambulated him three times and returned to the sky.

11.15 King Śuddhodana did not see the Bodhisattva. Displeased with his absence, he said, "Where has the child gone? I do not see him."
A great many people ran around [132] searching for the boy. Finally one of the ministers saw the Bodhisattva seated cross-legged, practicing concentration in the shade of a rose apple tree. Although the shade of all the trees had shifted by that time, the shade of the rose apple tree had not left the Bodhisattva's body. Seeing him there, the minister was surprised. Elated with a sense of satisfaction and joy, he was ecstatic. In a state of jubilation he rushed before King Śuddhodana and said the following verses:

11.16 "Your Majesty, look! This child is practicing concentration
In the shade of the rose apple tree.
He shines with glory and splendor
Like Śakra or Brahmā!

11.17 "The shade of the tree
Where this perfect being is seated
Does not leave him.
It shades this supreme being while he practices concentration."

11.18 King Śuddhodana went over to the rose apple tree. He saw the Bodhisattva blazing with glory and splendor and uttered this verse:

"Like seeing a fire blazing on a mountain peak,
Or the moon present amid a cluster of stars, [F.70.a]
When I see him meditating with a torch-like luster,
My limbs tremble."

11.19 He bowed to the feet of the Bodhisattva and spoke to him in verse:

"I have now twice bowed down to your feet,
O Leader and Lord—
Once when you were born,
And now as you practice concentration, shining."

11.20 At that point some of the other boys, who were carrying their seats, made a commotion. The ministers thus told them, "Quiet down! Quiet down!"
"Why?" asked the boys.
The ministers responded, "Even though the orb of the sun has shifted, the shade of his tree does not leave Prince Siddhārtha—who has the highest and most sublime marks of virtue and is as brilliant as the sky—while he practices concentration, motionless as a mountain." [133]

11.21 On this topic, it is said:

In summer, the first month after spring,
When flowers were covered in buds and blooming,
When cranes, peacocks, parrots, and myna birds were singing,
Most of the Śākya boys went outside.

11.22 Chanda, surrounded by the other boys, said, "Young Prince, come on!
Let's go and take a look at the forest.
What use is staying in the house like a priest?
Come on, let's go call on some girls."

11.23 At midday, the Pristine Being,
Unnoticed and without asking his parents,
Went out to a village
Accompanied by five hundred attendants.

11.24 In that village, which belonged to the supreme king,
There was a rose apple tree with many broad branches.
Seeing the tree, the prince was disturbed by the suffering he had just understood,
And remarked, "Conditioned things are no good! They bring a lot of suffering."

11.25 With a disciplined mind, he approached the shade of the rose apple tree,
Gathered some grass, and spread out a seat for himself.
Then, sitting cross-legged and upright, the Bodhisattva practiced concentration,
Immersed in the virtue of the four concentrations. [F.70.b] [134]

11.26 When five sages were coursing through the sky,
They could not move beyond the top of the rose apple tree.
Thwarted, they relinquished pride and conceit,
And all of them were drawn to investigate.

11.27 They thought, "We travel swiftly and without impediment,
Penetrating the supreme Mount Meru, and likewise the surrounding ranges,
Yet we are unable to pass beyond this rose apple tree.
What could be the reason for this?"

11.28 They descended and settled on the ground,
Where they saw the Bodhisattva, the Son of the Śākyas,
As he sat cross-legged at the trunk of the rose apple tree, practicing concentration,
Shining and brilliant like the glow of gold from the Jāmbū River.

11.29 Surprised, they joined their hands at their heads
And paid homage, bowing down to his feet with palms joined.
They said, "Holy One, Wellborn One, who brings happiness to the world!
May you swiftly become awakened and lead beings to immortality!"

11.30 The supreme tree bowed down like a lotus leaf;
Though the sun shifted, its shade did not leave the Well-Gone One.
Many thousands of gods, with palms joined,
Bowed down to the feet of this resolute child.

11.31 Śuddhodana, searching all around his quarters, asked,
"Where has my son gone?" [135]
His maternal aunt said, "I have searched but did not find him;
Your Majesty, please find out where the boy has gone."

11.32 Śuddhodana frantically asked his attendants,
The doormen, and everyone else in the inner quarters,
"Has anyone seen my son go out?"
Then someone said, "Your Majesty! The Supreme One has gone to a farming village."

11.33 The king hurriedly left together with his companions
And saw the prince sitting on a hill by the farming village,
Benefiting others and blazing with splendor,
Like a trillion rising suns.

11.34 Taking off his crown, sword, and shoes,
The king made salutations to the prince with his palms joined above his head.
The king said, "Yes! The eminent sages speak eloquently and truthfully;
The boy will surely leave home for the sake of awakening." [F.71.a]

11.35 Twelve hundred gods with supreme devotion,
As well as five hundred Śākya boys, approached.
Seeing the miraculous power of the Well-Gone One with his ocean of qualities,
They firmly engendered the intent set on supreme awakening.

11.36 Shaking the ground of the entire trichiliocosm,
The Bodhisattva arose from his absorption with mindfulness and introspection.
The Resplendent One then said to his father in the voice of Brahmā,
"O Father, relinquish your fields and seek no further! [136]

11.37 "If it's gold that you seek, I will shower down a rain of gold;
If it's garments that you seek, I will offer you garments;
If it's grain that you seek, I will shower down a rain of grain.
Your Majesty, please apply this genuinely to everyone!"

11.38 Once he had instructed his father and those in the retinue,
He instantly returned to the supreme city.
In conformity with worldly convention, he dwelt in that city,
Yet the Pristine Being had fixed his mind on renouncing the palace.

11.39 *This concludes the eleventh chapter, on the farming village. [B7]*

12.

Chapter 12

DEMONSTRATING SKILL IN THE ARTS

12.1 Monks, one time, when the prince had grown older, King Śuddhodana was sitting in the meeting hall together with the assembly of Śākyas. There some of the Śākya elders spoke to King Śuddhodana:
"Your Majesty, you know that the priests who are skilled in making predictions, as well as the gods who have definite knowledge, have foretold that if Prince Sarvārthasiddha renounces the household, he will become a thus-gone one, a worthy one, a completely perfect buddha. Yet if he does not renounce the household, he will become a universal monarch, a righteous Dharma king who has conquered the four quarters and is equipped with the seven treasures. The seven treasures that will be his are the precious wheel, the precious elephant, the precious horse, the precious wife, the precious jewel, [F.71.b] the precious steward, and the precious minister. He will have one thousand sons, all of them full, fierce warriors with well-built bodies that destroy the armies of the enemy. He will conquer the entire earth without the use of violence or weapons, and then he will rule [137] according to the Dharma. Therefore we must arrange a marriage for the prince. Once he is surrounded by a group of women, he will discover pleasure and not renounce the household. In that way the line of our universal monarchy will not be cut, and we will be irreproachably respected by all the kings of the realm."

12.2 King Śuddhodana then said to the assembly, "If we are to do such a thing, then you should determine which girl would be a suitable match for the prince."
One by one, five hundred Śākyas each came forth and said, "My daughter would be suitable for the prince! My daughter is very beautiful."
"My son is difficult to match," said the king. "So we should ask the prince himself which girl he prefers."
As everyone gathered and broached the matter with the prince, he told them, "I will give you an answer in seven days."
He then thought:

12.3 "I know the endless pitfalls of desire—
They are the root of suffering, rife with conflict, enmity, and despair.
Desire is threatening, like a poisonous leaf,
Like fire and like the blade of a sword.

12.4 "Sensual objects are not alluring to me,
Nor am I attracted when among a crowd of women.
So I ought to dwell silently in the forest,
With a mind stilled by the bliss of concentrated absorption."

12.5 The prince first reflected in this way. Then, manifesting skillful means, he considered the ripening of sentient beings and engendered intense compassion for them. He then spoke the following verses:

12.6 "Lotuses thrive in filthy swamps; [F.72.a]
A king receives veneration surrounded by a crowd of people. [138]
When a bodhisattva obtains a sizable entourage,
He leads trillions of sentient beings to the deathless state.

12.7 "The wise bodhisattvas who came before me,
All were known to have wives, children, and harems,
Yet they were not enamored with desire, nor deprived of the bliss of meditation.
I too will emulate their merits.

12.8 "An ordinary woman, lacking qualities of proper conduct and honest speech,
Would not be suitable for me at all.
Someone who pleases me, who is modest,
And perfectly pure in beauty, birth, family, and race would be fitting.

12.9 "The following verses describe her qualities;
If there is a girl like that, seek her out for me!
I have no use for an unabashed ordinary person;
If someone has the qualities described here, seek her out for me!

12.10 "She should be young and beautiful, but without vanity;
She should be loving like a sister.
Fond of renunciation, she should be generous and disciplined toward priests and ascetics.
Find a girl like this for me, O father!

12.11 "She should be without pride, conceit, or hostility;
She should be without deceit, jealousy, or guile, and not stray from uprightness.
She should not lust after other men, even in dreams;
Content with what is hers, she should lie with her husband, free from carelessness. [139]

12.12 "She should not be arrogant or slothful. She should comport herself fittingly.
She should be without any pride or willfulness, like a servant.
She should not be attracted to alcohol, tastes, sounds, or fragrances;
She should be free of greed and covetousness, satisfied with her fortune.

12.13 "Adhering to truth, she should be steady and unwavering;
Not puffed up, she should dress with modesty.
Always engaging in righteousness, she should be unimpressed with flashy displays;
She should always be pure in body, speech, and mind.

12.14 "She should not be excessively slothful or indolent, nor full of foolish pride;
Circumspect, she should always be engaged in good deeds.
She should regard her in-laws with the affection reserved for teachers, [F.72.b]
And be as loving to the servants and maids as she is to herself.

12.15 "She should be as adept as a courtesan in knowing the arts of love;
She should be the last to go to sleep and the first to rise;
She should lovingly obey, and be as guileless as a mother.
Find me, O father, a wife like this!"

12.16 Monks, when King Śuddhodana heard those verses, he ordered his family priest, "Go, great priest, out to the city of Kapilavastu! Go to every household and scrutinize the girls! If there is someone with these qualities— no matter whether she is a girl of royal caste, priestly caste, merchant caste, or servant caste—report to us about that girl! Because the prince is not after family or caste; rather he is interested in her qualities alone." [140]

12.17 On that occasion, he spoke the following verses:

"Whether she is a girl of royal caste or priestly caste,
Merchant caste or servant caste—
Report to me whichever girl
Possesses these qualities!

12.18 "My son is not enthralled
By family or caste;
His mind delights in
Good qualities, truth, and righteousness."

Monks, the family priest went out to the city of Kapilavastu carrying the written verses, and wandered from house to house looking carefully, searching for a girl with such qualities. However, he did not see such a girl.
Eventually he reached the house of the Śākya Daṇḍapāṇi. When he entered that dwelling, he saw a beautiful, pleasant, and captivating girl. The girl had a sublimely beautiful complexion like a white lotus, was neither too tall nor too short, neither too fat nor too thin, neither too fair nor too dark, was in her first blush of youth, and was a jewel of a woman, just as the prince had described.
The girl grabbed hold of the priest's feet and asked, [F.73.a] "O great priest, what is your aim?"

12.19 The priest said:

"The son of Śuddhodana is sublimely handsome;
Replete with thirty-two auspicious marks, he has splendorous qualities.
He has written of the qualities of a wife;
Whoever has those qualities will be his bride."

12.20 He then gave the girl the letter. The girl read the verses out loud, then she revealed a smile and spoke in verse to the priest: [141]
"O priest, since I have all of these suitable qualities,
May this handsome and gentle prince be my husband!
If he consents, there should be no delay,
Or I will end up with an inferior, ordinary man."

12.21 The councilor went before King Śuddhodana and told him what had happened: "I have seen, O King, a girl who would be suitable for the boy."
The king asked, "Who does she belong to?"
The councilor replied, "Your Majesty, she is the daughter of the Śākya Daṇḍapāṇi."
King Śuddhodana thought to himself, "The boy is unparalleled and inclined toward virtue. Most girls have no qualities, yet they think of themselves very highly. I will have some pleasing items made and let the boy distribute them to all the girls. I will choose for the prince whichever girl his eyes linger upon."

12.22 King Śuddhodana did indeed prepare some pleasing items made of gold, silver, and various jewels. Once the preparations were completed, he had the bell sounded in the city of Kapilavastu and announced the following decree:
"In seven days the prince will give a public showing. He will give pleasing goods to the girls, so all the girls should gather together in the assembly hall at that time."
Monks, after seven days had passed, the Bodhisattva went to the assembly hall [F.73.b] and took his seat on a splendid throne. King Śuddhodana had put some spies in place and ordered them, "Report to me if the boy's eyes linger upon any particular girl!" [142]

12.23 Monks, then the girls in the city of Kapilavastu, as many as there were, all came to the assembly hall where the Bodhisattva was seated in order to see him and lay claim to the gifts being offered.
Monks, then the Bodhisattva gave the pleasing items to the girls according to the order of their arrival. The girls, however, could not bear the Bodhisattva's splendor and brilliance and, as soon as they received the gifts, they quickly departed.

12.24 Then the daughter of Daṇḍapāṇi Śākya, the Śākya girl named Gopā, surrounded and escorted by an entourage of female servants, came into the assembly hall where the Bodhisattva was seated. She approached the Bodhisattva and stood to one side, staring at him with unblinking eyes.
When the Bodhisattva had finished distributing all the gifts, she went up to him and, with a smile on her face, said to him, "O Prince, you pay no attention to me. Have I done anything inappropriate toward you?"
The prince responded, "I am not ignoring you. But you certainly have come very late." He then took off his ring, which was worth several hundreds of thousands of silver coins, and gave it to her.
"Am I, Prince, worthy of this?" she asked.
The prince replied, "Here, take all these other ornaments of mine as well." Then the girl said, "It is not right to strip the prince of his adornments. Rather we should adorn the prince." And then she left.

12.25 The people who were positioned as spies came before King Śuddhodana and reported the event, saying, "O King, the boy's eyes lingered upon the daughter of Daṇḍapāṇi Śākya, the Śākya girl named Gopā, and there was a brief conversation between them." [F.74.a] [143]
When King Śuddhodana heard this, he sent the councilor-priest before Daṇḍapāṇi Śākya with the request, "May your daughter be given to my son!"

Daṇḍapāṇi replied, "The noble boy has grown up in the palace in ease and comfort. Yet our family rule is such that a girl can only be granted to someone who is skilled in the arts, and not to a man who lacks these skills. The prince is not skilled in the arts since he does not know the maneuvers of swordsmanship, archery, combat, or wrestling. How can I give away my daughter to someone who lacks such skills?"

The king was informed of this reply and thought, "This makes two times that I have been opposed with such a commonsensical rule. When I said, 'Why don't the Śākya boys come to attend upon the boy?' I was told, 'Why should we attend upon an indolent?' And now this." The king sat and reflected thus.

12.26 The Bodhisattva heard the story as well. He went to King Śuddhodana and asked, "Your Majesty, what's wrong? Why are you sitting here so depressed?" But the king just responded, "O child, enough with your questioning!"

But the prince insisted, "Your Majesty, it is absolutely essential that you tell me!" He asked King Śuddhodana three times, until finally the king told the Bodhisattva what was wrong.

The Bodhisattva then asked, "O King, is there anyone in this city who can compete with me in the arts?"

King Śuddhodana, with a smile on his face, asked the Bodhisattva in return, "My son, are you capable of demonstrating any athletic prowess?"

The prince responded, "I surely am, [144] Your Majesty. So please assemble everyone who is skilled in the arts! [F.74.b] Then I will demonstrate my skills before them."

King Śuddhodana then asked for the bell to be sounded in the city of Kapilavastu and announced, "In seven days the prince will demonstrate his prowess in the arts. Thus everyone skilled in the arts is to assemble then!"

12.27 When seven days had passed, a group of Śākya boys five hundred strong assembled. The daughter of Daṇḍapāṇi Śākya, the Śākya girl named Gopā, was put forward as a trophy for the victor, and a pledge was sworn: "Whoever here is victorious in swordsmanship, archery, combat, and wrestling shall have her."

Ahead of everyone else, the boy Devadatta arrived from the city. He saw that a large white elephant was being brought to the city for the Bodhisattva to ride. Intoxicated with jealousy, and drunk with pride about his Śākya family line as well as his own strength, he grabbed hold of the elephant by its trunk with his left hand and killed it with his right hand in a single stroke.

Right then the boy Sundarananda arrived. Seeing that an elephant had been killed at the city gate, he asked, "Who killed it?"

The crowd told him, "It was Devadatta."

Sundarananda said, "That was not right of Devadatta." Grabbing hold of the elephant by the tail, he dragged it outside the city gate.

12.28 Later the Bodhisattva arrived riding a chariot and noticed the dead elephant. When he inquired who had killed the animal, he was told that it was Devadatta. The Bodhisattva said, "That was not good of Devadatta. [145] Who dragged the elephant outside the city gate?"
When he was then told that it was Sundarananda who had done so, he answered, "It was good that Sundarananda carried it out, but this animal has a huge body. When it decays, the entire city will fill with a horrible stench." Then, while still on his chariot, [F.75.a] the prince extended one foot to the ground, and with his big toe he took hold of the elephant and hurled it a mile outside the city, over seven walls and seven moats. A deep pit formed where the elephant landed. Today this is aptly called Elephant Gorge.

12.29 Then hundreds of thousands of gods and humans let out hundreds of thousands of cries of amazement and waved their banners. From the sky, gods called out these verses:

"In a movement like a great elephant in rut,
The Bodhisattva grabbed hold of the great elephant with his big toe
And hurled it far outside the fair city,
Beyond seven of the city's moats.

12.30 "This supremely wise one will surely
Hurl the people who are bloated with the strength of pride
Far beyond the city of saṃsāra,
Alone, through the strength of his insight."

12.31 Then five hundred Śākya boys emerged from the city and arrived at the place where they were to demonstrate their abilities in the arts. King Śuddhodana, the Śākya elders, and a big crowd also arrived there, eager to compare the differences in artistic skill between the Bodhisattva and the other Śākya boys.
First those Śākya boys who were skilled in the rules of writing competed with the Bodhisattva in the art of scripts. The teacher Viśvāmitra was appointed judge by the Śākyas, and he announced, "You are to determine who among these [146] boys is superior, whether in penmanship or in the knowledge of scripts."

12.32 Then, because the teacher Viśvāmitra had witnessed firsthand the Bodhisattva's knowledge of scripts, he smiled and said these verses:

"This pure being has reached perfection
In all the scripts, as many as there are in all the worlds,
Whether it be the world of humans, the world of gods,
The world of demigods, or the world of gandharvas. [F.75.b]

12.33 "Neither you nor I know even the names
Of the scripts and letters
That this moon among men knows.
I have witnessed it firsthand. He will be victorious."

12.34 The Śākyas said, "It may indeed be that this boy is superior in knowledge of scripts, but he should also be tested and distinguish himself in knowledge of mathematics." So the greatest mathematician among the Śākyas, a man called Arjuna, an adept in knowledge of calculation, was appointed judge and told, "You are to determine who among the boys here is superior in knowledge of numbers." First the Bodhisattva proposed a mathematical problem. One of the Śākya boys tried to calculate it, but he could not solve it. Next another Śākya boy, then two, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred—up to five hundred of them—together tried to calculate the problem, but they could not solve it.

12.35 Next the Bodhisattva said, "Now you propose a mathematical problem, and I will calculate it." One of the Śākya boys proposed a mathematical problem to the Bodhisattva, but the boy could not confound the Bodhisattva's calculations. Next two of the Śākya boys, then three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty—up to five hundred of them—together proposed a mathematical problem, but they could not confound the Bodhisattva's calculations.
Finally the Bodhisattva said, "Enough with this dispute! All of you should convene and propose a mathematical problem for me. Then I will calculate it." Accordingly five hundred Śākya boys [147] in unison proposed an unprecedented problem, and still the Bodhisattva calculated it without any consternation. In this way all the Śākya boys met their match while the Bodhisattva remained undefeated. [F.76.a]

12.36 The great mathematician Arjuna was amazed and said these verses:

"When this fine intellect was questioned,
His knowledge was so very quick
That all five hundred Śākya boys
Were surpassed on the path of calculation.

12.37 "With such insight, wisdom,
Intellect, and mindfulness,
This ocean of knowledge
Even today learns and trains further in calculation."

12.38 The whole Śākya assembly was shocked and amazed, and they all said in unison, "O Prince Sarvārthasiddha, you have won, you have won!" All of them stood up from their seats, and with palms joined paid homage to the Bodhisattva. Then they addressed King Śuddhodana: "Great King, you are so fortunate to have a son whose eloquent self-confidence is so swift, nimble, subtle, and potent in the face of questions."

King Śuddhodana then said to the Bodhisattva, "Son, can you match the ways of calculation with the great mathematician Arjuna, an expert in the knowledge of numbers?"
"I can, Your Majesty," responded the Bodhisattva.
"Then calculate away!" commanded the king.

12.39 The great mathematician Arjuna then asked the Bodhisattva, "Child, do you know how to calculate the number called *ten million to the hundredth power*?"
"Yes, I do," said the Bodhisattva.
"How then," asked Arjuna, "should one commence that calculation?"
The Bodhisattva replied, "One hundred times ten million is called a billion (*ayuta*). One hundred times one billion is called one hundred billion (*niyuta*). One hundred times one hundred billion is called one quadrillion (*kaṅkara*). One hundred quadrillions is called one sextillion (*vivara*). One hundred sextillions is called a nonillion (*akṣobhya*). One hundred nonillions is called [148] a *vivāha*. One hundred vivāhas is called an *utsaṅga*. One hundred utsaṅgas is called a *bahula*. One hundred bahulas is called a *nāgabala*. One hundred nāgabalas is called a *tiṭilambha*. [F.76.b] One hundred tiṭilambhas is called a *vyavasthānaprajñapti*. One hundred vyavasthānaprajñaptis is called a *hetuhila*. One hundred

hetuhilas is called a *karaphū*. One hundred karaphūs is called a *hetvindriya*. One hundred hetvindriyas is called a *samāptalambha*. One hundred samāptalambhas is called a *gaṇanāgati*. One hundred gaṇanāgatis is called a *niravadya*. One hundred niravadyas is called a *mudrābala*. One hundred mudrābalas is called a *sarvabala*. One hundred sarvabalas is called a *visaṃjñāgati*. One hundred visaṃjñāgatis is called a *sarvasaṃjña*. One hundred sarvasaṃjñas is called a *vibhūtaṃgamā*. One hundred vibhūtaṃgamās is called a *tallakṣaṇa*.

12.40 "If one uses tallakṣaṇa as the basic unit of calculation, it is feasible to calculate the size of Mount Meru, the king of mountains. Beyond that is the number called *dhvajāgravatī*. If one uses dhvajāgravatī as the basic unit of calculation, it is possible to solve the calculation for all the grains of sand in the river Ganges. Beyond that is the number called *dhvajāgraniśāmaṇī*. Next is the number called *vāhanaprajñapti*. Then comes the number called *iṅgā*. Beyond that is the number called *kuruṭu*. Then comes the number called *kuruṭāvi*. Then comes the number called *sarvanikṣepā*. With this count serving as the basic unit of calculation, it is possible to calculate the number of grains of sand in ten Ganges rivers. Beyond that is the number called *agrasārā*. With this figure as the basic unit of calculation, it is possible to solve the calculation equal to the number of grains of sand in one billion Ganges rivers.

"Finally comes the number called *application to the smallest particles* (*paramāṇurajahpraveśānugata*). With the exception of a thus-gone one, a bodhisattva who dwells at the sublime seat of awakening, or a bodhisattva who is about to be initiated into all Dharmas, there is no other being [149] who understands this number, with the exception of me and perhaps one like me, namely a bodhisattva in his final existence who has departed from the household." [F.77.a]

12.41 Then Arjuna asked, "Child, how would you enumerate the number *application to the smallest particles*?"
The Bodhisattva answered, "Seven of the smallest particles is one small particle. Seven small particles is one water particle. Seven water particles is one airborne dust particle. Seven airborne dust particles is one dust particle on a hare. Seven dust particles on a hare is one dust particle on a sheep. Seven dust particles on a sheep is one dust particle on a cow. Seven dust particles on a cow is one louse egg. Seven lice eggs is one mustard seed. Seven mustard seeds is one barley grain. Seven barley grains is one finger joint. Twelve finger joints is one thumb tip to one index fingertip. Two measures of one thumb tip to one index fingertip is one cubit. Four cubits is one bow. One thousand bows is considered one earshot in Magadha. Four times shouting-distance is one league. Who among you knows the total number of smallest particles in a league?"

12.42 "Well," said Arjuna. "I am uncertain about this. So, child, how much more so will the others, who are of weaker intellect, be confused? Child, please explain how many of the smallest particles make up a league."
The Bodhisattva explained, "A league contains 100 billion nonillions, 30 quintillions, 60 billion, 320 million, 512 thousand smallest particles. Such is the sum of smallest particles in a league. There are seven thousand leagues here in Jambudvīpa, eight thousand leagues in the western continent of Godānīya, nine thousand leagues in the eastern continent of Videha, and ten thousand leagues in the northern continent of Kuru.
"Moreover, there are one billion worlds of four continents, such as this world, and one billion oceans. [F.77.b] [150] There are also one billion surrounding mountain ranges and one billion outer ranges. Likewise there are one billion Mount Merus, the kings of mountains.
"There are one billion god realms belonging to the Four Great Kings. There are one billion Heavens of the Thirty-Three, one billion Heavens Free from Strife, one billion Heavens of Joy, one billion Heavens of Delighting in Emanations, and one billion Heavens of Making Use of Others' Emanations.

12.43 "There are also one billion Brahma Realms, one billion realms of the High Priests of Brahmā, one billion realms of Brahmā's Entourage, one billion realms of Great Brahmā, one billion realms of Limited Light, one billion realms of Limitless Light, one billion realms of the Luminous Heaven, one billion realms of the Heaven of Limited Virtue, one billion realms of the Heaven of Limitless Virtue, one billion realms of the Heaven of Perfected Virtue, one billion realms of the Cloudless Heaven, one billion realms of the Heaven of Increased Merit, one billion realms of the Heaven of Great Fruition, one billion realms of the Heaven of Concept-Free Beings, one billion realms of the Unlofty Heaven, one billion realms of the Heaven of No Hardship, one billion realms of the Sublime Heaven, one billion realms of the Gorgeous Heaven, and one billion realms of the Gods of the Highest Heaven. All of this is called a great *trichiliocosm*.

12.44 "In width and breadth, each world system contains leagues measuring in the hundreds, thousands, ten millions, billions, hundred billions, and so on, all the way up to the measure of an *agrasārā*. There is also a corresponding measure of the smallest particles. The number of these particles can indeed be calculated but, since it is unfathomable, it is called *incalculable*. A number of smallest particles even more incalculable than that are those contained in a great trichiliocosm."
When the Bodhisattva demonstrated this display of calculation, the great mathematician Arjuna and the entire assembly of Śākyas were surprised and delighted, and they felt great appreciation and joy. They each kept just a single garment for themselves and offered the remaining garments and jewelry to the Bodhisattva. [F.78.a] [151]

12.45 Then the great mathematician Arjuna uttered the following verses:
"One hundred times ten million is a billion.
Likewise it is for one hundred billion and one quadrillion,
And also for a sextillion and a nonillion, but beyond that is unknown to me.
So in mathematics, the knowledge of the Peerless One is superior.

12.46 "Moreover, Śākyas,
If he can calculate in the duration of a single utterance of the sound *huṃ*,
All the dust particles, blades of grass, forests,
Medicinal herbs, and drops of water in a trichiliocosm,
Then what is so amazing about the other five hundred boys?"

12.47 When he said this, hundreds of thousands of gods and humans let out hundreds of thousands of exclamations of shock and cries of joy. From the center of the sky, gods called out the following verse:

"The Bodhisattva perfectly understands, with a single movement of his mind,
All the primary and subsidiary mental states, conceptions, and opinions
That belong to all beings throughout the three times without exception,
Whether they be inferior or superior, narrow or broad."

12.48 Monks, in this way all the Śākya youths were defeated and the Bodhisattva alone stood out. As the day progressed, the Bodhisattva also excelled in all aspects of leaping, swimming, and running. In the sky above, gods sang these verses:

12.49 "With the qualities of disciplined conduct and austerity
And the strength of his forbearance, discipline, and love, developed over millions of eons,
He is a leader with a body and mind that are supple in action,
And so you now witness the superiority of his swiftness. [152]

12.50 "You see this most excellent being here in this city,
But instantaneously he is moving throughout the ten directions,
Paying homage to infinite victorious ones,
With a plethora of jewels and gold, in infinite worlds.

12.51 "Yet you are totally unaware of his comings and goings;
Such is the extent of his miraculous powers.
So why should his skills here provoke wonder?
He is without equal, and you should feel respect for him." [F.78.b]

12.52 With his performances, the Bodhisattva uniquely distinguished himself. The Śākyas then said, "The prince should also be tested in terms of his strength." At that time the Bodhisattva stood to one side while the five hundred Śākya youths wrestled among themselves. Then thirty-two Śākya youths stayed on to confront the Bodhisattva in wrestling. First Nanda and Ānanda approached the Bodhisattva to wrestle with him. But as soon as the Bodhisattva merely touched the two boys, they were unable to withstand the Bodhisattva's power and brilliance, and they collapsed on the ground.

12.53 Next Devadatta vied with the Bodhisattva. He was a conceited and arrogant young man, who was bloated with pride about his strength and his relationship to the Śākya lineage. In the arena filled with spectators, Devadatta first made a round clockwise, and then he lunged at the Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva, however, was calm and unhurried. He playfully seized Devadatta with his right hand, twirled him into a triple spin, and tossed him to the ground. All the while the Bodhisattva's mind was full of love. He did not intend to hurt Devadatta, but only to break his pride. Therefore Devadatta was unharmed.

12.54 Then the Bodhisattva said, "Enough of this quarrel. You should now all join up and confront me in wrestling." [153] Exhilarated, they all assailed the Bodhisattva. However, as soon as the Bodhisattva touched them, they were unable to withstand his splendor, brilliance, physical strength, and stamina. Merely by his touch, they fell to the ground. Then hundreds of thousands of gods and humans let out hundreds of thousands of exclamations of shock and cries of joy. The gods in the sky showered down a rain of flowers and called out these verses: [F.79.a]

12.55 "Even if all the myriad beings in the ten directions
Became like mighty wrestlers inclined to foul play
And converged on this bull among men,
His mere touch would bring them to the ground.

12.56 "Grabbing Meru, the foremost mountain and the adamantine mountain ranges,
And all other mountains throughout the ten directions,
He could reduce them all to powder,
So what is so amazing about a human body with no substance?

12.57 "Through the strength of his love, he will vanquish Māra—
That mighty, foul-playing wrestler—along with his bannered forces of footmen and cavalry.
Under the most excellent lord of trees, he will vanquish this friend of darkness
And peacefully attain unexcelled awakening."

12.58 In this way the Bodhisattva, fighting alone, was the winner. Then Daṇḍapāṇi said to the Śākya youths, "This has now been tested and witnessed. Next let him demonstrate his skill in archery."
First Ānanda placed an iron drum [154] twice shouting-distance away as his target. Next Devadatta placed an iron drum four times shouting-distance away as his target. Then Sundarananda placed an iron drum six times shouting-distance away as his target. Daṇḍapāṇi placed an iron drum eight times shouting-distance away as his target. Finally the Bodhisattva placed an iron drum ten times shouting-distance away as his target. Behind the drum he set up seven palm trees, and beyond that he set up an iron image of a wild boar.

12.59 Ānanda struck his drum target twice shouting-distance away, but he could not shoot any farther. Devadatta struck the drum target four times shouting-distance away, but he also could not shoot any farther. Then Sundarananda struck the drum target six times shouting-distance away, but he was also unable to shoot any farther. Daṇḍapāṇi struck the drum target eight times shouting-distance away [F.79.b] and pierced it, but he also could not shoot any farther than that.

12.60 However, whichever bow the Bodhisattva drew, the string snapped or the bow broke. So the Bodhisattva asked, "King, is there any other bow here in the city that I can string or that can withstand my physical strength?"
"Yes, my son, there is." replied the king. "Where is it?" asked the boy.
"Son," the king answered, "your grandfather was called Siṃhahanu. He had a bow that is now being honored in the temple with incense and flower garlands. No one since him has been able to string the bow, let alone draw it."
The Bodhisattva said, "Your Majesty, may the bow be brought here! I would like to test it."

12.61 When the bow was brought to the assembly, all the Śākya youths tried pulling the bow with all their strength, but they were unable to string it, let alone draw it. Then the bow was placed before the Śākya Daṇḍapāṇi, who mustered all his bodily strength and endurance and tried to string the bow, but could not. Finally the bow was placed before the Bodhisattva. [155] He picked it up and, sitting on his seat in the cross-legged position, he held it with his left hand and strung it with a single fingertip of his right hand.
While he was stringing the bow, a sound resonated throughout the entire city of Kapilavastu. All the townspeople became agitated and asked one another where the sound came from. Some said, "The sound is surely from Prince Sarvārthasiddha, who has strung his grandfather's bow." Then hundreds of thousands of gods and humans let out hundreds of thousands of exclamations of shock and cries of joy. The gods in the sky then addressed this verse to King Śuddhodana and to the masses:

12.62 "Just as this bow was drawn by the Sage
Without rising from his seat, [F.80.a]
So will he undoubtedly fulfill his purpose
And conquer the armies of Māra with ease."

12.63 Monks, the Bodhisattva now picked up an arrow, drew the bow, and released the arrow. His shot was so powerful that the arrow went right through the targets set up by Ānanda, Devadatta, Sundarananda, and Daṇḍapāṇi. The arrow then cleaved his own iron drum target, which was ten times shouting-distance away, then pierced the seven palm trees and the iron image of a boar before it finally entered the ground and disappeared. There, in the area where the arrow pierced the ground and vanished, a crater formed, which still to this day is called Arrow Crater.
Then hundreds of thousands of gods and humans let out hundreds of thousands of exclamations of surprise and cries of joy. The entire assembly of Śākyas was shocked and astonished. They said, "How amazing! [156] He has such expertise in the arts, without even having trained."

12.64 The gods in the sky then called out to King Śuddhodana and the masses, "O people, why be so amazed? Do you know what's amazing?

"He will sit on this earth, on the seat of the previous awakened ones.
Holding the bow of calm abiding, he will shoot the arrows of empty lack of self,
And so destroy the enemies, the afflictions; rend asunder the net of views;
And attain sublime awakening—tranquil, stainless, and free from sorrow."

Having spoken thus, the gods approached the Bodhisattva, strewing him with divine flowers.

12.65 In this way the Bodhisattva was superior in all the main aspects of the mundane arts, as well as in all practices beyond the reach of gods and humans. He was superior in leaping, and likewise in writing, finger counting, computation, arithmetic, wrestling, archery, running, rowing, swimming, elephant mounting, horsemanship, carriage driving, bow-and-arrow skills, [F.80.b] balance and strength, heroics, gymnastics, elephant driving, lassoing, rising, advancing, retreating, gripping with the hand, gripping using the foot, gripping using the top of the head, cutting, cleaving, breaking, rubbing, target shooting without causing injury, target shooting at vital points, target shooting through only hearing the target, striking hard, playing dice, poetry composition, prose composition, painting, drama, dramatic action, tactical analysis, attending the sacred fire, playing the lute, playing other musical instruments, dancing, singing, chanting, storytelling, comedy, dancing to music, dramatic dancing, mimicry, garland stringing, cooling with a fan, dying precious gems, dying clothes, creating optical illusions, dream analysis, bird sounds, analysis of women, analysis of men, analysis of horses, analysis of elephants, analysis of cattle, analysis of goats, analysis of sheep, analysis of dogs, ritual science and its related lexicon, revealed scripture, ancient stories, history, the Vedas, grammar, etymologies, phonetics, metrics and composition, rules for conducting rituals, astrology, the Sāmkhya philosophical system, the Yoga philosophical system, ceremonies, the art of courtesans, the Vaiśeṣika philosophical system, economics, ethics, hydraulics, knowledge of demigods, knowledge of game animals, knowledge of bird sounds, logic, hydromechanics, beeswax crafts, sewing, wickerwork, leaf cutting, and perfume making. [F.81.a] [157]

12.66 When that became clear, the Śākya Daṇḍapāṇi decided to give away his daughter, the Śākya girl Gopā, to the Bodhisattva. King Śuddhodana also formally requested her hand in marriage for the Bodhisattva.
Then indeed, in order to conform to worldly conventions, the Bodhisattva dwelt among 84,000 women and showed himself to partake of the amorous games with pleasure. Among the 84,000 women, the Śākya girl Gopā was consecrated

as the foremost wife. However, no matter who the Śākya girl Gopā encountered, whether it was her mother-in-law, her father-in-law, or any other member of the inner quarters, she did not cover her face. So people criticized her and spoke badly of her, saying, "A new wife is supposed to be covered, but this one is always exposed."

12.67 The Śākya girl Gopā heard this rumor, and in front of all the folk of the inner quarters, she said these verses:
"A noble being shines when uncovered,
Whether sitting, standing, or walking,
Like a precious gem beaming,
Radiant on the pinnacle of a standard.

12.68 "While going, a noble being shines,
And likewise while coming, a noble being shines.
While rising or sitting,
A noble being always shines.

12.69 "A noble being shines when speaking,
And even when silent, a noble being shines,
Just like a nightingale does
Whenever seen or heard.

12.70 "Whether he wears clothes made of kuśa grass,
Poor quality clothes, or his body is emaciated,
One who is replete with good qualities and is adorned by those qualities
Shines with his own radiance. [158]

12.71 "A noble one without evil
Shines perpetually,
Whereas an immature being who commits evil
Never shines no matter what he wears.

12.72 "Those who have evil in their hearts but whose speech is sweet
Are like a jar of poison topped off with nectar.
Like a rocky stone rough to the touch, they are hard inside;
Being with them is like caressing a viper's head.

12.73 "The truly gentle are approached and honored by all,
Just like a sacred bathing bank, which sustains everyone.
Noble beings are like a jar filled with milk and curd; [F.81.b]
It is extremely auspicious to behold such a pure nature.

12.74 "Those who have long shunned evil companions,
Who are now surrounded by precious spiritual friends,
Who relinquish evil deeds and adhere to the teaching of the buddhas
Are fruitfully auspicious to behold.

12.75 "Those who control their bodies thus control all physical faults;
Those who control their speech never confuse their words;
Those with guarded senses are mentally composed and serene.
What good is it to cover the face of such beings?

12.76 "Others may be covered in a thousand garments,
But if their minds are revealed to lack shame and modesty
And if they have no good qualities and lack truthful speech,
Then they move through the world more naked than naked. [159]

12.77 "There are those who conceal their mind and restrain their senses,
Who are satisfied with their husbands and do not pine after others.
When they shine unconcealed, like the sun and moon,
What good is it to cover their faces?

12.78 "Furthermore the great sages, those who know the thoughts of others,
And the assemblies of gods all know my thoughts.
They know my discipline, qualities, restraint, and carefulness;
So why should I veil my face?"

12.79 Monks, when King Śuddhodana heard these eloquent verses from the Śākya girl Gopā, he felt satisfied and happy, and he cheerfully rejoiced. He then offered her a pair of fine cotton fabrics that were set with many different types of jewels, a pearl necklace worth a hundred billion silver coins, and a garland of gold set with red pearls. The king then offered this sentiment:

12.80 "Just as my son is adorned with good qualities,
His bride too is radiant with her own good qualities.
That these two pristine beings have come together
Is just like butter and clarified butter."

12.81 *This concludes the twelfth chapter, on demonstrating skill in the arts.* [B8] [F.82.a]

13.

Chapter 13

ENCOURAGEMENT

13.1 Monks, while the Bodhisattva was staying in the midst of his retinue of consorts, there were numerous gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas, as well as [160] Śakra and Brahmā and the guardians of the world, who were eager to make offerings to the Bodhisattva. They arrived calling out in joyous voices. However, monks, as time went on, many of these gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas, as well as Śakra, Brahmā, and the world protectors, began to think to themselves:

13.2 "Now, isn't this sacred being staying too long among the consorts? There are beings who have been brought to maturity over a long period of time through the four means of attracting disciples, namely generosity, kind talk, meaningful actions, and practicing what one preaches. Once he attains awakening, those beings would be able to understand his teachings on the Dharma. But perhaps all these suitable recipients for his teaching may be gone by then. In that case, the Bodhisattva will leave his home and awaken to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood on his own."

13.3 So they approached the Bodhisattva. Full of respect and devotion, they joined their palms and bowed before him. Standing expectantly in his presence, they asked with concern:
"Will we ever witness the Bodhisattva—this sacred, supreme, and pure being—leave home as an act of renunciation? Once he has left home, will we see him sitting under the great king of trees, taming Māra and his army, and awakening to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood?
"When shall we see him accessing the ten powers of the thus-gone ones, the four types of fearlessness of the thus-gone ones, and the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha? [F.82.b] Or spinning the unexcelled wheel of Dharma in its twelve aspects? Or teaching, through a vast display of buddhahood, according to the wishes of the world, including its gods, humans, and demigods, and satisfying them?"

13.4 Monks, for a long time—many uncountable eons—the Bodhisattva had always and continuously been without any need to rely on others. He was his own master with regard to worldly concerns, as well as those that go beyond the world. For a long time he had known the right time, the occasion, and the opportunity for the practice of all aspects of the roots of virtue. His higher knowledge was flawless, and his five types of superknowledge were fully manifest. Since he had a masterly command of his sense faculties, he could manifest miraculous powers. He knew indeed what was timely as well as what was untimely. Seeking the right opportunity, he would never miss it, [161] just like the great ocean, which is always timely. Since he possessed the power of clairvoyant wisdom, he knew everything himself:

13.5 "This is the appropriate time for reaching out, this is the time for separation, this is the time for getting together, this is the time for showing kindness, this is the time for resting in equanimity, this is the time to speak, this is the time to remain silent, this is the time to leave home, this is the time to take ordination, this is the time to recite, this is the time for deep reflection, this is the time to stay in solitude, this is the time to stay within royal circles, this is the time to be among priests and householders, and this is the time to be among gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, Śakra, Brahmā, the world protectors, monks, nuns, as well as male and female novices. This is the time to teach the Dharma, [F.83.a] and this is the time to rest inwardly."

13.6 At all times the Bodhisattva knew whether the time was suitable or not, and he watched out for opportunities. Monks, for bodhisattvas who have reached their last existence, it is customary that the buddhas, the blessed ones, who dwell in the realms within the ten directions, always come while these bodhisattvas amuse themselves in the female quarters and encourage them through singing and music to enter the gate of Dharma.

13.7 On this topic, it is said:

Whatever perfect beings abide in the worlds of the ten directions,
It is through their special power that, accompanied by music,
These verses and songs, so pleasant and sweet,
Encourage the supreme being to renounce his home.

13.8 "When witnessing others who suffer greatly,
You previously made an aspiration
To become their protector and refuge,
As well as their supreme supporter and defender.

13.9 "Virtuous Hero! Remember your previous actions
And your vow to help others.
This is your time, your moment;
So, Supreme Sage, renounce your palace! [162]

13.10 "It is for the sake of those for whom you have previously given up
The best of wealth, and even your head, arms, and legs,
That you will become a buddha, the supreme tamer of gods and humans,
The foremost in the world, and a storehouse of hundreds of qualities.

13.11 "With discipline you must perform austerities and hardship;
With patience you will benefit others.
With diligence you will unfold all good qualities;
Your concentration and knowledge will have no equal in the three realms.

13.12 "The many beings afflicted by anger and blemished by hate
Must be embraced by your love, Thus-Gone One.
Those who are lost and without any qualities of goodness
And the many unskillful ones must all feel your compassion.

13.13 "With your merit and wisdom, virtue pervades your body;
With your stainless concentration and higher knowledge, you shine brightly.
You illumine the ten directions,
Like the stainless moon free from clouds."

13.14 Many such pleasing words, accompanied by music, [F.83.b]
Are sung by the victorious ones.
They encourage the One Who Gods and Humans Venerate, saying,
"This is the time for you to renounce your palace."

13.15 Monks, the home of the Bodhisattva was indeed exquisite, complete with the most perfect belongings. It was anything a person could wish for, full of all the things necessary for comfortable living. Like a divine palace, it had the very best of verandas, turrets, porticoes, skylights, corridors, upper floors, and terraces. It was adorned with all sorts of jewels in many different arrangements and patterns. Parasols, flags, and banners were hoisted. Fine bells made of gems hung from lattices, as did hundreds of thousands of silk streamers. There were garlands of pearls set with various precious stones, and bridges built with boards that were ornamented by all types of jewels. Flower garlands and decorations hung everywhere. Incense burners dispensed fragrant smoke, and silk canopies were spread above. Fragrant flowers from all seasons adorned the grounds, and the ponds were full of white lotus flowers in bloom. In all the many lotus ponds were flocks of many types of birds, such as leafbirds, parrots, mynas, cuckoos, swans, peacocks, wild geese, kunālas, and pheasants that all called out in their beautiful voices. There were grounds covered in blue beryl that reflected all the many fine features of the palace. It was so delightful to watch, and thus one could never get enough.

13.16 The exquisite and perfect mansion where the [163] Bodhisattva lived was a source of supreme pleasures and joy. In his palace his body was always pure and stainless, he was adorned with flower garlands and jewelry, and his limbs were scented with the finest and most sweet-smelling oils. To cover his body he wore stainless white clothes of the finest quality, without any blemishes whatsoever. His bedding was made of divine fabrics of the finest thread, and as soft to the touch as the kācilindika cloth. [F.84.a] There on his perfect couch, he lay surrounded by his wonderful retinue of consorts, who all resembled goddesses. All the girls were virtuous, agreeable, and wholesome in conduct.

13.17 Inside this beautiful palace, the Bodhisattva woke up to the sound of conches, kettledrums, clay drums, wood drums, lutes, harps, tambourines, cymbals, and flutes that produced the most sweet-sounding and melodious tunes to accompany their many sweet songs. The girls woke up the Bodhisattva with beautiful and soft songs accompanied by the melodious tones of flutes. However, due to the grace of the blessed ones, the buddhas in the ten directions, the instruments suddenly began to encourage the Bodhisattva by resounding with these verses:

13.18 The girls are delighted and joyful;
They play fine melodies on beautiful instruments.
At that moment, by the power of the victorious ones in the ten directions,
These many verses can be heard, in all their diversity:

13.19 "Seeing the beings who are forever without protector,
Hero, you made the following promise:
'I will awaken to the supreme state without old age or grief
So that I can deliver all beings from death, old age, and other sufferings.'

13.20 "Therefore, Virtuous One, quickly leave this fine city
And practice the conduct of previous sages.
When you reach the right place on the earth,
You shall awaken to the incomparable wisdom of the victorious ones. [164]

13.21 "In the past you gave away your exquisite wealth and riches,
And even your hands, feet, and dear body.
Great Sage, now is your time;
Open up the limitless river of Dharma for sentient beings.

13.22 "Your stainless and virtuous discipline has never been broken;
Until now you have always been adorned by the best qualities.
Great Sage, no one has discipline like you.
Now you must free beings from their many afflictions.

13.23 "For hundreds of lives you trained in forbearance;
You had patience with all kinds of evil words from others;
Through patience you are forbearing, self-controlled, and at ease.
Lord of Men, now you must decide to depart from home. [F.84.b]

13.24 "Your diligence is firm, steadfast, and unshakable;
Well-Gone One, you are great from beginning to end.
Virtuous One, you will tame Māra, the evil one, and his army,
And dry up the entire three lower realms.

13.25 "This is why you have practiced disciplined conduct and austerities—
To burn the afflictions of these evil and degenerate times.
Now let a rain of nectar fall
To soothe the thirst of those who for so long have had no protector.

13.26 "Now remember your supreme vow from the past:
'I will leave behind this beautiful town,
Quickly attain the state without death or sorrow,
And satisfy those who suffer from thirst with the nectar of immortality.'

13.27 "You are skilled in the supreme actions of knowledge;
Your wisdom is vast and limitless.
So now, Virtuous One, shine the beautiful light of knowledge
On those who are caught in delusion and doubt.

13.28 "For hundreds of lives you have trained in love,
As well as compassion, joy, and equanimity.
All those perfect acts that you have performed,
You must now share with sentient beings."

13.29 Through all the splendor of the victorious ones in the ten directions,
These verses, the wonderful blossoms of qualities, come about.
Through music they reverberate beautifully,
Encouraging the youth who rests on his couch.

13.30 At that time the joyful maidens who bring pleasure,
Beautiful as they are, play melodious tunes.
At the same time the victorious ones in the ten directions, who tame gods and humans,
Let this perfect speech be heard through the instruments in a pleasant sound: [165]

13.31 "You, who benefit beings and possess many qualities,
Have made the virtues of the victorious ones your own as you traveled the paths.
Remember your past disciplined conduct and austerities;
Quick, go to the supreme tree and attain the state of immortality.

13.32 "Gods and humans are thirsty, lacking the qualities of the victorious ones;
Yet your resolve equals the task, so grant them the nectar of immortality.
You possess the features of the ten powers, and all learned ones venerate you.
Quick, Lord of Men, dispense that nectar.

13.33 "You, Benefactor of the World, delight in the qualities of the victorious ones.
In your past lives you gave away your wealth, jewels, and gold; [F.85.a]
Your beloved wife and children; your land, cities, and villages;
And even your own head, eyes, hands, and feet.

13.34 "O Best of Men, in former times you were a virtuous king.
When a person came before you and said,
'Please give me this land with its cities and villages,'
You gave it away with a happy and undisturbed mind.

13.35 "In former times you were a personal priest to a king;
You attended upon the masters and caused no harm to anyone.
Best among priests, you established many ordinary beings in virtue;
After you died you were reborn in the divine realms.

13.36 "Prince, in the past you were a perfect sage.
At that time an evil king cut off your limbs in anger, [166]
Yet your mind remained undisturbed and you performed your caste duties.
At that time milk flowed from your arms and legs.

13.37 "In the past you were a sage's son known as Śyāma;
In the fine shelter of the mountains, you delighted in your difficult discipline.
Yet when a ruler pierced you with his poisonous arrows,
You were not disturbed, and only felt pity for him.

13.38 "In the past, O Receptacle of Qualities, when you were a leader of a pack of deer,
A hunter was carried off by a raging mountain torrent.
Wishing to help, you carried him to dry land.
Even as you brought your enemy to safety, you remained calm.

13.39 "Perfect Man, in previous times you were born as the son of a priest.
When your gem fell in the ocean,
You dried out the ocean.
As the strong and firm leader of human beings, you recovered the valuable gem.

13.40 "Perfect Being, in times past you were born as a holy sage.
Once when a priest approached you, saying, 'Please give me your protection,'
Sage, you told him, 'Venerable priest, I will rid you of the enemy.'
You gave away your body, while the priest kept his.

13.41 "In the past you approached the sage Śyāma at his place by the tree;
He asked you how many leaves were on the tree.
With your skill you counted the leaves accurately [F.85.b]
And told him the exact number. [167]

13.42 "Previously you were a virtuous, quick-darting parrot that lived in a tree;
Although the tree died, you remained, remembering its kindness.
The king of gods saw your virtues and rejoiced;
He restored the perfect tree to its former glory.

13.43 "Your disciplined conduct and austerities are beyond compare;
You are a receptacle of virtue, rich in qualities, treading the path of virtue.
Your time has come to abandon your city and your land;
Quick, establish beings in the virtuous actions of the victorious ones."

13.44 When gems of playful women, exquisitely dressed, their bodies adorned,
Play sweet music on the best of instruments,
Then, by the glory of the victorious ones in the ten directions,
These wonderful verses emerge from the beautiful sounds of the instruments:

13.45 "You vowed, 'I will be the protector of the world plagued by old age and death.'
Light of the World, in times past, for many eons, you have made this wish.
Lion of Men, remember your past aspirations;
Lord of Men, this is your time for renouncing your home.

13.46 "For billions of lives, you generously made many lavish gifts,
Giving away your wealth, gems, gold, fine cloth, a variety of jewels,
Your hands, feet, eyes, your beloved child, and the wealth of your kingdom.
Still you never had any resentment or anger for those who took it.

13.47 "You, Śaśiketu, have been a peaceful king with fine teeth,
Loving and compassionate, with a crown jewel shining like the moon. [168]
Such were your main deeds, mighty hero with the beautiful eyes of a king.
As a king, for billions of years you have practiced generosity gladly.

13.48 "Thus-Gone One, for many eons you have practiced discipline.
Like a stainless jewel, your discipline has been pure;
Like a female yak that protects her calf, you have guarded your discipline.
Since you delight in discipline, you have done so much to benefit beings.

13.49 "As a perfect elephant, the arrows of the evil hunter hit you,
Yet you felt love and compassion for this harsh enemy and protected him. [F.86.a]
You gave him your fine and beautiful tusks and did not relinquish your discipline;
You displayed such discipline many times.

13.50 "Delighting in forbearance, you had patience with the many harms, sufferings,
Harsh words, murders, and imprisonments inflicted upon you by others.
In the past you always provided others with every comfort,
And although they were your executioners, you still remained forbearing.

13.51 "Protector, once you were a bear, living in a mountain lair;
At that time you rescued a man, frightened and terrified, out of an avalanche.
You served him roots and berries and provided him with every comfort;
Although he soon killed you and carried you off, you remained patient.

13.52 "When through austerities, you sought awakening and wisdom of many qualities,
You possessed fortitude, determination, unshakable resolve, and diligence;
The strength of your diligence could overcome even the most powerful demon.
Lion of Men, the time has come for renunciation. [169]

13.53 "In the past you were the finest of horses, as white as snow;
With compassion, you traveled swiftly through the sky to the land of demonesses.
You rescued the men in distress and brought them to safety;
Many times have you demonstrated such diligence.

13.54 "A skilled meditator, you destroyed afflictions with calmness, discipline, and restraint,
And tamed the fickle mind, which chases after the pleasures of the senses.
Since you delight in concentration, your personal qualities benefit others;
Now, Perfect Being, the time has come for you to demonstrate your concentration.

13.55 "In the past you were a well-to-do sage who delighted in concentration;
People who had lost their king invited you and consecrated you to kingship.
You showed these people the ten virtues and established them on the path of Brahmā;
Later, as they died, they all proceeded to the realm of Brahmā.

13.56 "You have mastered the art of knowing the destinies of beings in all directions; [F.86.b]
You know their actions, languages, and capacities.
You have perfected the way, the discipline, and different types of memory;
Royal Son, today the time for renunciation has come.

13.57 "In the past, when you saw anyone with wrong views,
Who suffered from old age, death, and all the different afflictions,
You instructed them in the straight path that destroys existence.
You who conquer darkness, you have benefited the world greatly."

13.58 These many virtuous and beautiful verses emerge from the tune of the instruments;
By the glory of the victorious ones, they encourage the hero: [170]
"Intelligent One, the time for renunciation has come;
When you see these suffering beings, do not remain indifferent."

13.59 The pleasing and joyful women are adorned
With fine clothes, gems, necklaces, perfumes, and flower garlands;
They wake the Supreme Being with music and song.
By the power of the victorious ones, the instruments call out these verses:

13.60 "It was for the sake of others that for many eons
You gave up what is hard to abandon and were disciplined, forbearing, and diligent.
Through your training in concentration and knowledge, your time has come;
Guide, quick, direct your mind toward renunciation, without delay!

13.61 "Before you relinquished treasuries of jewels, gold, silver, and ornaments;
In all those lives, you performed sacrifices of many types.
You gave away your wife, sons, daughters, body, kingdom, and even your life;
For the sake of awakening, you gave away without limits what is hard to abandon.

13.62 "You have been kings rich in merit and renowned for splendor:
Nimindhara, Nimi, Kṛṣṇabandhu, Brahmadatta, Keśarin,
Sahasrayajña, Dharmacinti, Arcimat, and Dṛḍhadhanu.
Always considering the matter well, you gave to lowly people what is hard to give.

13.63 "You have been powerful Sutasoma, Dīptavīrya, and Puñyaraśmi; [F.87.a]
Generous and powerful, you also acknowledged the kindness of others.
O Royal Sage, you were the moon-like hero Satyavardhana,
The king Subhāṣitagaveṣin, and the gentle Sumati. [171]

13.64 "You have been Candraprabha, Viśeṣagāmin, and Reṇu, lord of the ten directions;
You have been the king of Kāśi, Pradānasūra, Ratnacūḍa, and Śāntaga.
When you were these rulers, as well as others, you gave what is hard to give;
As you showered a rain of gifts then, may you now shower a rain of Dharma.

13.65 "In the past you saw the best of beings, as numerous as sand in the Ganges,
And made an inconceivable and limitless number of offerings to them.
As you searched for supreme awakening in order to liberate others then,
Hero, now the time has come to renounce this perfect city.

13.66 "At the beginning you offered Amoghadarśin a sāl flower;
With a mind full of devotion, you gazed for a moment at Vairocana.
You offered Dundubhisvara a myrobalan fruit;
When you saw Candana's house, you brought your grass torch and held it up.

13.67 "When Reṇu entered the city, you scattered a handful of fragrant powder at him;
When Dharmeśvara taught the Dharma, you applauded him.
When you saw Samantadarśin, you declared your homage to him;
You joyfully threw a golden chain toward Mahārciskandhin.

13.68 "To Dharmadhvaja you offered a robe, and to Nirodha a handful of beans.
You offered Jñānaketu a flower of the aśoka tree, and soup to Sārathi.
You offered a candle to Ratnaśikhin, and medicine to Padmayoni.
To Sarvābhibū you offered a pearl necklace, and to Sāgara a lotus flower.

13.69 "You offered a canopy to Padmagarbha, and a rain cover to Siṃha.
To Śālendrarāja you offered clarified butter, and milk to Puṣpita. [172]
To Yaśodatta you offered kuruṇṭa flowers, and food to Satyadarśin.
You bowed down to Jñānameru, and offered robes to Nāgadatta.

13.70 "To Atyuccagāmin you offered the finest sandalwood, and a handful of salt to Tiṣya.
You offered lotus flowers to Mahāvyūha, and jewels to Raśmirāja. [F.87.b]
To Śākyamuni you offered a handful of gold, and you praised Indraketu.
You offered earrings to Sūryānanda, and a golden crown to Sumati.

13.71 "To Nāgābhibhū you offered a jewel, and a cotton mat to Puṣya.
To Bhaiṣajyarāja you offered a precious parasol, and a throne to Siṃhaketu.
You offered Guṅāgradhāri a net of precious stones, and instruments to Kāśyapa.
To Arciketu you offered powders of exquisite scent, and flowers to Caityaka.

13.72 "You offered Akṣobhyarāja a multistoried palace, and a flower garland to Lokapūjita.
To Tagaraśikhin you offered your kingdom, and to Durjaya much incense.
You offered yourself to Mahāpradīpa, and jewel adornments to Padmottara.
To Dharmaketu you offered various flowers, and blue lotuses to Dīpaṃkara.

13.73 "In the past you made these and other offerings,
Manifold and marvelous, to the best of beings.
Remember the buddhas of the past and your offerings to these teachers.
Do not abandon those who suffer without protection; leave your home.

13.74 "Merely seeing Dīpaṃkara, you attained supreme forbearance,
And discovered, accordingly, the five indestructible clairvoyant perceptions.
Subsequently you performed inconceivable offerings
For limitless eons to all the buddhas in all the universes. [173]

13.75 "Now limitless eons have passed, and those buddhas have passed into nirvāṇa.
Where are all your past bodies and names now?
All things perish by nature; there is no permanence in conditioned things.
Delights, kingdoms, and enjoyments are impermanent, so leave this perfect city.

13.76 "Like the fierce and terrifying inferno, when this eon comes to an end,
Old age, sickness, and death bring great and terrible fear.
In the end, all things are conditioned and therefore cannot last;
Look at those who suffer intensely and, Capable One, renounce." [F.88.a]

13.77 As the retinue of women wake up the Lord of Men,
Who was resting in his comfortable bed,
With sounds of lutes, flutes, and other instruments,
At that time the following words come from within the sounds of the instruments:

13.78 "The three worlds are ablaze with the suffering of old age and sickness;
This world is ablaze with the fire of death and without a protector.
Always deluded in impure existence,
Beings spin like a bee caught in a vase.

13.79 "The three worlds are unstable, like autumn clouds;
The birth and death of beings is like watching a play.
The life of a being passes quickly,
Like a lightning bolt in the sky or a mountain stream.

13.80 "By the power of craving for existence and ignorance,
Beings take birth as humans, gods, or in the three lower realms.
In their ignorance they continuously circle among these five existences,
Like the spinning of a potter's wheel.

13.81 "Beautiful forms, sweet sounds, fragrant smells,
Delicious tastes, and pleasant touch—
The snare of these unfortunate times has caught beings,
Like the hunter's snare catches a monkey.

13.82 "The objects of enjoyment lead to much suffering and harm;
They bring fear, make enemies, and lead to depravity.
A noble being will reject them like a bowl of excrement,
The edge of a sword, or poison ivy.

13.83 "The objects of enjoyment always bring fear and depravity;
They make us suffer when we think of them, and they make us blind.
They always produce causes of fear and are the root of suffering;
They make the vine of craving for existence grow. [174]

13.84 "Just like a terrifying fire pit,
So the noble ones understand desire.
Or they see it like a great swamp, or like walking on swords,
Or like the edge of a knife smeared with honey.

13.85 "Like a viper's head or a bowl of excrement,
So the wise ones understand desire.
Desires are like a pang of pain, and as fragile as a bird's egg;
Like a bone among dogs, they are the prime cause of enmity.

13.86 "Desired objects are like a moon reflected in water,
Like a reflection, or an echo,
Like an illusion, or like a theater play,
Or like a dream—thus perceive the noble ones.

13.87 "Desired objects are momentary and empty.
They are as untrue as a magical illusion or a mirage;
They have no substance, like a bubble of water or foam.
The learned ones realize that these objects emerge from conceptualization. [F.88.b]

13.88 "At first in youth, when one has a fine body,
One is liked and desired and acts like a child.
Yet when old age, suffering, and diseases conquer the splendor of the body,
One is abandoned, just like a dried-up river is abandoned by deer.

13.89 "When one is powerful with the best of wealth, grains, and possessions,
One is liked and desired and acts like a child.
Yet when the wealth is spent and suffering sets in,
One is abandoned, just like an empty wilderness.

13.90 "Like a tree with flowers and fruits,
People love a person who delights in giving.
Yet when the wealth is gone, one becomes a beggar, miserable in old age;
At that point, just like a vulture, one becomes disliked.

13.91 "When one is powerful, rich, and handsome, one is like a lord;
People like to meet such a being, and one pleases their senses.
Yet when one is old, suffering from disease, and all wealth is spent,
One becomes as disagreeable as death.

13.92 "When one is old and youth has passed,
Like a tree struck by lightning,
One is worn out and terrifying to others, like a ruined house.
Sage, quick, tell us how to avoid old age!

13.93 "Old age withers men and women,
Just as the mālu ivy does to a thick sāl forest.
Old age robs one's diligence, energy, and power,
Like a person caught in a swamp.

13.94 "Old age makes the beautiful person ugly;
Old age steals one's splendor and robs one's power.
Old age takes your happiness and defeats you;
Old age brings death and destroys your vital force. [175]

13.95 "There are hundreds of diseases, and being struck by sickness
Brings torment to beings, like deer tormented by forest fire.
Look at those beings that are overcome by old age and sickness,
And, quick, explain how to be free of suffering!

13.96 "Just as the heavy snow during winter
Steals all life from grass, trees, and herbs,
So, alas, do sickness and old age rob the vitality of beings
And destroy their faculties, bodies, and strength.

13.97 "Old age and disease exhaust all stores of wealth and grain;
They bring great anguish to beings.
They create resentment and bring animosity among loved ones;
They torment everyone intensely, like the sun in the sky.

13.98 "When the time of passing away has arrived,
One is always separated from one's favorite possessions and loved ones.
There will be no returning or meeting again,
Just as fruits or leaves taken by the river never meet the tree again.

13.99 "Death makes the powerful helpless; [F.89.a]
Death robs everyone, like a river carrying off a tree.
One must proceed alone, without friend or company;
One is powerless but to follow the results of one's actions.

13.100 "Death devours beings by the hundreds,
Like a sea monster devouring numerous beings,
Or like a garuḍa devouring a nāga, or an elephant catching a lion,
Or how a fire devours plants, herbs, and living creatures.

13.101 "To liberate beings from these hundreds of calamities,
Thus you made your aspiration.
Now remember that aspiration of bygone times;
The time for leaving your home has come."

13.102 While the group of delighted women
Are waking up the Great Sage with their music,
At this time, through the power of the thus-gone ones,
These wonderful verses come out from the sound of the instruments:

13.103 "Everything compounded quickly disintegrates;
Nothing lasts longer than a flash of lightning in the sky.
Your time has now come—
The time for leaving home, Disciplined One!

13.104 "Conditioned things are impermanent and without stability;
Their nature is to break, like an unbaked earthen vase.
They are like things on loan from another,
Or a city of sand, so short-lived are they.

13.105 "All these conditioned things are impermanent by nature.
Like mud plaster applied during the rains,
Or the sandy banks of the river,
They depend on conditions and have a feeble nature. [176]

13.106 "Conditioned things are like the light of a candle:
They have the nature of quickly coming and going.
Like the wind, they do not remain;
Like foam, they are feeble and insubstantial.

13.107 "Conditioned things are inert and empty;
When examined they are like the stem of the plantain tree.
They are like an illusion that deceives the mind;
They are like an empty fist that tricks children.

13.108 "All conditioned things come about
Based on causes and conditions.
One causing the other, they arise in dependence,
Yet all the childish beings do not recognize this.

13.109 "Just as valvaja grass depends on muñja grass
To give a rope proper strength,
Or just as a bucket in a well depends on a winch—
One unable to function without the other—

13.110 "So too function the twelve links of dependent origination.
Being all in mutual dependence, [F.89.b]
One thing follows after another,
And it cannot be seen where one thing ends and the other begins.

13.111 "When you have a seed, a sprout can grow,
Yet the seed is not the sprout.
Still it is not different;
In this way the true nature knows no permanence or impermanence.

13.112 "Formative factors have ignorance for their cause;
Formative factors do not truly exist.
Ignorance and formative factors
Are naturally empty and inert.

13.113 "The seal makes the mark of the seal appear,
Yet the seal itself was not transferred anywhere.
It is not in the mark, yet it is also not elsewhere;
In this way the formative factors are beyond annihilation and permanence.

13.114 "It is based on the eye and form
That the eye consciousness appears.
Yet the form is not dependent on the eye,
Nor is the form transferred to the eye.

13.115 "Although all of this is without a self and is repulsive,
Beings perceive it as having a self and as beautiful.
Although that is a mistaken and corrupt imputation,
The eye consciousness arises from it.

13.116 "The consciousness ceases and rearises.
The practitioner observes this arising and ceasing of consciousness:
It goes nowhere and it does not come from anywhere.
The practitioner perceives consciousness as empty and illusory. [177]

13.117 "Since the combination of these three is needed—
The lower and upper pieces of wood, and the action of the hands—
A fire is born in dependence on conditions.
It is born, fulfills its purpose, and quickly ceases.

13.118 "In this way some scholars investigate:
'Where does this come from and where does it proceed?'
They check in all directions,
And find that nothing comes and nothing goes.

13.119 "The conditions for the aggregates, the sense fields, and the elements
Are ignorance, craving, and karma.
When all of these assemble, that is called a sentient being,
Although ultimately nothing is there.

13.120 "Based on the lips, throat, palate, and tongue,
The sounds of syllables are produced.
This is not so with just the throat or the palate;
No sound can be found in them individually.

13.121 "Speech occurs based on all of these things coming together;
It emerges based on the power of mind and intelligence.
Yet mind and speech are by nature invisible;
They are nowhere to be found, inside or outside. [F.90.a]

13.122 "When the learned ones analyze the coming and going
Of speech, voices, sounds, and tunes,
They see that all speech is like an echo,
Momentary and without substance.

13.123 "Sound is based on wood and strings
Meeting with the movements of the hands.
Due to these three things, sounds can emerge
From instruments such as the melodious lute.

13.124 "When some skillful people analyze this and wonder,
'Where does the sound come from and where does it go?'
They may search in all directions,
Yet never find the origin of sound or its destination.

13.125 "This is how all compounded phenomena appear,
Based on causes and conditions.
The practitioner, by observing the true nature of conditioned things,
Sees that these things are all empty and inert.

13.126 "The aggregates, sense fields, and elements
Are empty within and empty without;
They all lack a self and do not abide.
Everything is essentially like space.

13.127 "That everything is this way,
You realized when you met Dīpaṃkara.
That which you understood, exactly as it is,
You must now make gods and humans comprehend. [178]

13.128 "Beings are scorched by attachment and anger,
Yet they are falsely imputed—such ills are not for real.
Guide, release the stream of nectar,
The cooling waters of peace from the cloud of compassion.

13.129 " 'Once I attain supreme awakening,
I will gather noble wealth for beings.'
Skillful One, saying this you sought out supreme awakening,
And for many millions of eons you made offerings to the learned.

13.130 "Remember your previous actions!
Charioteer, do not forget to bring this noble wealth
To those who are depressed, poor, and suffering.
Gather them with your noble wealth.

13.131 " 'I will show millions of beings
The perfect gate to the nectar of the higher realms.'
Saying this, you guarded your discipline well
In order to block the way to the three lower realms.

13.132 "Keep your discipline and fulfill your wishes;
Remember your past actions.
Close the gates to the three lower realms,
And open the gates to the nectar of the higher realms. [F.90.b]

13.133 " 'I will put up with beings' hostility and anger,
And liberate everyone from the ocean of existence.
I will establish them in peace and happiness without disease.'
Saying this, you have always trained in forbearance.

13.134 "Remember your previous actions!
Do not abandon those who engage in harmful actions,
Due to being disturbed by animosity, ill will, and harmful wishes.
You said: 'I will bring those beings to the stage of forbearance.

13.135 " 'I will prepare the ship of Dharma,
Deliver beings from the ocean of existence,
And establish them in peace and happiness without disease.'
Saying this, you have relied on diligence to achieve that.

13.136 "Remember your previous actions!
The four rivers carry beings away;
Quick, rescue those beings that have no guide,
Through the power of your diligence and the strength of your discipline.

13.137 " 'I will establish on the noble path
Those beings that have confused faculties and suffer from monkey-like thoughts.'
O Gentle One, to accomplish that,
You have trained in concentration that expels disturbing emotions.

13.138 "Remember your previous actions!
Do not abandon those afflicted beings
Who are agitated by the web of disturbing emotions.
Establish these beings in one-pointed concentration. [179]

13.139 " 'I will give beings who are veiled by the darkness of delusion and ignorance
A vision of many hundred doors to the Dharma.
I will give them eyes that can see reality.'
Saying this, you have meditated on knowledge.

13.140 "Remember your previous actions!
To those beings who are veiled by the darkness of delusion and ignorance,
You must give the excellent light of sacred knowledge,
The eye of Dharma, which is stainless and impeccable."

13.141 Verses like this emerge from
The sounds of the women's instruments.
Hearing them, all the Bodhisattva's sleepiness vanishes
And he sets his mind on perfect and supreme awakening.

13.142 Monks, in this way, even as the Bodhisattva was with his retinue of consorts, he could not avoid hearing the sound of the Dharma. He could not avoid thinking about the Dharma. Monks, this was because for so long the Bodhisattva had paid his respects to the Dharma and to those who teach the Dharma. From the innermost core of his being, he strove toward the Dharma, wished for the Dharma, and his only delight was in the Dharma. [F.91.a] As he searched for the Dharma, he was insatiable.

13.143 He taught the Dharma just as he had heard it. He was a master of generosity in bestowing the gift of the unexcelled great Dharma. He taught the Dharma without seeking rewards. He was without any stinginess when it came to teaching the Dharma. Regarding the Dharma, he never held back anything as a teacher. He practiced the Dharma that he taught. He was brave in making the Dharma manifest. He found his home in the Dharma, his protection in the Dharma, and his refuge in the Dharma. His point of reference was the Dharma, and his ultimate resort was the Dharma. With the Dharma as his object of meditation, proficient in forbearance, he practiced the perfection of knowledge and attained skillful means.

13.144 Monks, the Bodhisattva demonstrated, with a playful mastery of his great skillful means, the actions conforming to the wishes of his entire retinue of consorts. He was acting in conformity with the bodhisattvas of the past who, while being beyond the world, acted in worldly ways. Since the Bodhisattva had long ago realized the shortcomings of desire, he now demonstrated sensual enjoyment, without himself wanting it, simply in order to ripen others. By the unique power of the accumulation of merit, gathered through limitless roots of virtue, he demonstrated the qualities of the ruler of the world. He demonstrated a complete enjoyment of the delightful forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures that went far beyond anything known to gods and humans in terms of quality and extent. [180]

13.145 He demonstrated a mastery of mind, which was free from attachment to any of his delightful maidens of pleasure. He ripened those who were now in his company as friends, due to the power of their previous aspirations and their accumulated roots of virtue. As such he was able to stay among the consorts without ever being disturbed by the stains of worldly emotions. While watching for the time to ripen the potential in those who were around him, [F.91.b] the Bodhisattva kept his former promise acutely in mind.

13.146 He actualized the Buddha and the Dharma and perfected the power of aspiration. For sentient beings he felt great compassion and kept their complete freedom foremost in his mind. He understood that in the end, any amount of wealth will be used up. He understood that saṃsāra is full of many calamities and terrors. He broke free from the evil shackles of Māra, extricated himself from the prison of cyclic existence, and directed his attention to nirvāṇa. [B9]

13.147 Monks, from the very beginning the Bodhisattva had already understood the many shortcomings of cyclic existence. With all his heart, he stopped striving after compounded phenomena, as well as all kinds of grasping and clinging. Instead he now only felt interest in the Buddhadharma. He turned toward the state of nirvāṇa and turned his back on saṃsāra. He delighted in the domain of a thus-gone one, because he had separated himself from the domain of Māra.

13.148 Perceiving the three realms to be ablaze with the shortcomings of existence, his wish was to free himself from them, and he became skilled in removing himself from the shortcomings and faults of cyclic existence. His wish was to become ordained, and his mind was filled with the thought of leaving home. He was determined to live in solitude and delighted in seeking remoteness. His wish was to be completely on his own and at peace.

13.149 He strove to be of help, both for himself and for others, and was a hero in unexcelled persistence. He wished to be of service to the world and to assist the world. He wished happiness and the peace of accomplishment for the world. He had compassion for the world and wanted to help. He was filled with love, saturated with great compassion, and skilled in the art of attracting others. He was never sad. [F.92.a] He was skilled in ripening and training others. In his heart he harbored the same love toward everyone that one has for one's only child.

13.150 He had abandoned wishes for material objects and paid no attention to them. He delighted in giving and sharing. He never refused, but gave courageously with an open hand. He made religious offerings. He accumulated perfect merit and guarded it well. [181] Through discipline, he freed himself from any stains or miserliness, and was fully in control of his thoughts. He was a peerless great benefactor. Even though he gave, he had no expectation of reward. He was a heroic giver ready to subdue the hostile forces of the entire multitude of disturbing emotions, the primary ones being longing, desire, attachment, anger, haughtiness, pride, delusion, and miserliness.

13.151 He did not lapse from continually giving rise to the state of omniscience. He was always well protected by an armor of great generosity. He had love and compassion for the world and wished to help. His protection and coat of mail was diligence. His focus was on liberating others. His power was compassion, and his strength was courage. He did not turn back. He had complete impartiality with regard to all beings, and his weapon was generosity. He was able to satisfy the hopes and wishes of others. He was a vessel fit for awakening who continuously realized the Dharma. He would dedicate his awakening to all beings. He did not lower his banner. When he gave, his generosity was not involved with subject, object, and action. He had the sharp vajra weapon of supreme wisdom. He conquered all opposing forces of disturbing emotions.

13.152 He was disciplined, skilled, and behaved correctly. He guarded carefully all his physical, verbal, and mental acts, [F.92.b] and exhibited fear of even the smallest unwholesome act. His discipline was perfectly pure. Mentally he had abandoned all stains and was now clean and spotless. Disturbing emotions resulting from negative speech, harmful

talk, adversity, criticism, blaming, cursing, beatings, threats, murder, bondage, and imprisonment did not perturb his mind, which was simply unshakable. He was perfectly forbearing and gentle. He had no harmful wishes, never did any damage, and was utterly free from any ill will.

13.153 He had given rise to a fervent diligence that was set on helping all other beings. It was a firm resolve. He could not be turned back from accomplishing all the practices that are the roots of virtue. He was mindful and composed. His mind was not distracted, and he rested one-pointedly in concentration. He was skilled in analyzing phenomena. He had found the light, and all darkness had disappeared for him. His mind was filled with thoughts about the nature of impermanence, suffering, and repulsiveness. He was trained in the applications of mindfulness, the thorough relinquishments, the bases of miraculous power, the faculties, the powers, the branches of awakening, the path, the four truths of the noble ones, and all the factors of awakening.

13.154 His mind was purified by tranquility and insight. He perceived the truth of dependent origination. Since he had realized the truth, he was not reliant on others. He mastered the three gateways to liberation. He had realized that all phenomena are like an illusion, a mirage, a dream, a moon reflected in water, an echo, or an optical illusion. [182] Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva lived according to the Dharma. [F.93.a] In this way he rested in wisdom. In this way he rested in a state of immense qualities. In this way he strove for the benefit of others.

13.155 Encouraged even more by these verses, which emerged out of the sounds of the instruments through the blessings of the buddhas in the ten directions, the Bodhisattva at this point manifested four Dharma gates in order to mature his retinue of consorts, just as all previous bodhisattvas in their last existence had done. What are these four Dharma gates?

13.156 The first Dharma gate that he manifested is called *pure accomplishment*. It refers to the four means of attracting disciples: generosity, kind talk, meaningful actions, and practicing what one preaches.

13.157 The second Dharma gate that he manifested is called *the irreversible state*. It produces the power of aspiration toward inexhaustible omniscience, and it ensures that the capacity of the Three Jewels is upheld and not wasted.

13.158 The third Dharma gate that he manifested is called *putting great compassion into practice*. It is a disposition of never abandoning any sentient beings.

13.159 The fourth Dharma gate that he manifested is called *the great array*. It accomplishes the unique strength of the accumulation of wisdom, which ascertains the meaning of the different categories related to all the factors of awakening.

13.160 These are the four Dharma gates that the Bodhisattva manifested. At that point, in order to mature his entire retinue of consorts, he produced many miraculous manifestations. By the power of the Bodhisattva, these miraculous displays caused hundreds of thousands of Dharma gates to emerge from the sounds of the music, such as the following:

13.161 "Through profound aspirations in one's heart
And the heartfelt compassion for beings,
The mind of the most eminent awakening is born."
Such words rang out from the musical instruments.

13.162 "Faith, devotion, dedication, respect,
Lack of pride, and humility before the teachers,
Inquiry and search for the nature of virtue,
And training in mindfulness." Such were the words that emerged. [183]

13.163 "Generosity, calmness, collectedness, discipline, [F.93.b]
Forbearance, diligence,
Concentration, absorption,
Knowledge, and means." Such were the words that emerged.

13.164 "Through settling on love, compassion,
Joy, equanimity, higher knowledge,
And the four means of attracting disciples,
You will ripen beings." Such were the words that emerged.

13.165 "Analyze the four applications of mindfulness,
The thorough relinquishments, the bases of miraculous power,
The five faculties, the five powers, and the branches of awakening."
Such were the words that emerged from the instruments.

13.166 "The divisions of the supreme eightfold path of the noble ones,
Tranquility, insight, impermanence,
Suffering, lack of self, and repulsiveness."
Such were the words that emerged from the instruments.

13.167 "Freedom from attachment, solitude,
Knowledge of extinction, nonarising,
Cessation, nonabiding, and nirvāṇa."
Such were the words that emerged from the instruments.

13.168 Through the power of the Perfect Bodhisattva,
Such words emerged from the instruments.
As all these wanton women heard these words, they learned them,
And directed their aspirations for awakening to the Perfect Being.

13.169 Monks, while the Bodhisattva remained in this way among his retinue of consorts, he matured 84,000 women along with many hundreds of thousands of assembled gods for the attainment of unexcelled and perfect awakening.

13.170 When it was time for the Bodhisattva to leave home, there arrived a god from the Heaven of Joy by the name Hṛīdeva, on a visit concerning the Bodhisattva's unexcelled and perfect awakening. Then, in the quiet of the night, he arrived at the palace together with an assembly of 32,000 gods in order to serve and venerate the Bodhisattva. As he arrived, he stopped in midair and sang these verses to the Bodhisattva:

13.171 "You have manifested passing away, Famed One!
Lion of Men, you have also manifested birth.
In order to teach the retinue of consorts,
You have acted in accordance with the world. [184]

13.172 "While acting in conformity with the world, [F.94.a]
You have ripened many gods and humans.
Today the time has come,
So please consider leaving home.

13.173 "If you are not free yourself, you will be unable to liberate others;
A blind man cannot show the way.
If you are free, you can liberate others;
A person with sight can show the way.

13.174 "Those beings who are slaves to desire—
Attached to their house, wealth, sons, and wife—
When being trained by you,
May they too form a wish to leave their homes.

13.175 "You must abandon your dominion and the sports of love,
And the seven riches on the four continents.
When people hear that you have renounced all this,
The world with its gods and humans will long for the same.

13.176 "You are not delighted by desire;
You rest in the bliss of concentration.
Yet many hundreds of gods and humans,
You awaken from their sleep.

13.177 "The prime of life is very short;
It passes quickly, like a cascading waterfall.
As youth fades away,
Leaving home will not seem appealing.

13.178 "So depart from home now
While you are still young and in your prime.
Fulfill your promise
And act in the interest of the host of gods.

13.179 "Desired objects never satisfy;
They are just like salty water from the ocean.
Satisfied, however, are those who possess knowledge,
The stainless noble ones who transcend the world.

13.180 "You are the delight of King Śuddhodana's kingdom,
Who has won its hearts and minds.
Your face is like a blooming lotus with hundreds of petals.
So please consider departing now!

13.181 "Beings suffer from the burning torment of disturbing emotions.
They are without refuge, bound in heavy fetters.
Hero, quick, establish them in peace
On the path to complete liberation.

13.182 "You, the skilled physician,
Please, quickly establish in the happiness of nirvāṇa
The beings touched by diseases, who have suffered for so long,
By dispensing the medicine of Dharma. [185]

13.183 "Beings are blind in the darkness of their stupor
And bound by the web of wrong views.
You are the eye of gods and humans,
So quick, shine the light of wisdom.

13.184 " 'We must see the One Who Has Attained Awakening,
And listen to the unexcelled Dharma.'
So say the many gods, demigods, nāgas,
Yakṣas, and gandharvas who are watching you.

13.185 "The king of nāgas can see your splendor,
Since it illumines even his abode. [F.94.b]
He brings boundless offerings,
So fulfill his wish for disciplined conduct.

13.186 " 'At the feet of the Bodhi tree your mind shall be perfected,
And we shall present you with four offering bowls.'
So say the four guardians of the world and their armies,
Who are all awaiting you.

13.187 "Even Brahmā, the peaceful and compassionate one,
Who speaks lovingly, awaits you, thinking,
'I must request this lord of men
To turn the unexcelled wheel.'

13.188 "The gods who venerate awakening
Are all present at the seat of awakening.
They await you, thinking,
'We shall witness his awakening.'

13.189 "It is true that bodhisattvas
Demonstrate their occupation with consorts.
You, however, should be at the forefront.
Do not fall behind them!

13.190 "Remember the sweet-sounding and soft words
Of Dīpankara when he gave his prophecy!
Utter now the sound of the victorious ones' voice,
The voice that is genuine and free from error!"

13.191 *This concludes the thirteenth chapter, on encouragement.*

Chapter 14

DREAMS

14.

14.1 Monks, while the god in this way was encouraging the Bodhisattva, a dream occurred to King Śuddhodana. As he was sleeping, King Śuddhodana dreamed that the Bodhisattva was leaving the palace in the quiet of the night, [186] surrounded by a host of gods. As the Bodhisattva left the palace, the king saw that he had become ordained and was wearing the saffron-colored robes.

As soon as the king awoke, he immediately asked the chamberlain, “Is the young prince with the consorts?”

The chamberlain replied, “Yes, Your Majesty.”

14.2 King Śuddhodana, sitting in the female quarters, thought to himself, “Then the young prince will surely leave us soon, as these omens foretell.” As a sharp pain shot through his heart, he began to scheme: “My young prince must never even set foot in the palace gardens. He must always remain inside with the maidens so that he will be addicted to their pleasures. He must never leave us!”

14.3 Then, in order for the young prince to enjoy himself, King Śuddhodana erected three palaces for each of the three seasons—hot, rainy, and cold. [F.95.a] The Hot Season Palace was very cool, the Rainy Season Palace was both cool

and warm, and the Winter Palace was naturally warm. At each palace five hundred guardsmen walked up and down the staircase. While they were ascending and descending the stairs, their calls could be heard for a distance of half a league. Everyone thought, "The young prince will never be able to leave without being noticed."

14.4 Nevertheless all the astrologers and fortunetellers kept making the same prediction, saying, "The young prince will leave through the Gate of Auspiciousness." So the king had massive door panels fitted into the Gate of Auspiciousness, so large that it took five hundred men to open and close each of them. The calls of these five hundred men could be heard half a league away. The king provided the palaces with the five desirable things, the likes of which had never been seen before. There were constantly young maidens around the Bodhisattva, playing their instruments, singing songs, and dancing for him.

14.5 Monks, at that point the Bodhisattva told his charioteer, "I will go to the parks, so quick, go and prepare my chariot." But the charioteer went to [187] King Śuddhodana and told him, "Your Majesty, the young prince wishes to visit the parks." On hearing that, King Śuddhodana thought to himself, "My young prince has never been to the parks to see their lovely grounds. However, if I allow him to visit the parks, the young prince must be surrounded by women. That way he can really enjoy amorous delights and surely he will not leave us then."

14.6 As King Śuddhodana had such love for the Bodhisattva and wanted to please him, he dispatched bell ringers and made the following announcement to the people in his city: "Seven days from now, the young prince will be visiting the grounds of the pleasure grove. You must all make sure that the young prince does not catch sight of anything disagreeable, so take care that everything that is not beautiful has been removed, and every nice thing, pleasing to the senses, has been brought forth!"

14.7 Accordingly, on the seventh day, the entire city was beautifully adorned. The parks were also adorned with canopies of cloth in various colors, as well as parasols, flags, [F.95.b] and banners. The road on which the Bodhisattva was to proceed had been sprinkled and swept, sprayed with perfumed water, and scattered with fresh flower petals. Incense burners dispensed fragrant smoke, and along the road vases had been placed and plantain trees planted. The road was shaded with silk canopies in many colors, and festooned with nets of tiny jewel bells and decorative garlands and tassels. Four army divisions had also taken position along the route, and members of the retinue were busy adorning the young prince's consorts.

14.8 Amid all this activity, while the Bodhisattva was exiting through the eastern gate of the city on his way to the parks, through the power of the Bodhisattva the gods from the pure realms emanated an old man on the road ahead. He was a decrepit old man, so skinny that the veins on his body protruded. His teeth had fallen out [188] and he was covered in wrinkles everywhere. His hair was gray and he was hunched over like the rafters in a gable roof. Weak and broken, he had to use a stick to keep himself from falling. He was in pain and his vitality was long gone. The only sounds that emerged from his throat were a dry wheezing. As he stood there on the road, with the weight of his upper body supported by his stick, all his limbs were shaking and trembling.

14.9 When the Bodhisattva saw the man, he asked his charioteer the following, even though he already knew the answer:

"Charioteer! Who is that decrepit man?
He is so weak, emaciated, and wrinkled;
His head is all gray, his teeth are few and far between, and his body is so skinny.
Holding his stick, he sways in discomfort from side to side."

14.10 The charioteer replied:

"Your Highness, that man is overcome by old age;
His senses are weak, he suffers greatly, and his strength and energy are gone.
His relatives despise him and no one looks after him;
Unable to function, he has been abandoned like a piece of wood in the forest."

14.11 The Bodhisattva then asked:

"Is that a practice specific to his family,
Or could that happen to anyone?
Quick, tell me the truth!
Then I will reflect on what I hear."

14.12 The charioteer replied:

"Your Highness, that is not the practice of his caste or the state;
For all beings, old age overcomes youth. [189]
Even your father, mother, friends, and relatives [F.96.a]
Are not free from old age, nor is any other class of people."

14.13 The Bodhisattva then remarked:

"Charioteer, how sad! Childish and ignorant beings do not see old age,
Proud and crazed as they are in youth.
I will go back now—quick, turn my chariot around!
If I shall also be old, how can I enjoy myself and play games?"

So the Bodhisattva turned his fine chariot around and returned to the city.

14.14 However, monks, sometime later, while the Bodhisattva was setting out for the parks through the southern city gate, again accompanied by a large parade, he saw on the road a man suffering from disease. His body was weak, and he was suffering greatly as he lay in his own urine and feces. There was no one to take care of him or assist him, and he was breathing only with the greatest difficulty. When the Bodhisattva saw this man, he turned to the charioteer and asked him the following, even though he already knew the answer:

14.15 "Charioteer, the body of this poor man is covered in sores and discolored;
His senses are weak, he is crippled, and he breathes so heavily.
He is so skinny, his belly is in convulsions, and he suffers;
He is lying in his own excrement, in a revolting state."

14.16 The charioteer replied:

"Your Highness, that man is seriously ill;
Confronted by the terrors of disease, he is now on the brink of death.
The splendor of his former health is gone and his strength has been lost;
He has no protection, refuge, or sanctuary, and nowhere to go." [190]

14.17 The Bodhisattva then exclaimed:

"Health is just like a play in a dream!
What wise person, having witnessed
Such unbearable terrors of disease,
Would have a positive view of playful games?"

And so, monks, once again the Bodhisattva turned his beautiful chariot around and returned to the city.

14.18 However, monks, sometime later, while the Bodhisattva was setting out for the parks through the western city gate, accompanied by a large parade, he saw on the road a dead man who had reached his end. The corpse was lying on a stretcher, covered by a cotton cloth. It was surrounded by a group of relatives who wailed, cried, and lamented. [F.96.b] As they followed the deceased, they pulled out their hair, threw dust on their heads, beat their chests, and lamented loudly.

14.19 When he saw this, the Bodhisattva turned to the charioteer and asked him the following, even though he already knew the answer:

"Charioteer, who is this man carried on the stretcher?
The other people have surrounded him,
And they keep pulling their hair, scratching their faces with their fingernails,
Throwing dust on their heads, beating their chests, and crying in distress."

14.20 The charioteer replied:

"Your Highness, this man has died in Jambudvīpa;
Never again shall he see his parents, wife, or children.
He must abandon his possessions, his house, his friends, and his relatives,
And proceed to the next world, where he shall never see his relatives again." [191]

14.21 The Bodhisattva exclaimed:

"How sad that old age destroys youth!
How sad that health is destroyed by various sicknesses!
How sad that the life of a wise man does not last long!
How sad that scholars are attached to pleasure!

14.22 "Even if there were no old age, sickness, or death,
The five aggregates would still be ridden with great suffering.
What then about old age, sickness, and death, which always occur together?
Well then! Turn around—I will think about how to be liberated from this state."

And so, monks, once again the Bodhisattva turned his fine chariot around and returned to the city.

14.23 Monks, sometime later, while the Bodhisattva was setting out for the parks through the northern city gate, through the power of the Bodhisattva the gods emanated a mendicant in the street where they were passing. The Bodhisattva saw the mendicant and noticed that he was peaceful. He was self-controlled and restrained. He had pure conduct, and his eyes didn't wander but looked down ahead at a distance of six feet. His behavior was beautiful and exquisite, as was the way he walked. The way he looked ahead and to the left and right was also beautiful. When he bent and stretched his limbs, he did so in an exquisite manner. The way he wore his robes and his offering bowl was delightful to see.

14.24 When he saw this monk, the Bodhisattva turned to the charioteer and asked him the following, even though he already knew the answer: [F.97.a]

"Charioteer, who is this peaceful and calm person?
He walks with his eyes toward the ground at a distance of six feet. [192]
His clothes are saffron colored and his actions so peaceful;
He carries his offering bowl and is not overbearing or haughty."

14.25 The charioteer replied:

"Your Highness, that person is what we call a 'monk.'
He has abandoned sensual enjoyments and now acts in a very gentle manner;
He has become a mendicant and searches for peace.
Free from attachment and anger, he lives from alms."

14.26 The Bodhisattva said:

"What you say is very true, and I agree;
Wise beings always praise the life of a monk.
Such a life is beneficial for oneself and it also helps others;
It is a happy life that results in the sweet nectar of immortality."

And so, monks, once again the Bodhisattva turned his fine chariot around and returned to the city.

14.27 Monks, King Śuddhodana both saw and heard that the Bodhisattva had been inspired in these ways. So in order to guard the Bodhisattva even more, he erected a perimeter wall around the palace, dug trenches, and strengthened the gates. He also posted guards, alerted his brave soldiers, and even prepared the cavalry. All of them were in full armor. In order to guard the Bodhisattva, he placed a full army division at each of the junctions by the four city gates to keep watch day and night, and told them to prevent the Bodhisattva from eloping. At the quarters of the consorts he directed everyone to [193] continuously sing and play music, and not to stop for even a moment.
"You must apply all your skills in pleasure and games!" he told them. "Use all your female trickery and keep persevering with the young prince so that when his mind becomes attached to you, he will not want to leave for the sake of ordination!"

14.28 On this topic, it is said:

At the gates there are men fond of combat, holding their swords aloft;
There are elephants, horses, chariots, and men in armor on rows of elephants.
Ditches have been dug, and tall walls and archways with turrets have been built;
There are gates so solid that their noise can be heard for several miles. [F.97.b]

14.29 All the Śākyas are worried and keep guard day and night;
The great noise of the powerful army is heard everywhere.
The city is in turmoil and full of terrified cries:
"May the Gentle One not depart!
If the holder of the Śākya lineage leaves, this royal line will be broken!"

14.30 The women are told, "You must never stop your songs and music;
You must make him stay, so captivate his mind with your games of pleasure.
Demonstrate all your many ways of female trickery and make a good effort;
Watch over him and create hindrances so that the Gentle Being does not depart!"

14.31 These are omens that foretell the departure of the best of charioteers:
The swans, cranes, peacocks, mynas, and parrots do not make any sounds.
They sit on terraces, by palace windows, on gateways, parapets, and pedestals;
Depressed, unhappy, and miserable, they hang their heads and remain silent.

14.32 Even the beautiful lotuses in the ponds and the pools wither and die; [194]
The foliage and the flowers in the trees disappear, and the trees blossom no more.
The strings on the lutes and the sitars break for no apparent reason;
The drums, big and small, all break when touched and emit no sounds.

14.33 The whole city is disturbed and overcome by lethargy;
Nobody has any desire for dancing, singing, or making merry.
Even the king is severely depressed and given to brooding;
He wonders, "Oh no, will the Śākya lineage, of such fortune, now be destroyed?"

14.34 As Gopā and the prince lie asleep in the same bed,
A dream appears to Gopā in the middle of the night.
She dreams that the entire earth with all its mountains is shaken;
The trees are rocked by the wind, and uprooted they fall to the ground.

14.35 The sun, the moon, and the stars that adorn them fall from the sky onto the earth;
She sees her shorn-off hair in her right hand, and her diadem crumbling into pieces.
Her hands and feet are cut off and she finds herself naked;
Her pearl necklace and the jewel in her girdle break apart. [F.98.a]

14.36 The four legs of her bed break off, and she ends up lying on the ground;
The beautiful and splendorous handle of the king's parasol is broken.
All her ornaments fall off and are scattered about and carried off by water;
Her husband's ornaments, clothes, and crown lie scattered on their bed.

14.37 Torches are carried out from the city, which is left behind in darkness;
The beautiful jewel lattices she sees in her sleep are broken.
The tassels of pearl fall off and the ocean is stirred;
She dreams that Meru, the king of mountains, is shaken in its foundation. [195]

14.38 These are the dreams that appear to the daughter of the Śākyas.
As she awakens with tearful eyes, she asks her husband,
"Lord, what is going to befall me? Please tell me the meaning of these dreams!
My memory is confused, and I cannot see clearly. My heart is aching!"

14.39 The Lord replies to Gopā in a voice as sweet as the nightingale, a drum, or Brahmā,
"Cheer up! Nothing bad is in store for you.
Only beings who have created previous merit have such dreams;
People for whom there is suffering in store could never dream like that.

14.40 "When you dream that the earth is shaken
And the mountains crumble to the earth,
It shows that gods, nāgas, rākṣasas, and bhūtas
All rank you as the highest among those worthy of worship.

14.41 "When you dream that the trees are uprooted
And you cut off your hair with your right hand,
It shows that you, Gopā, will quickly cut the web of afflictions
And free yourself from the web of viewing conditioned phenomena.

14.42 "When you dream that the sun and the moon fall to the ground
And that the stars fall as well,
It shows that you, Gopā, will quickly conquer the enemy of afflictions
And will become worthy of offerings and praise from the world.

14.43 "When you dream that your pearl necklace is torn
And that you are naked and your body is mutilated,
It shows that you, Gopā, can soon leave your female body
And swiftly attain a male body.

14.44 "When you dream that the legs of your bed break off
And the precious handle of the parasol is broken,
It shows that you, Gopā, shall quickly cross the four rivers
And see me as the single parasol bearer in the triple universe. [F.98.b]

14.45 "When you dream that your jewelry is carried off by water
And my clothes and crown are left behind on my throne,
It shows that you, Gopā, shall quickly see me adorned with signs
And receiving the praise of the entire world.

14.46 "When you dream that billions of lights
Leave the city and plunge it into darkness,
It shows, Gopā, that soon I will illuminate with the light of knowledge
The entire world, which is plagued by delusion and the darkness of ignorance. [196]

14.47 "When you dream that your pearl necklace breaks
And your beautiful golden chain is broken,
It shows that you, Gopā, shall quickly cut the web of affliction
And remove your chain of conceptual perception.

14.48 "Gopā, since you pay homage to me
And always make offerings with the highest respect,
You shall never go to the lower realms or meet with suffering.
Soon you shall have happiness and fortune.

14.49 "In the past I made abundant offerings;
I guarded my discipline and always trained in forbearance.
Therefore whoever has faith in me
Shall find happiness and fortune.

14.50 "For a limitless number of millions of eons in cyclic existence,
I have trained in the perfect path to awakening.
Therefore whoever has faith in me
Shall eliminate the three lower realms.

14.51 "So be happy and do not be depressed!
Be fulfilled and joyful!
Soon you shall attain happiness and fortune.
Gopā, with such good omens, lay down and sleep."

14.52 Those who are nourished by the splendor of merit and have merit in their heart
Will see in their dreams splendorous signs,
Which occur to supreme beings, who have accumulated virtuous karma,
At the time of their departure from home.

14.53 Such a being dreams that the waters in the four great oceans
Are stirred with the strokes of his hands and feet.
The entire earth becomes his bed,
And the king of mountains is his pillow.

14.54 He sees in his dream a light shining forth
That clears away the deep darkness of the world.
A parasol emerges from the ground and covers the entire three worlds;
Touched by this radiance, the misery of those who suffer disappears. [197]

14.55 In his dream four white-and-black animals lick his feet,
Birds of four colors change into one color. [F.99.a]
He climbs an abhorrent and revolting mountain of excrement,
Yet he succeeds and remains free from stains.

14.56 In his dream he further sees rivers overflowing
And many billions of beings swept away.
Building a boat he frees himself and can save others;
He takes them to the best of shores, the one that is free from fear and suffering.

14.57 He further sees many beings struck with illness;
Their health and splendor is gone, and their strength is weak.
He becomes a doctor and dispenses many medicines,
Curing billions of beings of their many diseases.

14.58 He sits on a lion throne on the central mountain;
His students join their palms, and the gods all venerate him.
He sees himself victorious in the midst of a battle,
With the immortals in the sky cheering him in joyous voices.

14.59 Such signs did the Bodhisattva see in his dreams,
And he saw the fulfillment of his virtuous and excellent conduct.
The gods and humans who heard this were delighted and thought,
"Soon he shall become the god of humans and gods!"

14.60 *This concludes the fourteenth chapter, on dreams.* [128]

15.

Chapter 15

LEAVING HOME

15.1 Monks, in the meantime the Bodhisattva thought to himself, "It would not be right if I did not share my plans with the great king Śuddhodana and simply left home without his permission. It would be very ungrateful of me."
So that night when everything became quiet, he left his own quarters and entered the quarters of King Śuddhodana. As soon as the Bodhisattva stepped foot on the palace floor, the entire palace became illuminated with light. The king woke up and, when he saw the light, he promptly asked his chamberlain, "Did the sun rise? It is such a beautiful light!"

15.2 His chamberlain replied, "No, my lord, it is still the middle of the night."
He continued:

"My lord, the light of the sun causes trees and walls to cast shadows;
It torments and overheats the body.
Also swans, peacocks, parrots, cuckoos, and wild ducks
Call out at the time of dawn. [F.99.b]

15.3 "However, Your Majesty, this light is lovely and pleasant.
It is soothing, auspicious, and does not burn;
It penetrates trees and walls and casts no shadow.
Someone with great qualities must have arrived here."

15.4 The king, worried, looked all around,
And saw the pure being with eyes like lotuses. [199]
He tried to get up from his bed, but did not succeed;
The noble one with pure heart then felt respect for his father.

15.5 Standing in front of the king, he said,
"My lord, now the time is right for me to leave home;
Please do not hinder me and don't be distraught.
My king, may you, my family, and the people of the kingdom forgive me."

15.6 The king replied with tears filling his eyes,
"What will it take for you to change your mind?
Will you ask me for a boon? Tell me, I will give you anything!
I am yours, and you can have the palace, the servants, and this whole kingdom."

15.7 Then, in a sweet voice, the Bodhisattva replied,
"My lord, I wish for four boons. Please grant them to me!
If you are able to give them to me, you will have power over me.
You will always see me here at home and I will not depart.

15.8 "I want, my lord, to be unharmed by old age;
To retain my fine complexion and youth forever;
To be healthy and without disease;
And to have infinite life without death ever coming."

15.9 When the king heard these words, he felt extremely sad.
"My son, you are asking for the impossible; I am powerless here. [200]
Even the sages who live for eons are not beyond
Degeneration and the dreads of sickness, old age, and dying."

15.10 "My lord, if you cannot give me these four boons—
Freedom from misfortune and the terrors of sickness, old age, and dying—
Then I request of you another boon. Please listen, Your Majesty:
I wish that, after I die, I will not have to take rebirth again."

15.11 When the king heard these words from the best among men,
He diminished his longing, let go of his attachment for his son, and said,
"Then go and benefit and liberate beings. I rejoice in that.
May all your wishes be fulfilled." [F.100.a]

Monks, then the Bodhisattva left and went to his own residence, where he lay down on his bed. No one had even noticed that he had left.

15.12 Monks, at daybreak King Śuddhodana gathered the entire Śākya clan and announced, "The prince wants to abandon his home. What shall we do?"
The Śākyas replied, "Your Majesty, let us guard him. There are many of us in the Śākya clan, and he is alone. He will not be able to leave home."
Thereafter the Śākyas and King Śuddhodana placed five hundred young men by the eastern city gate to guard the Bodhisattva. All the men were armed, trained in combat, skilled in archery and javelin throwing, and were as strong as powerful wrestlers. [201] In order to further guard the Bodhisattva, each of the young Śākya men had five hundred chariots at their disposal, and along with each chariot were five hundred infantrymen.
Likewise they placed five hundred young men by the southern, western, and northern city gates to guard the Bodhisattva. All the men were armed, trained in combat, skilled in archery and javelin throwing, and were as strong as powerful wrestlers. In order to further guard the Bodhisattva, each of the young Śākya men had five hundred chariots at their disposal, and along with each chariot were five hundred infantrymen.

15.13 The elders of the Śākya clan, both male and female, were also placed everywhere at road intersections, junctions, and many highways in order to guard the Bodhisattva. Even King Śuddhodana kept watch at the palace gate, accompanied by five hundred young Śākyas mounted on elephants and horses.

15.14 Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī said to her servants:

"Light bright lamps and fasten all jewels to the peak of the banners!
Hang garlands of pearls and illuminate this entire palace!
Play music, sing songs, and stay awake and alert through the night. [F.100.b]
Guard the prince so that he cannot leave without anybody knowing.

15.15 "Arm yourselves! Carry in your hands weapons—
Swords and lances, bows and arrows, and two-pointed spears—
To guard our beloved prince.
Everyone must be on high alert!

15.16 "First shut all doors, then lock them tight
And place door bolts firmly across the door panels.
Unless you must, do not open any door,
Otherwise this noble being might escape.

15.17 "Adorn yourselves with necklaces of jewels and pearls;
Wear flower ornaments, half-moon ornaments, and chains.
Adorn yourselves with belts, rings, and earrings;
Take care to fasten your anklets well.

15.18 "Should this benefactor of humans and gods, who acts like a proud elephant,
Try to escape in a hasty manner,
You should confront him in such a way
That no harm is done to him. [202]

15.19 "You girls with lances in your hands,
Who surround the bed of this pure being,
You must not slip into laziness,
But watch him with eyes like a butterfly.

15.20 "In order to guard the prince,
Adorn this palace with bejeweled lattices
And take up your flutes and play them to your fullest.
Protect the Stainless Being through the night!

15.21 "Keep each other awake
And do not take rest.
Otherwise he may certainly leave his home behind,
Abandoning the kingdom and all his subjects.

15.22 "If he were to leave his home,
Then the royal palace would become a place with no joy.
The continuity of the royal lineage, which has endured so long,
Would become interrupted."

15.23 Monks, at that point the twenty-eight great yakṣa generals, such as Pāñcika, met with the five hundred sons of Hārītī and voiced their concern: "Friends, tonight the Bodhisattva will leave his home. [F.101.a] So you should delight in making offerings to him."
Likewise the Four Great Kings, who had entered the Aḍakavatī Palace, told the great gathering of yakṣas, "Friends, tonight the Bodhisattva will leave his home. You must help him leave by carrying the hooves of his fine horse with your hands."

15.24 The gathering of yakṣas responded:

"Hard as vajra, and indestructible with a body as powerful as Nārāyaṇa's,
Diligent and strong, this perfect man cannot be moved.
Although great Meru, the foremost mountain, may be lifted and held up in the sky,
No one can lift the mountain of a victor's qualities, founded on merit and wisdom."

15.25 Vaiśravaṇa said: [203]

"For people bloated with pride, this teacher will be heavy;
For those who are loving and respectful, he will be light.
If from your heart you devote yourself to him with respect,
You will find him as light as a tuft of cotton is to birds.

15.26 "I will walk in front, while you will carry his horse.
When the Bodhisattva leaves, we shall gather vast amounts of merit!"

15.27 Monks, then Śakra, lord of the gods, spoke to the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three: "Friends, tonight the Bodhisattva will leave his home. So you should delight in making offerings to him."
The god Śāntamati replied, "I will cause all men, women, and children in the city of Kapilavastu to fall asleep."
The god Lalitavyūha offered, "I will silence all sounds from horses, elephants, donkeys, camels, cows, buffaloes, women, men, boys, and girls."
Then the god Vyūhamati volunteered, "I will construct in midair a fabulous road seven chariots wide, flanked on both sides by jeweled platforms, blazing with the light of sunstone gems, shaded with raised parasols, flags, and banners, strewn with various flowers, and censed from incense burners of various fragrances. On this road the Bodhisattva will set forth."

15.28 Then the king of the elephants named Airāvaṇa spoke: [F.101.b] "Upon my trunk I will erect a mansion thirty-two leagues tall. In that mansion divine maidens [204] can assemble to serve and venerate the Bodhisattva by making music, singing songs, and playing instruments."
Then Śakra, lord of the gods, himself said, "I will open the gates and show him the path."
Next the god Dharmacārin said, "I will cause the retinue of consorts to look unappealing."
Then the god Sañcodaka spoke: "I will help the Bodhisattva to rise from his bed."
Finally the nāga kings Varuṇa, Manasvin, Sāgara, Anavapta, Nanda, and Upananda spoke: "We, for our part, will produce cloud banks of sandalwood and let a rain of sandalwood powder descend as offerings to the Bodhisattva."
Monks, then all the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, and gandharvas set out to do what they had promised.

15.29 In the meanwhile the Bodhisattva's mind was on the Dharma. He was resting comfortably in the music hall, surrounded by his ladies. As he reflected on the conduct of past buddhas and the way to benefit all sentient beings, he was thinking about four aspiration prayers that he had formed in the past:

15.30 "Previously I wished to become a self-appearing lord and pursue omniscience. At that time I donned the armor of the following fourfold resolve.
"First, I have seen how sentient beings suffer. So may I free and liberate those who are bound to the world and caught in the prison of cyclic existence. May I liberate sentient beings from the tight shackles and chains of craving."

15.31 Such was his first aspiration prayer from the past. [F.102.a] [205] Next he thought of his second aspiration prayer from the past:
"May I shine the light of Dharma for those who are thrown deep into the darkness of great ignorance within the world—for the people whose eyes are obscured by the cataract of ignorance, who lack the eye of wisdom, and who are blind with ignorance and delusion. May I raise the lamp of wisdom, which destroys the darkness for those who are blinded by ignorance. May I apply the medicine of the three gateways to liberation—the remedy that employs means, wisdom, and knowledge. May I remove the darkness of ignorance and all cataracts and faults of dullness, and in this way purify their wisdom eye."

15.32 Then the Bodhisattva thought of his third aspiration prayer from the past: "Alas, this world has raised the banner of pride and egotism. It is obsessed with clinging to 'I' and 'mine.' People's minds grasp at the self, and false notions of a self distort their views. May I bring down this banner of pride that thinks 'I am' by showing them the noble path."

15.33 Finally the Bodhisattva thought of his fourth aspiration prayer from the past: "Alas, this world is not at peace because of the self. The world is continually disturbed and is like a tangled mass of cords. Beings come and go. They always move and circle back and forth between this world and the next. Their spinning around knows no end and resembles a firebrand's circle. May I show them the Dharma of tranquility, which brings fulfillment through knowledge."

15.34 Right then the god Dharmacārin and the gods of the pure realms made the retinue of consorts appear unappealing. After the gods had revealed the consorts' unpleasant and unattractive features, they took position in the sky and uttered the following verses:

15.35 The gods who have great magical powers
Spoke to the One with Elongated Eyes like a Blooming Lotus: [F.102.b]
"How can you be so delighted
When living amid a cemetery?" [206]

15.36 Inspired by the lords of gods,
Immediately the Bodhisattva looked around and examined the retinue of consorts.
Seeing that they had become repulsive,
He thought, "It is true, I live amid a cemetery."

15.37 When the Bodhisattva looked at the entire retinue of women, he saw that some had garments that had slipped off, some had disheveled hair, and some had their jewelry in disarray. Others had lost their head ornaments, some had ugly shoulders, while some had uncovered arms and legs. Some had repulsive expressions, while the eyes of others were crossed. Some were drooling, and others were snoring.

15.38 Some were laughing wildly, some were coughing, and others were prattling incoherently. Some others were gnashing their teeth, and the complexion of others had changed. Some of the women had unpleasant features, such as arms that were too long. Some tossed their feet around. Some had their heads uncovered, while the heads of others were covered. The facial features of some had changed. The bodies of some looked awful, and some were even lying naked.

15.39 Some were hunched over and making gargling sounds. Some, still holding clay kettledrums, were twisting their bodies and heads. Some of the women held their instruments, such as lutes and three-stringed lutes. Others were grinding their flutes with their teeth, making crushing noises. Some were playing kimpalas, nakalus, and sampas whose resonance boxes had been removed. Some had their eyes closed, some had them open, and some were rolling their eyes. Some of the women were also lying with their mouths agape.
The Bodhisattva looked at the retinue of consorts, who were lying there on the floor looking utterly revolting, and he had the impression that he was indeed in a cemetery.

15.40 On this topic, it is said:

Seeing this, the Protector of the World felt upset.
With an outpouring of compassion he exclaimed,
"Ah! This gathering is so miserable!
How could I find delight in this assembly of demonesses?

15.41 "Flawed and obscured with delusion is the judgment
Of he who thinks that worthless sense pleasures are meaningful.
Like a bird caught in a cage,
One never regains one's freedom." [207] [F.103.a] [B10]

15.42 Then the Bodhisattva examined his retinue of women by means of this gateway to the light of the Dharma. Next, with words spoken out of great compassion, he lamented sentient beings:

15.43 "These childish beings are killed, like the condemned at the scaffold.
These childish beings are filled with desire, like fools who are attracted to a ceramic vase filled with vomit.
These childish beings are drowning, like elephants sinking in deep water.
These childish beings are confined, like thieves in a dungeon.
These childish beings are content, like a pig surrounded by filth.
These childish beings are greedy, like a dog with a bone.
These childish beings fall, like moths flying into the candle flame.
These childish beings are trapped, like a monkey tangled in a snare.

15.44 These childish beings are caught, like fish snarled in a net.
These childish beings are cut up, like sheep on a slaughtering log.
These childish beings are impaled, like a criminal on the tip of a stake.
These childish beings are sinking, like an old elephant in a swamp.
These childish beings perish, like a ship wrecked on the ocean.
These childish beings fall, like a blind person tumbling into a deep abyss.
These childish beings are exhausted, like water running into the surface of the earth.
These childish beings go up in smoke, like this great earth at the end of the eon.

15.45 These childish beings are spinning, like the revolving of a potter's wheel.
These childish beings have lost their way, like blind people roaming the mountains.
These childish beings are tied up and run in circles, like dogs kept on a leash. [F.103.b]
These childish beings wither, like grasses and trees in the hot season.
These childish beings diminish, like the waning moon during the dark fortnight.
These childish beings are devoured, like snakes by the garuḍas.
These childish beings are swallowed, like ships by huge sea monsters.
These childish beings are robbed, like a traveler by a horde of thieves.

15.46 These childish beings are broken, like palm trees in a storm.
These childish beings are killed, like someone bitten by a poisonous snake. [208]
These childish beings are wounded because of seeking a taste, like fools licking a knife smeared with honey.
These childish beings are carried away, like wooden logs taken off by the river.
These childish beings play, like children toying with their own excrement.
These childish beings are controlled, like elephants by the mahout's hook.
These childish beings are deceived, like a simple-minded person by a charlatan.
These childish beings exhaust their roots of virtue, like a gambler losing his wealth.
These childish beings are devoured, like merchants consumed by demonesses."

15.47 The Bodhisattva examined the retinue of consorts by means of these thirty-two similes. He contemplated the impure nature of the body and developed a feeling of repulsion, and then disgust. Next he meditated the fact that his own body was just like theirs, and so he truly saw the shortcomings of the physical body. Then he let go of his attachment toward the body, destroying his perception of it as being attractive and instead seeing it as repulsive. He saw that the body, from the soles of the feet all the way up to the top of the head, is made of filth, produces filth, and emits filth. At that moment he exclaimed the following verses: [F.104.a]

15.48 "Grown in the fields of karma and born from the water of craving, we call it *the transitory body*.
This body is moist from tears, sweat, and mucus, and filled with urine and blood.
It is full of all kinds of filth, fat, pus, and brains;
It constantly leaks excrement and it stinks.

15.49 "It is made of bones, teeth, and hair, and is covered by a hairy skin;
Packed with intestines, liver, spleen, lymph, and saliva, it is weak.
It is like a machine held together by bones and sinew and adorned with flesh;
It is filled with diseases, subject to pain, and always afflicted by hunger and thirst.

15.50 "The body of beings has many cavities and transforms into old age and death.
Seeing the body, what wise person would not think of it as an enemy?" [209]
In this way the Bodhisattva remained mindful of the body as something that must be left behind.

15.51 The gods, who were hovering in the sky above, asked the god Dharmacārin, "Dear friend, what is this? Siddhārtha dawdles and keeps looking at the retinue of consorts. He even smiles and does not seem displeased. But perhaps he is like a deep ocean that cannot be fathomed? Because isn't it true that whoever is unattached does not cling to objects? Or will he perhaps forget the promise he made when he was inspired by the gods?"
The god Dharmacārin replied, "Why say something like that? There is surely evidence that when he practiced awakened conduct in the past, he developed this kind of detachment. Why then would he all of a sudden become attached in this existence, which is his last?"

15.52 Monks, indeed the Bodhisattva had become certain. He was filled with distaste and had made up his mind. So without any delay, he gracefully rose from his seat in the music hall and turned toward the east. With his right hand he parted the bejeweled lattice and went onto the palace roof. [F.104.b] There he folded his hands and, recalling all the buddhas, he bowed to them. When he looked up into the expanse of space, he saw Indra, the one-thousand-eyed lord of the gods, with a retinue of one hundred thousand gods, holding flowers, incense, garlands, perfumes, scented powder, garments, parasols, victory banners, flags, earrings made of flowers, and garlands made of precious stones. Bowing before him, Indra paid his respect to the Bodhisattva.

15.53 The Bodhisattva also saw the four guardians of the world together with hordes of yakṣas, demons, gandharvas, and nāgas. They all wore solid armor, corselets, and helmets. In their arms they held swords, bows and arrows, spears, javelins, and tridents. They gracefully took off their bejeweled diadems and crowns and bowed before the Bodhisattva. Then he saw two gods, [210] Sūrya and Candra, standing on his right and left sides. Puṣya, the chief of all constellations, was also seen standing by.

15.54 Seeing that it was now midnight, the Bodhisattva called upon Chanda:
"All the auspicious signs have come together;
Without a doubt I will accomplish my wishes tonight.
Chanda, don't vacillate or delay!
Ornament the king of horses and bring it bedecked to me."

15.55 When Chanda heard these words, he felt sad and asked:
"Where are you going, you who whose eyebrows are long
And who has eyes as beautiful as blooming lotuses?
A lion among men, with a face like the autumn moon,
The moon that delights the lotuses of the night?

15.56 "Your face is like a blooming white lotus;
It is as tender as a young blue lotus.
Your splendor is like that of the sun, or well-purified gold;
It is like the newly risen and stainless moon,

15.57 "Like the fire whose flames are fed by the sacrificial butter.
Your splendor is like a blazing flash of lightning;
Your invincible gait is as graceful as that of a confident elephant;
You walk and place your feet beautifully, with the gait of a bull, a lion, or a swan."

15.58 The Bodhisattva replied:
"Chanda, tell me, for what purpose then
Have I in the past forsaken my arms and legs and eyes? [F.105.a]
I have given up my head and my beloved wife and children,
My kingdom, wealth, gold, and clothes,

15.59 "Elephants and horses laden with jewels,
Swift as the wind and of great power.
For trillions of eons I have trained in discipline and patience,
Delighting in diligence, the powers, concentration, and knowledge.

15.60 "Therefore, once I attain the auspicious peace of awakening,
The time has come for me to free beings drowning in the ocean of old age and death." [211]

15.61 Chanda replied, "I have heard, my Lord, that when you were born, you were brought to the priests who are skilled in making predictions based on examining signs. They prophesied before your father, King Śuddhodana, 'Your Majesty, your royal line will flourish.' When King Śuddhodana inquired further, the priests replied:

15.62 " 'Your newborn son possesses a hundred marks of merit
And blazes with the splendor of merit.
He will become a universal monarch, ruling over the four continents,
And he will possess the seven treasures.

15.63 " 'However, if he is confronted with the miseries of this world,
He will abandon his retinue of consorts and leave his home.
Then he will attain awakening, the state free from old age and death.
He will satisfy beings with the water of the Dharma.'

15.64 "My Lord, there is this prophecy and it cannot be denied. But please listen to what I have to say, for I may be able to help you!"
"How so?" asked the Bodhisattva.
Chanda replied, "My Lord, why is it that some people go through disciplined actions and practice austerities? They wear deerskin and tie their hair in a topknot. They wear garments made of tree bark. They let their nails, hair, and beard grow long. They take pleasure in torturing their bodies and go through various difficult torments. They take up the harshest of austerities because, as they say, they wish to attain the best among gods and humans. But you, Lord, you already possess this good fortune!

15.65 "The kingdom is prosperous, large, and peaceful, with excellent harvests. It is delightful and filled with many people. [F.105.b] Your parks are the best of the best, full of flowers and fruits and resounding with the singing of birds.
There are beautiful ponds with blue, pink, and white lotus flowers, and they resound with the cries of swans, peacocks, cuckoos, wild ducks, storks, and whooper swans. There are many flowering trees growing around the lakes, such as mango, aśoka, campaka, amaranth, and saffron trees. The parks are adorned with groves of jeweled trees that are arranged like chessboards and surrounded by jewel platforms.

One sees jeweled lattices hanging everywhere. The parks can be enjoyed during any season, and they are pleasant to visit whether it is the hot season, the rainy season, autumn, or winter.

15.66 "Your palaces [212] are like the palace of Vaijayanta, wherein one finds the peace of true Dharma, and all one's worries are gone. Since your palaces are the color of autumn clouds, they resemble Mount Kailāśa. They are adorned with verandas, arches, portals, windows, cooling terraces, and top-floor terraces. They resound with the tinkling of tiny bejeweled bells on latticed draperies.

15.67 "Your retinue of consorts is well trained. They sing songs while playing melodious music and dancing. They play tuṇas, paṇavas, flutes, lutes, wood kettledrums, reed pipes, wooden pins, cymbals, kimpalas, nakalus, guitars, clay kettledrums with a good sound, and paṭahas. They attend upon you with comedy and dance—playful, enjoyable, happy, and sweet.

15.68 "And you, my Lord, are still young. You are in the prime of your life. You are a fresh and tender boy with black hair and a body like a lotus. You have not yet given yourself to the pleasures of the senses. So now enjoy yourself, like the lord of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the lord of the gods, the one endowed with a thousand eyes. We can always leave our homes later, once we are old." [F.106.a]

15.69 At that moment Chanda spoke the following verse:

"You know the techniques of enjoyment, so relish them,
Like the powerful lord of gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three!
Later, when we are old,
We can practice disciplined conduct and austerities!"

15.70 But the Bodhisattva replied, "Enough, Chanda! These sense pleasures are impermanent and unstable. They do not endure and are subject to change. Like the rapids of a mountain torrent, they quickly pass and are turbulent. Like dewdrops, they do not last. Like an empty fist that tricks a child, they have no substance. Like the core of a plantain tree, they have no strength. Like a vase of unbaked clay, they naturally break. Like autumn clouds, they appear one moment and vanish the next. Like a flash of lightning in the sky, they last for just the briefest time. Like a vessel filled with poison, they cause pain. Like poison ivy, they bring discomfort.

15.71 "The objects of desire, which are desperately craved by all those with immature minds, are like water bubbles, always changing. Like a mirage, they are caused by mistaken perception. They are like a hallucination that has come about through false thinking. Just like dreams, they cannot satisfy, since one is grasping at a false appearance. Just as it is difficult to fill the oceans, desires can never be fulfilled. Like salty water, objects of desire only make you thirstier. Like the head of a viper, they are dangerous to touch. [213] Like a deep abyss, they are abandoned entirely by wise people. They produce anxiety, cause strife, and generate distress and faults. Knowing this, the wise ones avoid them, the clever ones deplore them, the noble ones abhor them, and the intelligent ones disparage them. Yet the ignorant embrace them, and the immature rely on them."

15.72 At that moment he spoke the following verses:

"Wise people avoid the sense pleasures like the head of a snake;
They drop them like a filthy vessel filled with excrement.
Chanda, since I understand that sense pleasures
Destroy all virtue, I do not enjoy them." [F.106.b]

15.73 Then Chanda, wailing as if in sharp pain, with tearful eyes and stricken with agony, exclaimed the following verses:

"Why do some persevere in many austerities?
They wear deerskin and let their hair, beard, and nails grow long;
They cover themselves in tree bark.
Adhering to their practices of austerities, many have emaciated bodies.

15.74 "Some eat only vegetables, millet, and the gardūla plant.
Others, who have vowed to adopt the behavior of a cow, always keep their heads down.
We, however, should become the best and most distinguished in the world;
We should be supreme universal monarchs and guardians of the world,

15.75 "Or vajra holders like Śakra, or the chief god in the Heaven Free from Strife,
Aspiring to experience the bliss of meditation in the realm of Brahmā.
Perfect Being, your kingdom is wealthy, flourishing with excellent harvests.
Full of parks and palaces, it equals the Vaijayanta Palace.

15.76 "These ladies are well trained in offering pleasures,
In combination with song and the melodious sounds of lutes and reed pipes.
Enjoy these pleasures, my Lord!
If you do not leave, you will experience great delights!"

15.77 The Bodhisattva answered: [214]

"Listen, Chanda! In previous births
I have endured hundreds of sufferings—
Imprisonment, slavery, beatings, threats—all on account of desire.
While my mind was fixed on conditioned things, I could not gain liberation.

15.78 "Under the sway of carelessness and overcome by delusion,
I was blind in the past, covered with a veil of wrong views.
Such views made me grasp at the notion of a self
And perpetuate the experience of sensations, all due to not knowing the Dharma.

15.79 "All things move and change and are impermanent like clouds;
They may be likened to a flash of lightning.
They are like a dewdrop on a blade of grass, and deceptive like an empty fist;
They have no essence and no self, and lack intrinsic existence in every way.

15.80 "So my mind is not attached to objects anymore.
Chanda, bring me Kaṇṭhaka, well adorned, the supreme king of all horses.
My auspicious aspirations from the past have been fulfilled;
Overcoming everything, I will become a master of all phenomena, a king of Dharma, a sage." [F.107.a]

15.81 Chanda replied:

"Don't you see these women with eyes like blooming lotuses,
Who are adorned with garlands of many precious gems,
Sparkling like a flash of lightning amid cloud banks in the sky,
So beautiful as they rest on their beds?

15.82 "Or those who play such sweet-sounding flutes and cymbals,
Clay drums and reed pipes, making music and song,
Accompanied by the sounds of partridge, peacocks, and cuckoos?
Are you going to abandon this place, which is like a city of kinnaras?

15.83 "Here are many flowers, such as jasmine, blue lotuses, coral jasmine, and campakas,
And fragrant garlands with masses of fine blossoms.
We have perfectly scented incense made of black aloeswood,
And sublime scented ointments. Do you not see all of this?

15.84 "Here you get the finest cuisine and the best dishes,
With exquisite flavors, emitting superb aromas,
Along with the sweetest beverages.
Do you not see them, my Lord? Where will you go? [215]

15.85 "Here your garments are scented in the cold season with warming oils,
And in the hot season, with sandalwood.
You have beautiful, fine silken clothing;
Do you not see them, my Lord? Where will you go?

15.86 "Here are the five sense pleasures,
As exquisite as the divine pleasures in the god realms.
Now, enjoy and revel in them with delight and bliss!
Then later, Noble Lord of the Śākyas, you can retreat to the forest!"

15.87 The Bodhisattva replied:

"Chanda, for countless eons beyond measure
I have enjoyed the many sense pleasures of humans and gods,
In the manner of forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures,
Yet I have failed to become satisfied!

15.88 "I have been a supreme royal son, so rich in power!
I have been a universal monarch, ruling over the four continents.
I possessed the seven treasures,
And I lived in the midst of ladies.

15.89 "I ruled over the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and the Heaven Free from Strife;
I left those realms and came here.
In the past I enjoyed the most sacred and superb objects
Among the gods of emanations.

15.90 "I have been the lord of demons, who controls the realms of gods;
I have enjoyed the best and most exquisite sense pleasures, but found no satisfaction.
How then would I find satisfaction now by indulging in inferior pleasures?
This is out of the question! [F.107.b]

15.91 "Moreover, Chanda, I see that this world is suffering;
It is caught in the midst of cyclic existence.
It is a wilderness of misery, full of afflictions and evil,
Where beings are constantly swept away. [216]

15.92 "Without refuge or purpose, beings wander in the darkness of ignorance and delusion;
They suffer from the terrors of old age, sickness, and death.
They are assailed by the sufferings attendant upon taking birth,
And they suffer the onslaughts of enemies.

15.93 "So I will now assemble the ship of Dharma.
It is constructed with the strongest wood—
Giving, disciplined conduct, patience, and diligence—
And firmly secured by my indestructible, superior motivation.

15.94 "It is my resolve to board that ship and cross the ocean of cyclic existence.
Then I will ferry innumerable beings across this ocean,
This sea of suffering so hard to cross with its waves of anger,
Monsters of passion, and maelstroms of enmity.

15.95 "I will cross the ocean of existence,
Infested with the monsters of harmful views and the demons of affliction.
Once I have ferried innumerable beings across,
I will establish them on the auspicious dry land without old age or death."

15.96 At that time Chanda, who now cried even harder, exclaimed, "Lord, is your resolve based on conviction?"
The Bodhisattva replied:

"Chanda, listen to this about my resolve:
I will strive to benefit and liberate beings!
My resolve is like a mountain: immutable, unchangeable, and firm.
It is as difficult to move as Meru, the king of mountains."

15.97 Chanda then asked, "Lord, how can you be so certain?"
The Bodhisattva replied:

"Even if bolts of lightning, battle-axes, spears, and arrows were to rain upon me,
And if molten iron, blazing like a fork of lightning,
And an erupting volcano were to drop on my head,
I would never want to be a householder again!" [217]

15.98 At this moment the gods who were watching from the sky uttered cries of joy and rained down flowers, exclaiming: [F.108.a]

"With a mind not attached to any object,
And with compassion and love for sentient beings,
May you, the one with supreme intelligence, be victorious!
You are the protector who grants fearlessness to beings.

15.99 "Like the sky, which remains unattached to darkness, dust, smoke, or comets,
The mind of the Supreme Being remains unattached.
The Pure Being is unstained by pleasurable objects,
Just like a lotus rising up from the water."

15.100 Monks, when the gods Śāntamati and Lalitavyūha understood the Bodhisattva's determination, they caused all men, women, and children in the city of Kapilavastu to fall asleep. They made everything plunge into deep silence.
Monks, at that moment the Bodhisattva realized that everyone in the city was sound asleep, that the hour of midnight had come, and that the moon was in the constellation of Puṣya, the lord of constellations. He was aware that right then the time had come for him to leave home.
So he told his servant, "Chanda, don't badger me now. Instead, without any further delay, bring me my horse Kaṇṭhaka, well adorned."

15.101 As soon as the Bodhisattva uttered these words, the Four Great Kings left their residences. They had listened to the Bodhisattva's words and had prepared to make offerings to him. Now they hurried quickly to the city of Kapilavastu.

15.102 King Dhṛtarāṣṭra, lord of the gandharvas, arrived from the east together with several trillion kinnaras playing various instruments and singing songs. As soon as Dhṛtarāṣṭra arrived, he began to circumambulate the city of Kapilavastu. Stopping in the east, from where he had arrived, he paid homage to the Bodhisattva.

15.103 The great king Virūḍhaka arrived from the south with several trillion kumbhāṇḍas holding in their hands various pearl necklaces. [218] In addition they carried various precious gems, and vases filled with different types of perfumes. [F.108.b] As soon as Virūḍhaka arrived, he also began to circumambulate the city of Kapilavastu. Stopping in the south, from where he had arrived, he paid homage to the Bodhisattva.

15.104 The great king Virūpākṣa arrived from the west with several trillion nāgas holding in their hands various necklaces made of pearls and different types of precious gems. They sent forth a gentle breeze from a rain of flowers and perfumed powders that emitted beautiful scents. When Virūpākṣa arrived, he also circumambulated the city of Kapilavastu. Stopping in the west, from where he had arrived, he paid homage to the Bodhisattva.

15.105 The great king Kubera arrived from the north with several trillion yakṣas holding in their hands precious jewels of the type called *starlight*. They also carried oil lamps and lighted lanterns. They held in their hands various weapons, such as bows and arrows, swords, spears, lances with two and three points, discuses, one-pointed pikes, and javelins, and they were armed with strong armor and helmets. When Kubera arrived, he also began to circumambulate the city of Kapilavastu. Then he settled in the northern direction, from where he had arrived, and paid homage to the Bodhisattva.

15.106 Thereafter Śakra, lord of the gods, arrived together with the gods from the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, bringing divine flowers, perfumes, garlands, ointments, scented powders, garments, parasols, victory banners, flags, earrings, and adornments. When he arrived there, he began to circumambulate the city of Kapilavastu.
Then he settled together with his retinue in the space above, in the same direction from which he had come, and began to pay homage to the Bodhisattva. [F.109.a]

15.107 Monks, when Chanda heard the Bodhisattva's words, his eyes became filled with tears and he said, "Lord, you know the right time, the right moment, and the right occasion. However, this is not the right time and not the occasion to leave. So why do you give me the order for leaving?"
The Bodhisattva replied, "Chanda, the time has come." [219] Then Chanda asked, "The time for what, my Lord?"

15.108 The Bodhisattva replied:

"A long time ago, while seeking to benefit beings,
I made the wish to liberate the world
Once I attained the state of awakening beyond old age or death.
Now that time has come."

15.109 On this topic, it is said:[8]

At the time when the Supreme Being departed,
All the gods were eager to present offerings.
All protector gods of heaven and earth came,
As did Śakra, lord of the gods, along with his following.

15.110 The gods of the Heaven Free from Strife, the Heaven of Joy, and the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations,
And the gods of the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations all came.
So did the nāga kings Varuṇa, Manasvin,
Anavapta, as well as Sāgara.

15.111 The gods in the form realm also came,
Those who always experience the peace of concentration.
They were in a hurry to make offerings to the Supreme Being,
Who is worthy of honor in all the three realms.

15.112 Also the bodhisattvas, who were his companions in past actions,
Gathered there from all ten directions, saying,
"Let us see the departure of the Victorious One,
And make offerings to him in an appropriate manner."

15.113 The great being who is lord of the guhyakas,
Pradīptavajra, positioned himself in the sky above.
Wearing armor, strong, brave, and energetic,
He held a blazing vajra in his hand.

15.114 Sūrya and Candra, these two gods,
Came to stand to his right and left.
They joined their palms together
And reflected on the Bodhisattva's departure.

15.115 The constellation Puṣya as well, with his retinue,
Transformed his body in a majestic way,
And stood before the noblest of men.
With a delightful voice he spoke: [F.109.b]

15.116 "Now that Puṣya is present, this is the perfect time to leave.
Tonight all your virtuous and auspicious prayers will be fulfilled;
I will accompany you.
As you make an end to desire, may you encounter no obstacles! [220]

15.117 "You have been encouraged by the god Sañcodaka.
Now swiftly manifest your strength and courage,
And liberate all beings who are oppressed by misery!
Now is the right time for you to leave!"

15.118 Billions of gods had gathered
And let a rain of ravishing flowers fall down.
The Bodhisattva, for his part, sat there in the perfect cross-legged posture;
Surrounded by gods, he was so beautiful, blazing with splendor.

15.119 In the city, all men, women, and children
Became tired and fell asleep, abandoning their chores.
The horses, elephants, oxen, parrots, cranes, peacocks, and mynas
Became tired and quickly slept, not noticing anything.

15.120 Armed with lances hard as vajra, and mounted on elephants, horses, and chariots,
The Śākya youths who kept guard also fell asleep,
As did the king, the princes, and the royal pages.
The retinue of consorts, completely naked, were asleep and oblivious.

15.121 As midnight arrived, the Bodhisattva spoke to Chanda
In a voice captivating like Brahmā's and sweet as a nightingale:
"Chanda, bring Kaṇṭhaka, well adorned and well groomed.
Do not create obstacles and do not hesitate, if you have any affection for me."

15.122 Chanda's eyes filled with tears as he spoke to his master:
"Great Charioteer, where will you go? What do you need the horse for?
You know the right time and moment, and this is not the time to practice the Dharma.
The gates are shut and firmly bolted, so who will open them for you?"

15.123 Right then Śakra opened the gate merely by the power of his mind;
Chanda was thrilled at the sight, yet also sad and on the verge of tears. [221]
"Oh no, what shall I do now? Who can help? To whom should I turn? [F.110.a]
Śakra will only listen to the one with such invincible power.

15.124 "What use is this powerful army with its four divisions?
The king, the princes, and the royal pages—none of them know what the Bodhisattva is doing.
Yaśovatī and the retinue of consorts are in their beds, lulled to sleep by the gods.
Alas! He is leaving. The vow he made in the past is now being fulfilled!"

15.125 Right then, billions of overjoyed gods spoke to Chanda:
"Chanda, bring him the excellent horse Kaṇṭhaka. Do not disappoint our guide.
The gods and demigods play their millions of drums and instruments,
And still this supreme city that the gods have put to sleep does not awake!

15.126 "Chanda, look to the pure sky where a divine light shines so beautifully!
Look at the millions of assembled bodhisattvas making offerings.
Look at glorious Śakra, Śacī's husband, who is at the gates with his army.
Look at the gods, demigods, and kinnaras who are here making offerings!"

15.127 Chanda heard the gods and told the horse Kaṇṭhaka,
"You must neigh now, because here comes the supreme charioteer of beings!"
Then he adorned the horse's jasmine-colored hoofs with gold.
Distressed and weeping, he gave the horse to He Who Is an Ocean of Qualities, saying:

15.128 "You with noble marks who benefits others, here is your horse of virtuous pedigree.
May all your past aspirations become fulfilled! Please proceed!
May all obstacles be pacified and your desired disciplined conduct be accomplished!
May you grant all beings happiness, rebirth in the higher realms, and peace!" [222]

15.129 When the Bodhisattva rose from his seat, the earth shook in six ways;
He mounted the supreme king of horses that resembled the full moon.
The guardians, with their pure lotus-like hands, then lifted up the supreme horse;
Śakra and Brahmā went in the front, showing the way.

15.130 The pure and bright light sent forth by the Bodhisattva illumined the earth;
The lower realms were pacified, and all beings were happy and free from afflictions. [F.110.b]
A rain of flowers fell, millions of instruments sounded, and gods and demigods rejoiced;
All of them circumambulated the city and departed filled with delight.

15.131 Since the Great Being was leaving, the deity of the best of cities came, feeling depressed.
Appearing before the Bodhisattva, the deity spoke to his lotus face, feeling miserable and dejected:
"If you leave, the city will become disturbed and steeped in darkness.
If tonight you abandon your palace, there will be no joy and no happiness for me.

15.132 "No longer will I hear the singing of the birds,
Or the sweet sound of the flute in the female quarters,
Or the sound of songs with propitious lyrics,
Which you, One of Infinite Fame, used to hear on waking up.

15.133 "No longer will I behold the assembly of divine siddhas
Who make offerings to you day and night,
Nor will I be able to smell any longer the divine scents,
If you, who conquers emotions, abandons this palace tonight.

15.134 "This palace, if abandoned by you,
Will be like a withered and used garland;
It will seem like an empty stage.
When you are gone, all magnificence and splendor will disappear.

15.135 "You will take away the vitality and power from this entire city;
Like a wasteland, it will shine with beauty no more.
Today, disproved are the sages' prophecies
That you will be a universal monarch on earth.

15.136 "The might of the Śākyas on this earth will come to nothing,
And the royal family line will be interrupted.
The hopes of the assembly of Śākyas will be dashed entirely
If you, the great tree of merit, depart. [223]

15.137 "Immaculate One, Faultless One, let me go with you,
Wherever you wish to depart for.
Yet please engender love and compassion,
And take one more look at this palace!"

15.138 The Intelligent One looked at the palace
And spoke in the sweetest voice:
"Until I have made an end to birth and death,
I will not return to the city of Kapilavastu.

15.139 "Until I have attained precious awakening,
The supreme level of immortality beyond old age and dying,
I will not turn my face toward Kapilavastu, [F.111.a]
Whether I am standing, sitting, lying down, or walking."

15.140 When the Bodhisattva, the Lord of Beings, departed,
The celestial maidens traveling through the sky began to sing his praise:
"He is the marvelous object of offering and a great field of merit,
The field for those wishing for merit, and the giver of the fruit of immortality.

15.141 "Out of compassion for sentient beings, he has throughout ten million eons
Trained in generosity, self-control, and restraint, and thus attained awakening.
His discipline is pure, his conduct excellent, and his practice undiminished;
He did not pursue pleasures and enjoyments, but observed discipline.

15.142 "He always spoke patiently to protect others;
Even when his limbs were cut off, he was never angry or hostile.
Constantly diligent for millions of eons, he never felt disheartened;
Thus he has awakened and performed millions of sacrifices.

15.143 "Always in meditative concentration, his mind has become calm and tranquil;
Since he has burned away all emotions, he will liberate millions of beings.
He possesses unobstructed knowledge and is free from conceptual thinking;
With a mind free from conceptuality, he will become a self-arising victor. [224]

15.144 "His mind is always suffused with love, and his compassion is complete;
He possesses joy, equanimity, concentration, and knows the four immeasurables.
He is the supreme god of gods, worthy of all gods' worship;
With his pure, stainless, and sublime mind, he perfected millions of qualities.

15.145 "He is a refuge for the frightened, and a lamp for the blind;
He is a place of rest for the persecuted, and a physician for those long sick.
He is like a king, a righteous king, like Śakra with a thousand eyes,
Like the self-arisen Brahmā, pure in body and mind.

15.146 "He is firm with abundant knowledge, diligent and detached; [F.111.b]
He is a hero because he destroyed the afflictions; undefeated, he conquers all enemies.
He is fearless like a lion and gentle like an elephant;
He is the leader of the herd like a perfect bull, always patient and without anger.

15.147 "He is bright like the moon and illuminating like the sun;
He shines like a torch and glows like a star.
He is unstained like a lotus, and his discipline smells sweet like a flower;
This teacher is immovable like Mount Meru and provides sustenance like the earth;
He is unshakable like an ocean.

15.148 "He has defeated the demon of the afflictions and the demon of the aggregates;
He has defeated the demon of death and the demon of the god.
He is the great leader who soon will teach the supreme, eightfold path of the noble ones
To those who are established in wrong paths. [225]

15.149 "Free from the darkness of ignorance, he destroys old age, death, and the afflictions;
He will become the self-arisen victor, famous on earth and in heaven.
In the form of a supreme being, he is praised in infinite ways;
Through the merit of praising you, may we become like you, the lion of speech."

15.150 Monks, once the Bodhisattva had left his home, he crossed over the lands of the Śākyas, the Kroḍyas, and the Mallas. When day broke, he had arrived six leagues away from the town of Anumaineya in the country of Maineya. There he dismounted from his horse Kaṇṭhaka and, once he was on the ground, he dismissed the great assembly of gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas. Then he thought to himself, "I should entrust these ornaments and the horse Kaṇṭhaka to Chanda, and then send him back."
So he summoned Chanda and told him, "Chanda, you should go back now. Take these ornaments and my horse Kaṇṭhaka and return to the palace."
At the place where Chanda left the Bodhisattva in order to return home, a memorial was later built. [F.112.a] This memorial is still known today as "Chanda's Return."

15.151 The Bodhisattva then thought to himself, "With my hair this long, I cannot be a monk." So he took his sword, cut off his hair, and then cast it into the air. The gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three collected the hair for worship. Even to this day the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three celebrate this event during the Hair Festival. At this very place another memorial was built, which today is still known as "Receipt of the Hair."

15.152 Again the Bodhisattva considered, "If I am to be a monk, it would not be right to wear silken garments. So it would be good if I could find some clothes suitable for living in the forest." [226]
The gods of the pure realms then thought, "The Bodhisattva needs saffron-colored robes." Immediately a god left and manifested in front of the Bodhisattva in the form of a hunter wearing saffron-colored cloth.
The Bodhisattva asked the god, "My friend, would you give me your saffron-colored robes? Then I will give you my silken garments."
The god replied, "Your clothes already suit you well, and I am happy with what I wear."
But the Bodhisattva insisted: "Please, I beg you."

15.153 The god, still in the shape of a hunter, then gave his saffron-colored clothes to the Bodhisattva, while he himself took the Bodhisattva's silken garments. Because the god was overcome with devotion to the Bodhisattva, he touched the garments to his head, holding them with both of his hands. Then he returned to the celestial world in order to render offerings and veneration to the garments there. Chanda had witnessed the exchange of clothes, and later a memorial was erected at the site. This memorial is still known today as the "Memorial of Receiving the Saffron-Colored Cloth." [F.112.b]

15.154 When the Bodhisattva cut off his hair and put on the saffron-colored cloth, one hundred thousand gods felt joyous, pleased, and elated. Happy and delighted, they called out cries of joy and exclaimed,
"Friends, Prince Siddhārtha has left his home! Friends, Prince Siddhārtha has become a monk! He will awaken to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood and will turn the wheel of the Dharma. He will liberate from birth the infinite number of beings who are born. Then he will free them from old age, death, sickness, pain, lamentation, suffering, depression, and distress, and ferry them to the other shore of the ocean of saṃsāra. He will establish them in the realm of phenomena, which is blissful, peaceful, deathless, and free from fear, suffering, [227] harm, and stain."
These words of amazement, delight, and joy resounded all the way up to the Highest Heaven.

15.155 When the retinue of consorts did not see the young prince, they began to search for him in the spring, summer, and winter palaces, and in his private rooms and apartments. Unable to find him, they all began to wail like fish hawks. The ladies were overcome by extreme grief, and some cried out, "My son!" Others called out "My brother!" "My husband!" "My lord!" and "My master!" Some mumbled different tender words, while others contorted their bodies in various ways and wept. Some of the ladies plucked their hair, while others faced each other and sobbed.

15.156 Some cried with rolling eyes, and others shed tears, wiping their faces with their garments. Some slapped their thighs with their hands, and others beat their chests.

Some slapped their arms with their hands, and others beat their heads. [F.113.a] Some covered their head with dust and wept, crying out loud. Some ladies were seen disheveling their hair, others pulling it out. Some raised their arms and lamented loudly. Some ran headlong, like gazelles pierced by poisonous arrows, all the while crying. Some among them staggered about like a plantain tree shaken by the wind and sobbed. Others tossed their bodies around on the floor, as if they were just about to die, while some writhed on the ground, as if they were fish pulled from water, and cried. Others collapsed suddenly on the ground, like a tree that has been cut from its root, and wept.

15.157 When the king heard these noises, he asked his fellow Śākyas, "What is this loud noise coming from the ladies' apartments?"

The Śākyas looked into the matter and replied, "Your Majesty, the young prince [228] is not in the ladies' apartments."

The king then ordered, "Quickly close the city gates! Let us search for the prince within the gates!" But the prince was nowhere to be found, whether inside or outside the gates. Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī collapsed on the ground lamenting and said to King Śuddhodana, "Your Majesty, get my son back quickly."

The king then sent messengers on horseback into the four directions with the order: "Go, and do not come back until you have found the prince!"

15.158 Since those who can read signs and the future had prophesied that the Bodhisattva would leave through the Gate of Auspiciousness, the messengers proceeded to this gate. There they saw that a rain of flowers had fallen on the road, and they thought, "He must have left this way."

When they had traveled a little farther, they met the god who was carrying the Bodhisattva's silken garments on his head. Again they thought, "These are the silken garments of the prince. Can it be that he has been killed for their sake? Get hold of this man!"

However, right then they saw Chanda trailing behind the god, leading the horse Kaṇṭhaka and carrying the Bodhisattva's ornaments. [F.113.b] So they said, "Here comes Chanda with Kaṇṭhaka. Let us not act rashly but instead question him first."

15.159 So they asked him, "Chanda, did this man kill the prince for the sake of his silken garments?" [229]
Chanda replied, "No, not at all. This person offered the prince his own saffron-colored clothes, and the prince in return gave him these silken garments. That god then placed the garments on top of his head and returned right then to his celestial realm in order to venerate them."

15.160 The men questioned Chanda further: "What do you think, Chanda? Should we go after the prince? Will we be able to make him return?"
Chanda replied, "No, you will not be able to do so. The young prince is so diligent, disciplined, and steadfast. He said that unless he awakens to perfect and complete buddhahood, he will never again enter the city of Kapilavastu. So he will not return with you. What the prince said will happen is in fact what will happen. And why will the prince not return? Because of his enthusiasm, discipline, and steadfastness."

15.161 Then Chanda took the horse Kaṇṭhaka and the ornaments and went to the inner quarters. Three young Śākyas called Bhadrika, Mahānāma, and Aniruddha tried for a long time to lift the ornaments, but they were unable to. These ornaments were made for someone with a body as strong as Nārāyaṇa, and so other people were not able to wear them.
When Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī saw that nobody could move the ornaments, she thought, "When I see his ornaments lying there, my heart is pierced with pain. I think it is better therefore to throw the ornaments into the pond." So she let the ornaments be thrown into the pond, and even to this day that lake is called the Lake of the Ornaments.

15.162 On this topic, it is said:

When the wise and courageous Bodhisattva departed from his home,
The entire city of Kapilavastu awoke from its sleep. [230]
Everyone thought that the young prince was still asleep in his bed; [F.114.a]
Seeing one another, they felt content.

15.163 When Gopā and the assembly of consorts awoke,
They looked at his bed but did not find the Bodhisattva there.
They let out cries that reached the king's quarters:
"Alas, we have been deceived! Where did the Bodhisattva go?"

15.164 When the king heard that, he collapsed on the ground.
He wept and cried, "Oh no, my only son!"
Many hundreds of Śākyas tried to revive him,
Sprinkling water from vases on him as he lay motionless.

15.165 Gopā had also fallen off her bed and onto the ground;
She cut her hair and took off her jewelry.
She exclaimed, "Before long we must separate from those we love!
The Guide of Beings told me that; he made me so perfectly aware of this.

15.166 "Your form is so beautiful; your faultless limbs are perfect.
So brilliant and pure; all beings cherish you.
Praised as he who brings good fortune, you are honored in heaven and on earth.
When you left my bed, where did you go?

15.167 "Until I see the Bodhisattva with all his good qualities again,
I will not drink water, nor mead or liquor.
I shall sleep on the ground and wear my matted hair in a topknot;
Without bathing, I shall practice disciplined conduct and austerities. [231]

15.168 "In all the parks, the leaves, flowers, and fruits are gone;
The brilliant white necklaces of pearl have faded and collected dust.
Since the most noble being has left this fine city,
The palace has lost its beauty and the city has become like a desert!

15.169 "Alas, the delightful singing voices!
Alas, the assembly of consorts with fine jewelry!
Alas, the spaces covered with golden nets!
All this I shall see no more without him, who is so full of qualities."

15.170 The maternal aunt, who also felt miserable,
Tried to console her, saying, "Daughter of the Śākyas, do not cry.
The supreme noble one among men has said in the past:
'I will liberate this world from birth and old age.' "

15.171 The Great Sage, who is well trained in thousands of virtues,
Traveled six leagues during the remainder of the night.
He gave his fine horse and his ornaments to Chanda and said, [F.114.b]
"Chanda, take these and return to the city of Kapilavastu!

15.172 "Repeat the following to my parents:
'The young prince has left. Please do not be saddened!
When he attains awakening, he will return.
Then you will listen to the Dharma and find peace.' "

15.173 Chanda began to weep and spoke again to the Guide: [232]
"Your kinfolk, the best of people, may beat me and ask,
'Chanda, where have you taken the virtuous Bodhisattva?'
But I have no ability, fortitude, and strength."

15.174 The Bodhisattva replied, "Chanda, do not be afraid.
My kinfolk will be happy to see you again.
They will always regard you as their teacher
And love you in the same way as they loved me."

15.175 Bringing the finest of horses and the ornaments,
Chanda returned to the park of the noble one among men.
The guard at the park, overjoyed upon seeing them,
Speedily conveyed the happy news to the Śākyas:

15.176 "The prince, the noble horse, as well as Chanda,
Have returned to the park, so don't worry anymore."
When the king, who was surrounded by the retinue of Śākyas, heard this,
He became exhilarated and quickly went to the park.

15.177 But Gopā, knowing the intelligence and steadfastness of the Bodhisattva,
Was not thrilled, and did not trust these words. She thought,
"It is wrong to assume that the prince returned here
Before having attained awakening."

15.178 When the king saw only the horse Kaṇṭhaka and Chanda,
He cried out and collapsed on the ground.
"Alas, my son, so talented in playing music and singing songs,
Where have you gone, abandoning this kingdom? [233]

15.179 "Chanda, now explain to me truly, right here,
Where did the Bodhisattva go, and what are his plans?
Who opened the gate for him, who led him away?
How did the gods make offerings to him?"

15.180 Chanda replied, "Powerful king, listen to me.
At night, when the old and young in this city were deeply asleep,
The Bodhisattva told me in a soft and gentle voice, [F.115.a]
'Chanda, quickly bring me the king of horses.'

15.181 "I tried to wake up the assembly of men and ladies,
But they were so sound asleep that they did not hear my words.
With tears I had to bring him the king of all horses.
I then told him, 'Benefactor of Beings, go wherever you please.'

15.182 "Śakra opened the gates that were fitted with a lock;
The guardians of the world tightly held the horse's hoofs.
When the hero mounted the horse, the trichiliocosm shook;
The road on which he traveled through the sky was very broad indeed.

15.183 "A bright light appeared, which dispelled the pitch-black darkness;
Flowers fell, and the sound of hundreds of musical instruments was heard.
The gods and goddesses offered him praises
As he moved through the sky surrounded by a celestial retinue."

15.184 Then Chanda took the noble horse and the ornaments with him
And went into the ladies' quarters, weeping. [234]
When Gopā saw Chanda and the noble horse,
She fainted and collapsed on the ground.

15.185 Startled, the large gathering of women
Brought water, washed her, and called out,
"May our Śākya princess not die now!
It would be too much to bear if we lost two loved ones!"

15.186 The dejected princess of the Śākyas gathered her strength
And embraced the neck of the noble king of horses.
Recalling the games of love from the past,
She was overcome by sorrow and cried out,

15.187 "Alas, you gave me joy!
Alas, noble man whose face is like the spotless moon!
Alas, my most noble of men!
Alas, you with excellent marks, so stainless and splendid!

15.188 "Alas, my wellborn man with a perfect body,
Well formed and tapering, you are unequaled.
Alas, my lord full of supreme qualities,
Venerated by humans and gods alike and full of great compassion.

15.189 "Alas, my powerful man, who is as strong as Nārāyaṇa,
You conquer the hordes of demons.
Alas, my gentle love with a voice as sweet as Brahmā's
And as soft as the sound of a nightingale. [F.115.b]

15.190 "Alas, my man of limitless renown,
You have emerged from hundreds of virtues and have stainless merit!
Alas, you are my love with glory beyond limits!
Adorned with good qualities, you delight the sages!

15.191 "Alas, my handsome love, who was born in the sublime forest of Lumbini,
Which resounds with the buzzing of bees.
Alas, my dear one, renowned in heaven and on earth,
You who are a revered tree of wisdom.

15.192 "Alas, my sweet-tasting man, with lips like the bimba fruit,
With eyes like a lotus and skin of golden hue.
Alas, my dear one with spotless teeth,
As white as cow's milk or snow. [235]

15.193 "Alas, my dear one with a beautiful nose, beautiful eyebrows,
And the stainless circling hair between your brows.
Alas, my dear one with shoulders so well formed,
With a waist like a bow, legs like a deer, and rounded hips.

15.194 "Alas, my man with thighs like the trunk of an elephant,
With fair hands and feet, and with copper-colored nails.
All these beautiful attributes were formed by your merit
And delighted the king.

15.195 "Alas, you were my melodious song and music,
And a balm obtained from exquisite flowers in the best of seasons.
Alas, you were to me the scent of flowers;
You brought delight to the retinue of consorts with song and music.

15.196 "Alas, fine Kaṇṭhaka, my husband's companion!
Where did you carry him?
Alas, Chanda, don't you have any compassion?
Why did you not wake us when the best of men was leaving?

15.197 "Today the compassionate guide
Of those who need guidance has left this noble city.
Why did you not tell us
That our benefactor was leaving?

15.198 "How did our benefactor leave?
And who helped him escape from the capital?
In which direction has he gone?
Fortunate are the deities of the forest groves who are now his companions.

15.199 "Chanda, I am miserable, for I had been showed a treasure.
Yet now, since it is like my eyes have been gouged, restore my sight!
Chanda, the victorious ones always teach
That one's parents are to be honored.

15.200 "If he abandoned them, needless to mention
That he would leave the pleasures of love with a woman!
Alas, to separate from those we love
Is like watching a play—nothing endures! [F.116.a]

15.201 "Because of grasping at concepts, childish beings hold mistaken views;
This is why they have to take birth and die.
In the past he taught that all who are conditioned by birth and death
Have no friends whatsoever.

15.202 "So may his wishes be fulfilled and may he,
Under the best of trees, attain supreme and noble awakening.
When he has attained stainless awakening,
May he return to this noble city!"

15.203 When Chanda heard Gopā's words,
He felt deeply unhappy.
He said in a voice choked with tears,
"Gopā, listen to my words. [236]

15.204 "Around midnight, when the gathering of ladies
Were deeply asleep, secretly
The One Elevated with Hundreds of Merits
Told me to bring his horse Kaṇṭhaka.

15.205 "When I heard his words,
I immediately looked at you, asleep on your bed,
And I shouted aloud to you, Gopā,
'Your beloved is about to leave, get up!'

15.206 "But the gods blocked my words,
And so not even one lady awoke.
Weeping, I adorned that king of horses
And gave it to the most exalted among men.

15.207 "Kaṇṭhaka then neighed with his fierce energy,
And although the sound could be heard for a mile,
Nobody in our fine city heard it,
Having been lulled to sleep by the gods.

15.208 "As the hooves of Kaṇṭhaka—
Covered with gold, silver, and precious gems—struck the earth,
The earth gave off a terrible and beautiful sound,
And yet nobody could hear it.

15.209 "At that time the constellation of Puṣya had arisen,
And the moon and the stars were shining in the sky.
From the sky tens of millions of gods folded their hands,
Bowed to him, and offered prostrations.

15.210 "With the assembly of yakṣas and rākṣasas in attendance,
The four guardians of the world, who possess great magical power,
Lifted the hooves of Kaṇṭhaka with their hands
That were as spotless and pure as the anthers of a lotus flower.

15.211 "The Lord elevated with hundreds of merits
Mounted the horse and resembled a red lotus and a jasmine flower. [F.116.b]
At that time the earth shook in six different ways,
And the buddha realms were pervaded with stainless light.

15.212 "Then the god Śakra, the husband of Śacī,
And the principal of all gods, opened the gates.
A hundred million gods preceded the Bodhisattva,
And the nāgas and gods offered him their veneration as he left.

15.213 "The noble Kaṇṭhaka, at a mere sign,
Carried the protector of this world across the sky.
Gatherings of gods and demigods, along with Śakra,
Escorted the Well-Gone One as he was leaving.

15.214 "The goddesses, so skilled in playing music,
Praised the qualities of the Bodhisattva.
They all gave Kaṇṭhaka strength
As they sang to him in the most delightful and touching way: [237]

15.215 " 'Kaṇṭhaka, carry the guide of this world!
Be swift and don't feel sad!
When you assist the protector of this world,
You are free from the dangers of the lower realms and difficult rebirths.'

15.216 "Each of the gods also expressed this desire, saying,
'I also want to carry the guide of this world.'
There was not a place to be found
Not walked upon by the millions of gods, who said:

15.217 " 'Kaṇṭhaka, look at the path prepared for you in the sky!
It is so bright and beautiful.
Its bejeweled ledges are ornamented in various ways,
And it is censed with divine incense based on supreme essences.

15.218 " 'Kaṇṭhaka, because of your meritorious deed,
You will be magically reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three.
As divine maidens surround you and attend to you,
You will delight in divine sense pleasures.'

15.219 "Gopā, do not shed any more tears!
Be happy and rejoice!
Before long you will witness the best among men attaining awakening.
You will see him honored and served by the immortals.

15.220 "Gopā, one should never shed tears over people
Who do such excellent deeds!
Instead, rejoice in He Who Is Elevated by Hundreds of Splendors and Merits,
And do not weep anymore!

15.221 "Gopā, even if I were to speak for seven days
About the offerings that humans and gods arranged
At the time of our King's departure from home,
I would not be able to cover it all. [F.117.a]

15.222 "You have served and paid respect
To the One Who Benefits Beings;
Thus you will find supreme and inconceivable attainment.
I believe that you shall become just like him, the most noble being!"

15.223 *This concludes the fifteenth chapter, on leaving home.* [B11]

16.

Chapter 16

THE VISIT OF KING BIMBISĀRA

16.1 Monks, through the blessing of the Bodhisattva, Chanda told King Śuddhodana, the Śākya princess Gopā, the retinue of consorts, and everyone else among the Śākyas what had happened in order to alleviate their suffering. [238]
Monks, the Bodhisattva first gave his silken robes to a god in the form of a hunter, and then he donned the hunter's saffron-colored robes. He adopted the lifestyle of a renunciant in order to act in agreement with the perception of worldly people, and also because he felt compassion for others and wished to mature them.

16.2 The Bodhisattva then went to the hermitage of a brahmin woman called Śākī. The woman invited the Bodhisattva to stay and have a meal. Next the Bodhisattva went to the hermitage of a brahmin woman called Padmā, who also invited the Bodhisattva to stay for a meal. Later he went to the hermitage of a sagely priest called Raivata, who offered the Bodhisattva hospitality in the same way. Likewise Rājaka, the son of Datṛmadaṇḍika, also invited him as a guest. Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva slowly made his way to the city of Vaiśālī.

16.3 At that time Ārāḍa Kālāma had arrived in Vaiśālī, where he resided together with a saṅgha of listeners and three hundred students, to whom he delivered teachings on the practices related to the sense field of utter absence. [F.117.b] When Ārāḍa Kālāma saw the Bodhisattva approaching in the distance, he was amazed and told his students, "Oh, look at his figure!"
The students replied, "Yes, we see him. He is amazing."
Monks, I walked up to where Ārāḍa Kālāma was staying and addressed him in the following way: "Ārāḍa Kālāma, I have come to learn spiritual practices from you."[9]

16.4 Ārāḍa Kālāma replied, "Gautama, I shall give you a teaching through which a faithful person of good family can accomplish omniscience with very little hardship." [239]
Monks, I then thought to myself, "I have faith. I am also diligent. I am mindful and I can practice absorption. I also have knowledge. So therefore, in order to master and actualize that teaching, I will practice on my own in a solitary place, without getting distracted."
Monks, I then practiced on my own in solitude with carefulness and diligence. And indeed, with only little hardship, I was able to understand and actualize the teaching.

16.5 Monks, I then went to Ārāḍa Kālāma and asked him, "Ārāḍa Kālāma, you have understood and actualized this teaching, isn't that true?"
"Yes, Gautama, indeed I have," he replied.
I then told him, "I have also understood and actualized this teaching." Ārāḍa Kālāma replied, "Well then, Gautama, whatever teaching I know, you also know. And whatever you know, I also know. So now both of us should assume patronage of the students."
After he made that offer, Ārāḍa Kālāma honored me with exquisite offerings and installed me as a teacher in residence, who would share his duties with him.
Monks, I then thought to myself, "Ārāḍa's teaching does not bring freedom. It would not bring total freedom from suffering for either of us. So now I must depart and search for a better practice." [F.118.a]

16.6 Monks, since I had now stayed in Vaiśālī for as long as I found enjoyable, I proceeded to the country of Magadha and found my way to Rājagṛha, the capital city of that country. Once there I took up residence at Pāṇḍava, the king of mountains, where I stayed on its slope alone in solitude without any company. At that time many trillions of gods protected me. [240]

One morning I dressed in the skirt and robes of a mendicant and, holding my offering bowl, I went into the city of Rājagṛha through the Gate of Warm Water and started my alms round. I looked ahead and to both sides and proceeded in a gracious manner, moving my limbs with elegance. I carried the skirt, the offering bowl, and the monk's robes in a very beautiful manner. My senses were undistracted and my mind was not diverted by outer events. Like an image of someone who is carrying a vase filled with oil, I looked ahead at a distance of six feet.
When the people of Rājagṛha saw me, they were amazed and thought, "Goodness, is that Brahmā? Or perhaps Śakra, king of the gods, or Vaiśravaṇa? Or is it some kind of mountain god?"

16.7 On this topic, it is said:
Stainless and of infinite glory,
The Bodhisattva becomes a mendicant of his own will.
His mind is peaceful and his actions are gentle;
He resides on the slope of Pāṇḍava, the king of mountains.

16.8 As the Bodhisattva knows that day has broken,
He dons his robes, so beautiful to behold.
Holding his alms bowl with a humble attitude,
He enters Rājagṛha on his alms round.

16.9 Like gold, he is of refined nature
And bears the thirty-two marks.
When men and women see him,
They cannot get enough of beholding him.

16.10 The streets are adorned with precious fabrics;
People move out of his way, only to follow behind him.
They ask, "Who is that being whom we have never seen before
And whose luster makes the whole city shine?"

16.11 Thousands of women stand on their roofs [F.118.b]
And in their doorways and windows.
Filling the streets, they leave their houses empty;
Dropping all other tasks, they only stare at this perfect man.

16.12 All business and shopping comes to an end;
Even those in the bars stop drinking.
They cannot stay still in their houses or in the streets
As they behold the form of this perfect man.

16.13 Quickly one man runs to the palace
And joyfully relates the story to King Bimbisāra:
"It seems that Brahmā himself is doing alms rounds in our city!
Your Majesty, you are most fortunate!" [241]

16.14 Some people say to the king that it is Śakra, king of the gods;
Others say it is a god from the Heaven Free from Strife.
Others say it is a god from the Heaven of Joy or the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations;
Some suggest it is a god from the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations.

16.15 There are some who say that it is Sūrya or Candra;
Some say it is Rāhu, Balī, or Vemacitri.
Still others are saying,
"He lives on Pāṇḍava, the king of mountains."

16.16 As the king hears these reports,
He is overjoyed and comes to his balcony.
There he sees the Perfect Being, the Bodhisattva,
Who shines with beauty like well-refined gold.

16.17 King Bimbisāra gives the Bodhisattva some alms
And tells his men, "Find out where he goes."
Seeing that he returns to the best of mountains, they report back:
"Your Majesty, he is staying on the face of the mountain!"

16.18 Knowing that the night has passed,
King Bimbisāra, surrounded by a large retinue,
Arrives at the root of Pāṇḍava, the king of mountains,
And sees that the mountain is ablaze in glory.

16.19 He dismounts from his chariot and proceeds on foot.
With great devotion he beholds the Bodhisattva
Sitting cross-legged on a cushion of grass,
Immutable, like the central mountain.

16.20 The king touches his head to the Bodhisattva's feet.
As they discuss many issues, the king says,
"I will give you half my kingdom.
Enjoy the sense pleasures here; I will give you all you need."

16.21 The Bodhisattva replies in soft words,
"Ruler of this land, may your life be long!
I have already discarded a beautiful kingdom and become a monk
In order to search for peace with no expectations for the future." [F.119.a]

16.22 The king of Magadha responds to the Bodhisattva,
"You are young and in the prime of life;
You have a beautiful complexion and you are strong.
Let me offer you much wealth and many women.

16.23 "Please stay in my kingdom and enjoy yourself.
When I see you, I am filled with supreme joy;
Please be my friend, and I will give you my entire kingdom.
Please enjoy its abundant pleasures.

16.24 "Please do not stay in the empty forest;
From now on, please do not sit on grass on the ground.
Your body is so young and fresh,
So please stay in my kingdom and enjoy yourself." [242]

16.25 The Bodhisattva replies in a gentle voice,
With love and concern for the king's welfare,
"King, may fortune always be with you!
I do not seek desirable objects.

16.26 "Desire is like poison and has endless faults;
It pushes beings into hell and the realms of hungry spirits and animals.
Ignoble desires are condemned by the wise ones;
I have abandoned desire like putrid snot.

16.27 "Desires fall like fruit from trees;
They pass like clouds and rain.
Unstable and fleeting, they move like the wind;
They destroy everything that is good, and should be avoided.

16.28 "If people don't get what they want, their desires burn;
But even if they do get what they want, it is never enough.
However, when desires consume someone who is unable to handle them,
That is when these terrifying desires bring the most pain.

16.29 "Your Majesty, even if one man were to attain
All the pleasures of the gods
And everything desirable among humans,
It still would not suffice, and he would search for more.

16.30 "Yet, Your Majesty, whoever is peaceful and gentle,
Informed by the noble and stainless Dharma,
And filled with knowledge—he is satisfied.
For him desirable objects have no attraction.

16.31 "Your Majesty, if one follows after desire,
It will never end.
Like drinking salty water,
Following after desire only increases craving. [F.119.b]

16.32 "Your Majesty, consider how unstable the body is.
There is no substance to the body—it is like a machine of suffering;
It constantly leaks from the nine openings.
Your Majesty, I have no desire for pleasures.

16.33 "I have abandoned many delights
And thousands of women so beautiful to behold.
I now wish for the perfect peace of sacred awakening.
Since I find no joy in conditioned existence, I have left it."

16.34 The king of Magadha now asks:

"Monk, where do you come from?
Where were you born? Where are your father and mother?
Are you a member of the ruling class, a priest, or a king?
Monk, please tell me everything, if you don't mind." [243]

16.35 The Bodhisattva replies:

"Your Majesty, I am from the city of Kapilavastu of the Śākyas,
A wonder-filled city of which you may have heard.
My father's name is Śuddhodana.
I renounced this city because I wished for deeper qualities."

16.36 The king of Magadha says:

"Good! We are so glad to see you!
As for your life, we too can learn from it.
Also forgive me for my earlier intention
To invite the One Free from Desire to enjoy sense pleasures.

16.37 "If you do become awakened,
Dharma Lord, please share the Dharma with me.
Self-Born One, that you now live in my country
Is for me the greatest gift of all."

16.38 Once again the king bows to the Bodhisattva's feet;
He circumambulates the Bodhisattva with the greatest respect.
Then, surrounded by his entourage,
The ruler returns to his royal palace.

16.39 The Protector of the World came to the city in Magadha;
Peacefully, he stayed as long as he wished.
When he had accomplished the welfare of gods and humans,
The Lord of Men proceeded to the banks of the Nairañjanā River.

16.40 *This concludes the sixteenth chapter, on the visit of King Bimbisāra.*

17.

Chapter 17

PRACTICING AUSTERITIES

17.1 Monks, at that time a son of Rāma by the name of Rudraka arrived in Rājagṛha, where he stayed with a large group of seven hundred of his students. He was teaching his students the principles of the disciplined conduct necessary for attaining the state where there is neither perception nor nonperception. [F.120.a]
Monks, the Bodhisattva saw that Rudraka, the son of Rāma, was in charge of a group, indeed a large group, and that as the head of the congregation, he was well-known, popular, venerated by the masses, and recognized by all scholars. Witnessing this, the Bodhisattva thought to himself:

17.2 "Rudraka, the son of Rāma, is really in charge of a group, indeed a large group; he is the head of the congregation and, moreover, well-known, popular, venerated by the masses, and recognized by all scholars. [244] However, unless I begin to practice disciplined conduct and austerities myself in his presence, he will never perceive me as someone special. He will also not have an understanding based on direct perception. In this way he will never renounce his concentration, absorption, and states of equilibrium, which are fabricated, defiled, and perpetuating.
"Therefore I must first actualize these experiences myself. In that way I can demonstrate that his worldly absorptions, which are limited to concentration and which only support states of equilibrium, do not carry a result. I will go to

Rudraka, the son of Rāma, and become accepted as his student in order to demonstrate the superiority of the qualities of my own absorption. I will demonstrate to him that fabricated absorptions are pointless."

17.3 Monks, with this purpose in mind, the Bodhisattva went to see Rudraka, the son of Rāma. When he met Rudraka, the Bodhisattva asked, "My friend, who is your teacher? Who taught you so well?"
Rudraka, the son of Rāma, answered, "My friend, I did not have a teacher. Nevertheless I did reach a genuine understanding on my own."
The Bodhisattva then asked, "What is it you understand?"
Rudraka replied, "The way of equilibrium, which is neither perception nor nonperception." [F.120.b]
Next the Bodhisattva asked, "Could you please allow me to follow you so that I can obtain the instructions for your path of absorption?"
Rudraka replied, "Yes indeed, I will let you follow me so that you can obtain instructions for my path of absorption."

17.4 With this the Bodhisattva went off and sat down with his legs crossed. Now, no sooner did the Bodhisattva sit down before he actualized hundreds of all the main types of worldly and transcendent equilibriums in all their many details. [245] The reason he could do this was because he had become a master of his mind, possessing a superior accumulation of merit and wisdom, a special fruition of all his previous trainings, and a distinctive familiarity with all absorptions.
At that point the Bodhisattva arose from his seat, mindful and attentive, and went to see Rudraka, the son of Rāma.
He then addressed him: "My friend, is there any higher path than the state of neither perception nor nonperception?"
"No," Rudraka replied.

17.5 The Bodhisattva then thought to himself, "Rudraka is not the only one who has faith, diligence, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I am also faithful, diligent, mindful, concentrated, and wise." He therefore addressed Rudraka with these words: "My friend, I have now understood the teaching in which you are adept."
Rudraka replied, "Well, in that case, come, we should teach everyone together." And accordingly he installed the Bodhisattva as a teacher on the same level as himself.
The Bodhisattva then said, "My friend, this path does not free the mind. Neither does it free one from attachment. It also does not lead to cessation or peace. It does not bring higher knowledge, nor does it lead to complete awakening. [F.121.a] It does not make one a mendicant or a priest, and it does not lead to nirvāṇa."
Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva made up his mind regarding Rudraka, the son of Rāma, and his followers. He left them, saying, "This is enough; I am leaving."

17.6 At that point there were five ascetic companions who were learning religious practices under the guidance of Rudraka, the son of Rāma. They thought to themselves, "Even though we have tried and persisted for a long time in this way, we have not been able to realize our goal. Yet this mendicant Gautama was able to realize it and manifest it through such little hardship. And now he doesn't want it! Surely he must be searching for something even higher than that. Surely he will become a teacher of the world. Whatever he is about to discover, he will probably share it with us." And with this, the five ascetic companions left Rudraka, the son of Rāma, to follow the Bodhisattva instead. [246]

17.7 Monks, by that point the Bodhisattva had remained in Rājagṛha for as long as he wanted, and now he left together with the five ascetic companions in order to wander through the kingdom of Magadha. Somewhere on the road between Rājagṛha and Gayā, they met a group of people who were enjoying a feast. This group called out to the Bodhisattva and the five ascetic companions and invited them to sit down and participate in the feast.

Monks, afterward the Bodhisattva proceeded through Magadha and eventually arrived at Gayā. At the peak of Mount Gayā, the Bodhisattva stayed in order to apply himself to strenuous practice. As he was staying there, three parables that he had never previously heard or thought of came to his mind. What were these three?

17.8 First he thought, "There are some monks and priests who are unable to separate their mind and body from the objects of their desire. Instead they delight in those objects and feel attached to them, long for them, wish for them, strive for them, crave and thirst for them, become senseless for them, and are burned by them. This striving after the objects of desire never brings peace. They further harm themselves and torment their bodies and end up with intense and unbearable feelings of suffering. Therefore, in doing so, they become incapable of actualizing the noble wisdom vision that is superior to any human teaching. This is like a person who tries in vain to create a fire in order to make light by rubbing together two wet pieces of wood that have been submerged in water. He will not be able to produce fire and make light. This is the same as the monks and priests who are unable to separate their mind and body from the objects of their desire. They delight in those objects and feel attached to them, long for them, wish for them, strive for them, crave and thirst for them, become senseless for them, and are burned by them. This striving after the objects of desire never brings peace. [F.121.b] [247] They further harm themselves and torment their bodies and end up with intense and unbearable feelings of suffering. Therefore, in doing so, they become incapable of actualizing the noble wisdom vision that is superior to any human teaching." This was the first example that he had never thought or heard of that came to the Bodhisattva's mind.

17.9 Second, he continued to think, "There are also monks and priests who have separated their mind and body from the objects of their desire. Still they delight in those objects and feel attached to them, long for them, wish for them, strive for them, crave and thirst for them, become senseless for them, and are burned by them. This striving after the objects of desire never brings peace. [F.122.a] They further harm themselves and torment their bodies and end up with intense and unbearable feelings of suffering. Therefore, in doing so, they become incapable of actualizing the noble wisdom vision that is superior to any human teaching. This is like a person who tries in vain to create a fire in order to make light by placing a wet piece of wood on the ground and rubbing another wet piece of wood against it. He will be unable to produce fire and make light. This is the same as some monks and priests who have separated their mind and body from the objects of their desire. They delight in those objects and feel attached to them, long for them, wish for them, strive for them, become senseless for them, and crave for them to the extent that they never find peace. In this way they harm themselves and torment their bodies and end up with intense and unbearable feelings of suffering, as if being burned. Therefore, in doing so, they become incapable of actualizing the noble wisdom vision that is much supreme to the highest human teaching." This was the second example that he had never thought or heard of that came to the Bodhisattva's mind.

17.10 Third, he thought, "There are also other monks and priests who have separated their mind and body from the objects of their desire. Although they also delight in those objects and feel attached to them, long for them, wish for them, strive for them, crave and thirst for them, and become senseless for them, they do find peace. Although they do harm themselves and torment their bodies and end up with intense and unbearable feelings of suffering, in doing so they do become capable of actualizing the noble wisdom vision that is superior to human teaching. They are like a person who wishes to create a fire in order to make light, and therefore places a dry piece of wood on the ground and rubs another dry piece of wood against it. For such a person the fire will ignite, and light will shine. This is how there are also other monks and priests who have separated their mind and body from the objects of their desire. Although they also delight in those objects and feel attached to them, long for them, wish for them, strive for them, crave and thirst for them, and become senseless for them, they do find peace. Although they do harm themselves and torment their bodies and end up with intense and unbearable feelings of suffering as if being burned, in doing so they do become capable of actualizing the noble wisdom vision that is much supreme to the highest human teaching." This was the third example that he had never thought or heard of that came to the Bodhisattva's mind. [248]

17.11 Monks, then the Bodhisattva thought to himself, "I have also separated my body from the objects of desire. Although I also delight in those objects and feel attached to them, long for them, wish for them, strive for them, crave and thirst for them, and become senseless for them, I do nevertheless find peace. Although I do harm myself and torment my body and end up with intense and unbearable feelings of suffering, as if being burned, in doing so I have become capable of actualizing the noble wisdom vision that is much supreme to the highest human teaching."

17.12 Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva remained in Gayā at the peak of Mount Gayā for as long as he pleased before he proceeded by foot to the village Senāpati near Urubilvā. On the way he passed by the Nairañjanā River. He witnessed its pure water and beautiful bathing areas and saw how trees and groves adorned the riverbank and the surrounding village. This made the Bodhisattva very delighted, and he thought to himself, "What an amazing place! It is so pleasant! [F.122.b] It is a great place to stay, and it is perfect for someone of noble family who is wholly dedicated to renunciation. Since I am wholly dedicated to renunciation, I will stay here."

17.13 Monks, the Bodhisattva continued to think, "I have been born in this world at the time of the five degenerations among beings who are occupied with lowly pursuits. These various religious practitioners have so many orientations and views. They wholly fixate on the body. They seek to purify the body by oppressing it in various ways. In complete ignorance, they give instructions. Some, for example, make use of spells, lick their hands, remain seated, cease talking, ingest various roots, abstain from eating meat and fish, spend the summer indoors, refrain from wine and beverages and even water, and take their nourishment from one or three or five or seven houses.

17.14 "Some consume roots, fruits, water plants, kuśa grass, leaves, cow dung, cow urine, milk, yogurt, butter, molasses, or seeds that have not been ground. There are others who wash and eat the leftovers that swans and pigeons throw away. Others live in villages or remote places. There are others who practice living like an ox, a deer, a dog, a pig, a monkey, or an elephant. There are some who only stand, some who don't talk, and some who hold the vīrāsana body posture. Some live on just one mouthful of food, or anything up to seven mouthfuls. Some eat only once a day, some eat once every twenty-four hours, while others eat every four or five or six days. [249] Others fast for a fortnight or a month, according to the moon.

17.15 "Some dress themselves in the feathers of vultures or owls, while others wear planks, muñja grass, asana bark, darbha grass, or valvaja grass. Others don a cloak made of camel wool, goat wool, horsehair, or simply a hide. Still others only put on wet clothes. Some sleep on a stool or in the water, while others sleep in ashes, on rocks, gravel, planks, thorns, grass, [F.123.a] or sticks. Others sleep with their heads toward the ground, in squatting posture, or on the bare ground.

There are some who wear one, two, three, four, five, six, seven or more pieces of clothing, while others go naked. There are some who have a ritual of bathing, and others who make a ritual out of never bathing. Some let their hair and nails and beards grow long, while others keep their hair braided in a topknot. There are also some who subsist on just a single juniper berry, sesame seed, or grain of rice.

17.16 "Some smear their bodies with ashes, soot, dead flower pollen, coal dust, dirt, and mud. Others adorn themselves with bodily hair, reeds, scalp hair, fingernails, rags, ribs, and skulls. They drink hot water, water leftover after washing rice, water filtered through a blanket, and dishwater. Some wear dyes of charcoal, minerals, or saffron, shave their heads, carry vases, human skulls, and clubs.

17.17 "In such ways do these fools believe themselves to be pure. Some inhale smoke and fire, stare at the sun, and perform the five-fires ritual. They stand on one foot, raise one hand in the air, and stay in just one spot. Such are the hardships that they undergo. They use burning chaff and coals and tandoor ovens. They walk on glowing rocks, scorching fire, or scalding water. Some go to a sacred riverbank and die there. They follow the course of such practices.

17.18 "They believe that they become pure by reciting *oṃ, vaṣaṭ, svadhā, svāhā*, the benedictions, collected praises, or invocations; by repeating mantras or dhāraṇīs; or by practicing meditation. Considering themselves pure, they take refuge in and pay homage to beings that they believe to be essential, such as Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, [F.123.b] Viṣṇu, Devī, Kumāra, Mātṛ, Katyāyanī, Candra, Āditya, Vaiśravaṇa, Varuṇa, the Vāsus, the Aśvins, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, rākṣasas, bhūtas, kumbhāṇḍas, pretas, gaṇas, ancestors, piśācas, devarṣis, rājarṣis, and brahmarṣis.

17.19 "They also take refuge in the elements, such as earth, water, fire, wind, and space. Likewise they resort for refuge in mountains, rivers, sources of rivers, lakes, ponds, pools, oceans, reservoirs, lotus ponds, and wells; trees, bushes, vines, grass, tree trunks; cow pens, cemeteries, crossroads where four roads meet, and markets. They pay homage to houses, pillars, and rocks; clubs, swords, bows, axes, arrows, spears, and tridents. They also believe that yogurt, butter, mustard seeds, barley, magic strings, dūrvā grass, jewels, gold, silver, [250] and other such items are auspicious.

17.20 "This is what these extremists rely on because of their fear of cyclic existence. In doing so, some of them think, 'Because of these methods, in the afterlife we shall find heaven and final emancipation.' In this way they go astray on errant paths.

They seek refuge in that which cannot offer protection. They take as auspicious that which is not auspicious. They take as pure that which is not pure.

17.21 "However, if I now attain mastery in the prescribed practices and austerities, all the opposing views will become suppressed. I will then demonstrate to these people, who disregard karmic actions, the inescapability of the fruits of actions. And as for the gods in the realms of meditative concentration and form, if I can demonstrate a superior meditative concentration, [F.124.a] they will become interested."

17.22 Monks, following up on these thoughts, the Bodhisattva now began a six-year period of extremely fierce prescribed practices and hardships that were intensely difficult, the hardest of all difficult practices. The reason for calling this *difficult practice* is because it is excruciatingly difficult, and therefore it is described in such terms. Except for a bodhisattva who has reached his last existence and rests in equanimity in all-pervasive absorption, there is no one, human or nonhuman, who is capable of undergoing such hardships. This absorption is called *all-pervasive* because as the Bodhisattva rested in equanimity in the fourth absorption, from the very beginning all movements of the breath slowed down and ceased, and the absorption was nonconceptual. There was no thought, no movement, no conceptual mind, and no change, yet it was all-pervading and not dependent on anything. Previously no student, master, solitary buddha, or bodhisattva who had taken up such conduct had ever entered this absorption. This absorption is likened to space, because like space—which is motionless, uncaused, and changeless—there is nowhere it cannot reach. In that way it is similar to space, and therefore it is described as such.

17.23 Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva displayed true wonders to the worldly ones. He did so in order to shatter the proud satisfaction of extreme practitioners, to vanquish the opponents' attacks, [251] to attract the gods, and to correct nihilists and eternalists, who disregard karmic action. He also did so in order to declare the results of merit, to teach the results of wisdom, to distinguish the levels of concentration, to demonstrate the power and strength of the body, [F.124.b] and to develop bravery of mind. For these reasons the Bodhisattva sat down on the rugged earth, crossed his legs, and began to punish and torment his body through his mental resolve.

17.24 Monks, for eight winter nights I punished and tormented my body. Sweat ran from my armpits and from my forehead. As the sweat fell on the ground, the drops turned into hoarfrost, heated up, and evaporated. It was just like a strong man who grabs a very feeble person by the neck and strangles him. Such was the manner, monks, in which my mind brought punishment and torment on my body. Sweat ran from my armpits and from my forehead and, as the sweat fell on the ground, the drops turned into hoarfrost, then grew hot, and evaporated.

17.25 Monks, at that point I thought to myself, "I should now practice the all-pervading absorption." And, monks, as I was practicing the all-pervading absorption, from my mouth and my nose all movement of breath ceased, and within the openings of my ears an immense sound was heard. The sound was as loud and intense as when a blacksmith's bellows is being squeezed. Monks, all the while there was no movement of my breath through my mouth and nose, there was this intense, loud noise in my ears.

17.26 Monks, I then continued to think, "I should practice the all-pervading absorption." Since my mouth, nose, and ears were blocked, [252] the breath went up into my skull. Monks, it felt as if someone was striking my skull with a sharp spear. Monks, in that way, as my mouth, nose, and ears were blocked, my in-breaths and out-breaths were pushing up and hitting my skull.

Some gods noticed the suffering of the Bodhisattva and remarked, [F.125.a] "Oh no! It seems the young Siddhārtha is dying!"

The others remarked, "No, he's not dying. This is simply how worthy ones abide in absorption."

17.27 On this occasion, they then sang these verses:

"May this son of the Śākya kings,
Who has not fulfilled his aim in the forest here,
Not pass away without fulfilling his intention,
And thus leave this triple world suffering and without a defender.

17.28 "Oh no! You are the essential being and your commitment is strong.
Protector, previously in the Heaven of Joy you invited us
To hear the gift of the sacred Dharma,
But now where is your resolve, O Pure Being?"

17.29 These gods then went to the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and told Māyādevī, "It seems that the young prince is about to pass away."

Māyādevī surrounded herself with a retinue of goddesses, and at midnight they went to the bank of the Nairañjanā River where the Bodhisattva was staying. She saw how thin the Bodhisattva had become, and it appeared as if he had died. Upon seeing this, she was choked with tears and began to weep. She then sang these verses:

17.30 "When I gave birth to you, my son, in the Lumbinī Grove,
Without support, like a lion, you took seven steps on your own.
You gazed in the four directions and said these beautiful words:
'This is my last birth.' Those words will now never come to pass. [253]

17.31 "Asita predicted that you would be a buddha in this world,
But his prediction was wrong, as he did not foresee impermanence.
My son, you have not yet had the joys of a universal monarch's splendors,
And now you are passing away in this forest without attaining awakening.

17.32 "To whom can I turn to about my son?
To whom shall I cry out in my pain?
Who will give life back to my only son,
Who is barely alive?"

17.33 The Bodhisattva answered:

"Who are you? You cry so heart wrenchingly,
With disheveled hair and your beauty impaired,
Lamenting your son so intensely
And throwing yourself on the ground." [F.125.b]

17.34 Māyādevī replied:

"It is I, your mother, O son,
Who for ten months
Carried you in my womb like a diamond.
It is I who now cry out in despair."

17.35 Then, in order to console her, the Bodhisattva told her, "As for grieving for your son, there is no need to worry; your hardship will pay off. Renouncing the world for the sake of awakening is indeed meaningful. What the priest Asita predicted shall come true. Likewise the prediction of Dīpaṃkara shall come to pass.

17.36 "It is possible that the world may break into a hundred pieces,
and the jewel peak of Mount Meru may fall into the ocean.
The sun, the moon, and the stars may fall to the ground.
Yet although I am an ordinary person, I will not die.
Therefore do not bring misery on yourself.
Before long you shall behold the awakening of a buddha."

17.37 As soon as Māyādevī heard this, she became overjoyed, and the hair on her body stood on end. Sprinkling the Bodhisattva with māndārava flowers, she circumambulated him three times. Then, accompanied by heavenly music, she went back to her abode. [254]

17.38 Monks, at that point I thought to myself, "Because some religious practitioners and priests believe that one becomes purified by eating very little food, I must also be diligent in fasting." Monks, I realized that I should henceforth live on a single juniper berry and restrain myself from eating two. Monks, you might think that the juniper berries of that time were larger than now, but that is not the case. They were just as they are now.

Monks, as I now began living on just a single juniper berry, never taking a second, my body became extremely weak and emaciated. Monks, my limbs and joints began to resemble the knots of the āsītakī plant or the kālā plant. My rib cage resembled the sides of a crab. Like an old stable for horses or elephants where the two sides have caved in and made the inside rafters visible, [F.126.a] the insides of my chest became visible through both sides of my ribs. My spine appeared uneven and rugged, like a braid of hair with all its ups and downs.

17.39 Just as a bitter gourd that has been cut too early withers, dries out, and develops cracks, likewise my head began to wither, dry out, and develop cracks. Just like a well during the end of summer, where the reflection of the stars has sunk and is hard to notice, my eyeballs had sunk into my head and become barely visible. My legs resembled the legs of a goat or a camel, and so it was for my armpits, belly, chest, and so forth. Monks, when at that point I tried touching my belly with my hand, I actually ended up touching my spine. I was so hunched over that I fell whenever I tried to stand. When I finally managed to get up [255] and wipe my dust-covered body with my hands, my decayed hair fell out of my body. Previously my complexion had been beautiful and smooth, but now this radiance was all gone due to exerting myself in harsh travails.

17.40 The people who lived in the villages surrounding the area where I was practicing began to say, "Oh my, the mendicant Gautama has turned black! Have you seen, he's so dark! The mendicant Gautama has the color of the madgura fish! Previously his complexion was so beautiful, but now it has all changed."

17.41 Monks, at that point I thought to myself, "I must apply myself to eating even less than this." I realized that I should henceforth live on only a single grain of rice and restrain myself from eating two. Monks, you may think that the rice grains of that time were larger than now, but that is not the case. They were just as they are now.
Monks, as I now lived on only a single grain of rice, my body quickly grew thinner, and people began to say, [F.126.b] "Oh my! The mendicant Gautama has turned black! Have you seen, he's so dark! The mendicant Gautama has the color of the madgura fish! Previously his complexion was so beautiful, but now it has all changed."

17.42 Monks, at that point I thought to myself, "I must apply myself to eating even less than this." I realized that I should henceforth live on only a single sesame seed and restrain myself from eating two. Just as before, I grew even thinner, and people continued to remark on how my previously beautiful complexion had disappeared.

17.43 Monks, I then thought to myself, "There are some monks and priests who believe that they are purified by abstaining from eating food. I should also apply myself to completely abstaining from any food." Monks, I then began a complete fast. Monks, as I now began living without any sustenance, my body became extremely weak and emaciated. Monks, my limbs and joints gradually became twice, three times, four times, five times, and finally ten times as thin as the knots of the āsītakī and kālā plants. My rib cage resembled the sides of a crab, [256] and it looked like a collapsed stable with rafters exposed on either side. My spine appeared like a braided tuft of hair. My skull looked like a cracked gourd. My eyeballs appeared like stars in a sunken well. Monks, whenever I thought I should stand up, I tried to do so, but my body was so hunched over that I fell every time. When I finally managed to get up with great effort and wipe my dust-covered body with my hands, my body hair, its roots rotten, came out of my body. Previously my complexion had been beautiful and smooth, but now this radiance had disappeared because of exerting myself in extreme austerities.
The people who lived in the villages surrounding the area where I was practicing began to say, "Oh my, the mendicant Gautama has turned black! Have you seen, he's so dark! The mendicant Gautama has the color of the madgura fish! Previously his complexion was so beautiful, but now it has all changed." [F.127.a]

17.44 During this time King Śuddhodana sent a messenger every day to see the Bodhisattva. Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva displayed true wonders to the world. He did so in order to shatter the proud satisfaction of extremists, to vanquish the opponents' attacks, to attract the gods, and to show the nihilists and eternalists, who disregard karmic action and the ripening of karmic results. He lived on just a single sesame seed, a single juniper berry, and a single grain of rice in order to demonstrate the accumulation of merit, to teach the qualities of great wisdom, and to distinguish the levels of absorption. In this way he demonstrated hardships for six years without ever weakening his resolve.

17.45 The Bodhisattva remained sitting cross-legged for six years. He simply sat the way he was, without forsaking his activity. When the sun was shining, he did not seek shade. When the shade fell on him, he did not move into the sun. Never did he seek shelter from the wind, the sun, and the rain. He never chased away mosquitoes, bees, and poisonous snakes. He did not defecate, urinate, spit, or blow his nose. Neither did he bend his limbs or stretch them out. He never lay down on his belly, side, or back.

17.46 The hot season, the winter, and the great clouds, storms, rain, and lightning of autumn [257] all assailed the body of the Bodhisattva. In fact the Bodhisattva did not even use his hand to shelter himself. He did not block his senses, but neither did he follow after the objects of his senses. Those who passed by the Bodhisattva, such as village boys or girls, ox herders, cow herders, grass collectors, wood collectors, and those looking for dung, all thought he was a demon made of dust. They made fun of him and sprinkled him with dust.

17.47 In this way the Bodhisattva spent six years, during which time his body became increasingly feeble, weak, and emaciated. When people placed grass or cotton in his ears, it would stick out of his nostrils. When they did the same with his nostrils, the grass and cotton would emerge from his ears. When they placed things in his ears, they would stick out of his mouth. And when they stuffed things in his mouth, they would come out of his ears and nose. [F.127.b] Things put in his nostrils would appear out of his ears, nose, and mouth.

17.48 The gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas who witnessed the qualities of the Bodhisattva watched over him day and night, making offerings and forming aspirations. While the Bodhisattva demonstrated austerities for six years, one thousand two hundred billion gods and humans were matured in the Three Vehicles.

17.49 On this topic, it is said:

The Bodhisattva left his home
In possession of all good qualities.
In order to benefit sentient beings,
He gave rise to a skillful outlook.

17.50 "At the time of the five degenerations,
When lowly people devoted themselves to non-Dharma,
I was born in this world,
Where people endowed with leisure practice Dharma. [258]

17.51 "The world is full of extremists,
Who act out of curiosity or for the sake of good luck.
Making their own bodies into tools,
These childish people think they are purified.

17.52 "They walk into ravines, fire, and desolate areas;
Naked, they smear themselves in soil and ashes.
In order to punish the body,
They employ the five-fires ritual.

17.53 "They commit the error of using mantras;
In ignorance they lick their hands.
Some do not take food from vases;
Others reject offerings near doors and pillars.

17.54 "Some won't take offerings where a dog lives;
Others reject places where they are told to stay or come.
By receiving a single offering from a house,
They think, 'I have become pure.'

17.55 "Some reject butter, oil, molasses, and yogurt;
Others won't eat fish, meat, and milk.
Instead they eat vegetables and grain,
Lotus roots and garḍula seeds.

17.56 "Living on roots, fruits, and leaves,
They wear grass, mendicant's robes, and skins.
Still others wander naked—
Such fools think they have grasped the only truth.

17.57 "Some hold up their hand outstretched;
Others keep their hair in a braided knot.
Straying from the path,
They have lost the path, yet they hope for happy rebirths.

17.58 "They sleep on beds of grass, sticks, and ashes;
They sleep on thorns or sit upright.
Some always stand on one leg, [F.128.a]
Staring, with their faces upturned, at the sun and the moon.

17.59 "They also venerate springs, lakes, and ponds,
The ocean, rivers, the sun, and the moon,
Trees and mountain peaks,
Rocks and soil

17.60 "These fools use many different methods,
Trying to purify their bodies.
Because of their wrong views,
They will quickly fall into the lower realms.

17.61 "The intense hardship
That I now intend to engage in
Will consist of austerities, discipline, and adversities
That no god or human can perform. [259]

17.62 "My concentration will be one
That even solitary buddhas cannot demonstrate.
Stable and firm like a diamond,
I will now practice the all-pervasive concentration.

17.63 "There are gods and humans
Who delight in the distorted discipline of extremists.
In order to ripen these beings,
I will now practice fierce hardship and discipline."

17.64 Sitting cross-legged
On bare ground,
He demonstrated the method of subsisting on
A single berry, sesame seed, or rice grain.

17.65 Cutting off all movements of the breath,
Immutable, he showed his strength.
For six years he practiced the supreme concentration—
The all-pervasive concentration.

17.66 Without any conceptual thought,
Immutable and mentally still,
He practiced the all-pervasive concentration
That merges with the element of space.

17.67 He neither moved from the sun to the shade,
Nor from the shade to the sun.
Immutable like the central mountain,
He practiced the all-pervasive concentration.

17.68 He did not protect himself against the wind and the rain,
Nor mosquitoes, poisonous snakes, or bees.
With a completely undisturbed behavior,
He practiced the all-pervasive concentration.

17.69 Not merely for his own sake
Did he practice the all-pervasive concentration.
With compassion for others,
He practiced for their sake as well.

17.70 Yet village children and cow herders
And those who gather wood and grass
Thought that he was a demon made of dust
And covered him in soil.

17.71 They even covered him with impure substances
And harmed him in many ways.
Yet immovable and calm, [F.128.b]
He practiced the all-pervasive concentration.

17.72 Neither getting up nor lying down,
He did nothing to protect his body.
He did not defecate nor did he urinate;
When sounds were heard, he was neither startled, nor did he avert his gaze. [260]

17.73 His flesh and blood dried out
So that the bones and tendons stuck out through his skin.
His spine could be seen through his belly,
Twisted like braided hair.

17.74 The gods, demigods, yakṣas, gandharvas, and nāgas
Who supported him,
Made offerings to him day and night
Because of seeing his qualities.

17.75 Since his mind is like the sky,
He practiced the all-pervasive concentration.
"May we also quickly be like him!"
Such aspirations did they make.

17.76 Motivated by compassion for others,
He sought to bring about vast benefits to the world.
He did not practice for himself,
Neither for pleasure nor to feel the taste of absorption.

17.77 He overcame his opponents' attacks;
He outshone the feeble minds of extremists.
The actions and deeds that were described by Kāśyapa
Were now being demonstrated.

17.78 This awakening was the same as the awakening of Krakucchanda;
It is difficult to find even over many eons.
In order to bring benefit to mankind,
He practiced the all-pervasive concentration.

17.79 There are one thousand two hundred billion gods and humans
That are guided in the Three Vehicles.
It is for their sake that the One with Excellent Intellect
Practiced the all-pervasive concentration.

17.80 *This concludes the seventeenth chapter, on practicing austerities.*

18.

Chapter 18

THE NAIRAÑJANĀ RIVER

18.1 Monks, during the six years that the Bodhisattva practiced austerities, he was continually followed by Māra, the evil one. Yet, although Māra tried his best to harm the Bodhisattva, he never found an opportunity. As it became apparent that it would be impossible to harm the Bodhisattva, Māra, sad and dejected, finally left. [261]

18.2 It is also expressed in this way:
There is a pleasant wilderness
With forest thickets full of herbs
To the east of Urubilvā,
Where the Nairañjanā River flows.

18.3 There, for the sake of renunciation,
The Bodhisattva persevered with continuous and stable strength.
To attain accomplishment and bliss,
He remained calm and diligent.

18.4 Māra approached him and said,
With soft and pleasant words, [F.129.a]
"O Son of the Śākyas, get up!
What use is there in tormenting your body?

18.5 "Life is better for the living;
Alive, you can practice the Dharma.
As a living being, you can do that,
Then later you will have no regrets.

18.6 "But your complexion has faded and is almost gone,
And it appears as though you're on the verge of dying.
Death has a thousand chances,
While life has only one.

18.7 "One who always gives
And performs fire offerings
Will accumulate great merit.
Why then do you practice renunciation?

18.8 "The path of renunciation brings only suffering
And taming the mind is hard."
This is what Māra said
When addressing the Bodhisattva.

18.9 To reply to Māra who said these words,
The Bodhisattva said,
"Evil one, steeped in craziness!
You have come here with ulterior motives.

18.10 "For you have no intent
That would match my merits, Māra.
If you were interested in merit,
You would rather speak like this:

18.11 " 'Since the end of life is death,
I do not concern myself with death.
Wholly devoted to my religious practice,
I shall never back down.[262]

18.12 " 'If even the flow of rivers
Can be dried out by the wind,
Then what about the body and blood of the renunciant?
Wouldn't that be dried out as well?

18.13 " 'When his blood has dried out, his flesh will wither.
When his flesh has wasted away,
His mind will become yet clearer.
He will have more dedication, diligence, and absorption.'

18.14 "Since I live like that,
I have attained the highest perception,
So I do not worry about my body and my life.
Just look at the purity of my being.

18.15 "I am dedicated and diligent;
I have insight as well.
In this world I see no one
Capable of disturbing my diligence.

18.16 "Better is death, the thief of the life force,
Than living an unwholesome life.
It is better to die in battle
Than live defeated by the enemy.

18.17 "A coward cannot defeat an army;
Armies conquer and win respect.
Yet a hero can defeat an army;
O Māra, I will easily defeat you. [F.129.b]

18.18 "Desire is your foremost army;
Discontent comes next.
Third is hunger and thirst;
Craving is your fourth army.

18.19 "Fifth is dullness and stupor;
Fear is said to be sixth.
Your doubt is army number seven;
Anger and hypocrisy come eighth.

18.20 "Ambition, greed, and wanting praise,
Fame obtained through deception,
Seeking to exalt oneself
And put down others:

18.21 "This is the army of Māra,
The evil friend who inflicts torment.
Some ascetics and priests
Appear to be caught up in that.

18.22 "This army of yours,
Which overcomes this world and that of the gods, [263]
I will destroy it with knowledge,
Just as water destroys a vessel of unbaked clay.

18.23 "With mindfulness as the foundation
And knowledge as my training,
I act carefully.
So what will you now do, O feeble-minded one?"

18.24 As the Bodhisattva spoke these words, Māra, the evil one, felt very uncomfortable and sad. Having lost his confidence, he disappeared. [B12]
Monks, at that point the Bodhisattva thought to himself, "There are monks and priests in the past, the future, and the present who cause themselves harm. They experience intense suffering from unbearable heat and go through very unpleasant experiences. In this way they suffer greatly."
Monks, I continued to think, "With these acts and methods I have not been able to manifest any true knowledge that would be higher than manmade teachings. This path does not lead to awakening. This path is incapable of eradicating the continuation of birth, old age, and death in the future. But there must be another path to awakening that can eradicate the future suffering of birth, old age, and death."

18.25 Monks, I continued to think, [F.130.a] "Once, when I was sitting in my father's park under the shade of a rose apple tree, I rejoiced as I attained the first level of concentration, which is free from desires and negativities, endued with good qualities, reflective, investigative, and full of joy born out of discrimination. I rejoiced as I attained the levels of concentration up to the fourth. That, indeed, must be the path to awakening, which can eradicate the arising of the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness, and death. And so a conviction was born in me: 'This is the path to awakening!' "

Again I thought, "Yet this path cannot be realized by someone who has grown so weak. If I were to proceed toward the seat of awakening merely by the power of my supernatural knowledge but with my body so critically weak, [264] future beings would not be disposed favorably toward me, and this path would not lead to awakening. Therefore I shall begin to eat solid food again. That way I can regain my physical strength. Once I do so, I will proceed to the seat of awakening."

18.26 Monks, at that point some gods felt concern for me. Since they knew my thoughts, they came to where I was staying and told me, "Holy Man, don't eat solid food! We can give you nourishment through the pores of your body."
Monks, I then thought, "I took a vow to remain fasting. And in this way the people in the villages around me would know that the mendicant Gautama abstains from food. However, if these concerned gods were to grant me nourishment through the pores of my body, I would be the worst of hypocrites."
The Bodhisattva therefore decided to disregard the words of the gods in order to avoid hypocrisy. Instead he decided to begin eating solid foods. Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva arose from the seat where he had practiced discipline and hardship for the past six years, [F.130.b] and he proclaimed, "I will now eat solid foods, such as molasses, pea soup, lentil soup, porridge, and rice!"

18.27 Monks, at that point the five ascetic companions thought to themselves, "Based on this path and these practices, the mendicant Gautama appears unable to actualize an exalted wisdom vision that is any higher than manmade teachings. Yet how can eating solid foods and leading a comfortable life be of any help? What an ignorant and childish man!"
With this thought in mind, the companions left the Bodhisattva and headed toward Vārāṇasī, where they set up camp at the Deer Park by the Hill of the Fallen Sages. [265]

18.28 Ever since the Bodhisattva had begun his practice of austerities, ten young girls from the village had served him as a way to see him, venerate him, and assist him. At the same time his five companions had also attended him by bringing him the single juniper berry, sesame seed, or rice grain that he ate. The names of these ten village girls were Balī, Balaguptā, Supriyā, Vijayasenā, Atimuktakamalā, Sundarī, Kumbhakārī, Uluvillikā, Jāṭilikā, and Sujātā.
These young girls now prepared various types of soups for the Bodhisattva and offered them to him. The Bodhisattva accepted these meals, but he also gradually began to go on alms rounds in the local village. In this way he regained his previous luster, appearance, and strength. People now began calling him "the beautiful monk" and "the great monk."
Monks, every day since the beginning of the Bodhisattva's practice of austerities, the village girl Sujātā had offered food to eight hundred priests in the hope that the Bodhisattva would come out of his discipline and hardship and maintain

his vital functions. [F.131.a] As she did so, she offered the prayer, "May the Bodhisattva take my food and thereby truly attain perfect and completely unexcelled awakening!"

18.29 Monks, since six years had passed, I had this thought, "My saffron robes have really aged. Perhaps it would be good if I could find some cloth to cover me." Monks, at that point one of Sujātā's servants, a woman named Rādhā, had just died. She had been wrapped in a hemp cloth and left in the charnel ground. When I saw this dusty rag, I decided to use it to cover myself.

As I stood there, bent over with my left leg stretched out and my right hand reaching down in order to pick up the rag, [266] one earth god called out to the sky gods, "Friends, here is a descendent of a great royal clan. He has abandoned his kingdom of a universal monarch, and now he turns his mind to a dusty rag. What a sight! Friends, this is really amazing!"

18.30 All the sky gods heard the voice of the earth god, and they passed on the message to the gods in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings. The gods in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings told the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. They in turn passed on the message to the gods in the Heaven Free from Strife, and from there the message spread to the Heaven of Joy, the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations, and finally all the way to the Brahma realm. Monks, at that time, at that moment, at that very instant, this message resounded and traveled all the way to Highest Heaven: "Friends, here is a descendent of a great royal clan. He has abandoned his kingdom of a universal monarch, and now he turns his mind to a dusty rag. What a sight! Friends, this is really amazing!"

18.31 The Bodhisattva then thought to himself, "I have found this dusty rag, so it would be good if I could find some water to wash it with." At that very moment the gods hit the ground with their hands, and on that spot a lotus pond appeared. Still to this day, this pond is known as "The Pond Where the Hands Struck." [F.131.b]

Once again the Bodhisattva thought, "Now I have obtained water, so it would be good if I could also find a flat stone on which to wash this cloth." At that very moment Śakra placed such a rock before him, and the Bodhisattva now began to wash the dusty rag.

Śakra, king of the gods, then spoke to the Bodhisattva: "Holy Man, give the cloth to me. Then I will wash it." However, the Bodhisattva wanted to demonstrate the conduct of a renunciant, so he did not give the cloth to Śakra. Instead he washed it himself. [267]

18.32 Afterward the Bodhisattva felt tired and wanted to step out of the pond. However, Māra, the evil one, felt jealous and magically raised the edge of the pond. Yet at the side of the pond was a large kakubha tree. In order to follow the worldly custom and to please the goddess of that tree, the Bodhisattva called out to her, "Listen, goddess, lower one of your branches!" The goddess lowered a branch and, as the Bodhisattva grasped it, he was lifted out of the pond. Once he was free, he remained under the shade of the kakubha tree, where he sewed the dusty rag into the robes of a monk. Today this place is still known as "The Sewing of the Dusty Rags."

At that point a god from the pure realms, who was called Vimalaprabha, offered the Bodhisattva divine fabrics that had been dyed in saffron-red color, as is suitable for a monk. The Bodhisattva accepted this gift, and the following morning he put on these fabrics, arranged them into a monk's robes, and went to the nearby village.

18.33 At midnight the gods announced the following to Sujātā, daughter of the villager Nandika, in the village Senāpati in Urubilvā: "The one for whom you have been making offerings has relaxed his discipline and decided that he will once again eat nourishing and solid food. Previously you made the aspiration, 'May the Bodhisattva take my food and thereby truly attain perfect and completely unexcelled awakening!' Now that time has come, so you must do what you ought to be doing." [F.132.a]

18.34 Monks, as soon as Sujātā, daughter of the villager Nandika, heard these words of the gods, she quickly gathered the milk of a thousand cows. Seven times she skimmed the cream from the milk, until she obtained a thick, strength-giving cream. She then poured this cream into a new clay pot, mixed it with the freshest rice, and placed it on a brand-new stove. As the milk porridge was cooking, various omens manifested. [268] Within the milk appeared the contours of an endless knot, a simple swastika, an elaborate swastika, a lotus, a vardhamāna, and other auspicious signs. Upon seeing this, Sujātā thought to herself, "The appearance of these signs surely means that the Bodhisattva will now take food and obtain unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening." At that time a fortuneteller versed in ritual and the art of reading signs came to the village and prophesied that someone would attain immortality there.

18.35 When Sujātā had finished cooking the porridge, she placed it on the ground where, full of devotion, she had already prepared a seat for the Bodhisattva by scattering flowers and perfumed water. She then told one of her servants, a woman named Uttarā, "Uttarā, go and fetch the priest. I will stay here and look after this milk porridge with honey."

"Very well, my lady," answered Uttarā, who then did as she was told. She went off in the eastern direction, but there she met only the Bodhisattva. She then went south, but there as well she met the Bodhisattva. Then she went west and north, but in those places as well she encountered the Bodhisattva. At that time some gods from the pure realms had removed all the extremist practitioners, and now none of them were to be found.

18.36 When she returned, Uttarā told her mistress what had happened: "Wherever I go, the only person I meet is that beautiful monk. Other than him, there are no monks or priests!"
Sujātā said, "He alone is the monk, he alone is the priest! It is for his sake that I have prepared this meal. Go, Uttarā, and fetch him."
"Very well, my lady," said Uttarā, and off she went. When she met the Bodhisattva, she bowed at his feet and conveyed Sujātā's invitation to him. [F.132.b]

18.37 Monks, the Bodhisattva then went to the home of the village girl Sujātā, where he sat down at the seat that had been prepared for him. Monks, the village girl Sujātā then filled a golden vessel with the milk porridge and honey and offered it to the Bodhisattva. [269]
The Bodhisattva then had this thought: "Sujātā has offered this food, and if I eat it now, there is no doubt that I shall truly attain perfect and completely unexcelled awakening." Then the Bodhisattva had his meal. When he was done, he got up and asked Sujātā, "Sister, what should I do with the golden bowl?" "Please take it with you," she replied.
The Bodhisattva told her, "I don't need this bowl."
Sujātā then told him, "Well then, do as you please. But I do not give food to anyone without also giving them a bowl."

18.38 So the Bodhisattva took the bowl and left Urubilvā. Before noon he arrived at the banks of the Nairañjanā River, the river of nāgas. He put down his bowl and robe and entered the water to refresh himself. Monks, while the Bodhisattva was bathing, several hundred thousand gods came to venerate him. They poured divine aloe and sandalwood powder as well as various ointments into the river, and they scattered divine flowers of all colors onto the water. In this way the whole great Nairañjanā River flowed on full of divine perfumes and flowers that rained down. Many trillion gods came to collect the perfumed water that the Bodhisattva had used for bathing. They brought it with them to their own abodes in order to enshrine it in memorials and venerate it. The village girl Sujātā also collected all the hair and the beard of the Bodhisattva. Thinking that it must be sacred, [F.133.a] she took it with her in order to make memorials for veneration. [270]

18.39 When the Bodhisattva emerged from the river, he wanted to sit down, and so he looked for a suitable place on the riverbank. Right then, a nāga girl who lived in the Nairañjanā River emerged out of the earth's surface and offered the Bodhisattva a throne made of jewels.
The Bodhisattva took his seat there and, while he was thinking fondly of the village girl Sujātā, he drank what he needed of the milk porridge made with honey. When he was done with his meal, he threw the golden bowl into the water

without any feelings of attachment. As soon as the bowl hit the water, the nāga king Sāgara, full of devotion and great respect, came to fetch the bowl and bring it to his kingdom, thinking, "This is worthy of veneration!"

18.40 At that point the thousand-eyed Indra, the destroyer of cities, changed into a garuḍa with a diamond beak and attempted to steal the golden bowl from the nāga king Sāgara. When Indra was unable to do so, he changed into his own form and requested it politely. This time he received the bowl, and he brought it back to the Heaven of the Thirty-Three in order to enshrine it in a memorial for the sake of worship. In this heaven he started a religious festival called The Procession of the Bowl, observed on the days of astrological juncture. To this day the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three hold an annual Festival of the Bowl. The nāga girl carried off the magnificent throne in order to make a memorial out of it and venerate it.

18.41 Monks, due to the strength of the Bodhisattva's merit and the power of his insight, his body instantaneously changed as soon as he took in solid foods. In one moment his body regained its previous beautiful lotus-like luster. He now manifested the thirty-two and eighty marks of a great being as well as a halo of light, one fathom in diameter, around his body.

18.42 On this topic, it is said:

After six years of austerities, the Blessed One thinks,
"I may have the strength of concentration and supernatural knowledge,
But if I go to the king of trees in order to awaken to omniscience under its branches
While I am this emaciated, that would not be kind toward beings in the future. [F.133.b] [271]

18.43 "Gods and humans with little merit look for wisdom in mistaken ways;
Being in a weakened state, they are unable to attain nectar-like awakening.
Yet if I eat solid and excellent food, I will regain my physical strength;
Then I can go to the king of trees to attain omniscient awakening under its branches."

18.44 The village girl Sujātā, who has done much good in the past,
Continuously makes offerings, thinking, "May this guide complete his discipline!"
When she hears the request of the gods, she brings milk porridge with honey;
She goes to the river and happily sits on the banks of the Nairañjanā.

18.45 For one thousand eons the Bodhisattva practiced discipline, and his faculties are at peace.
He goes to the Nairañjanā surrounded by hosts of gods and nāgas as well as sages;
He makes the crossing and bathes with thoughts aimed at liberating others.
The Sage, pure and stainless, washes himself in the river out of love for the world.

18.46 Trillions of gods joyfully descend into the river and infuse the waters
With perfumes and scented powders so the Sacred Being can bathe.
When the Stainless Bodhisattva has bathed and rests serene on the shore,
Thousands of gods rejoice and take the bathing water as an object for venerating the Pure Being.

18.47 A god offers him saffron robes of beautiful stainless cloth;
Dressed in these suitable robes, the Blessed One rests on the banks of the river.
A nāga girl joyfully and devotedly erects a splendid throne
On which the guide of the universe peacefully sits.

18.48 Sujātā fills a golden bowl with food and offers it to the Mindful One;
She prostrates at his feet, saying joyfully, "Great Guide, please enjoy this!" [272]
The Mindful One eats as much as necessary and then throws the bowl in the river;
The highest god, the destroyer of cities, carries it off, saying, "I will venerate it!"

18.49 The very moment the Victorious One consumes solid and excellent food,
His body regains its former strength, magnificence, and splendor. [F.134.a]
To Sujātā and the gods he offers a teaching that benefits them greatly;
He, the lion with the bearing of a swan and the gait of the supreme elephant, proceeds to the Bodhi tree.

18.50 *This concludes the eighteenth chapter, on the Nairañjanā River.*

19.

Chapter 19

APPROACHING THE SEAT OF AWAKENING

19.1 Monks, when the Bodhisattva bathed in the Nairañjanā River and enjoyed a meal, his physical strength came back to him. With a triumphant gait, he now began the walk toward the great Bodhi tree. This tree was the king of trees and was found at a place characterized by sixteen unique features.

19.2 He walked with the gait of a great being. It was an undisturbed gait, a gait of the nāga Indrayaṣṭi, a steadfast gait, a gait as stable as Mount Meru, the king of mountains. He walked in a straight line without stumbling, not too fast and not too slow, without stomping heavily or dragging his feet. It was a graceful stride, a stainless stride, a beautiful stride, a stride free from anger, a stride free from delusion, and a stride free from attachment. It was the stride of a lion, the stride of the king of swans, the stride of the king of elephants, the stride of Nārāyaṇa, the stride that floats above the surface, the stride that leaves an impression of a thousand-spoked wheel on the ground, the stride of he whose fingers are connected through a web and who has copper-colored nails, the stride that makes the earth resound, and the stride that crushes the king of the mountains.

19.3 He walked with the stride of someone whose feet level off the terrain, be it sloping up or sloping down, the stride that leads sentient beings to happy rebirths through contact with the light rays that emerge from the web between his fingers, the stride that walks upon stainless lotuses, the stride that proceeds from previous wholesome actions, the stride of the previous buddha-lions, [F.134.b] and the stride that proceeds from a stable and indestructible diamond-like intention. [273] He had a stride that destroys all lower realms and all miserable existences, a stride that brings happiness to all beings, a stride that points out the path to liberation, a stride that renders powerless the strength of demons, a stride that suppresses evil opponents with their doctrines, a stride that removes the cataract of darkness and disturbing emotions, and a stride that undoes the workings of cyclic existence.

19.4 He walked with a gait that outshines Śakra, Brahmā, Maheśvara, and the world protectors. His stride was that of the single lord of the great trichiliocosm, the spontaneous stride that cannot be overpowered, the stride that actualizes the attainment of omniscient wisdom, the stride of mindfulness and insight, the stride that leads to a happy rebirth, the stride that pacifies old age and death, the stride of stainless peace, the stride that leads to the city of nirvāṇa, which is auspicious, stainless, and free from fear. With such a stride the Bodhisattva set out for the seat of awakening.

19.5 Monks, on the stretch between the Nairañjanā River and the seat of awakening, the gods of wind clouds swept the road for the Bodhisattva, while the gods of rain clouds sprinkled his path with scented water, and scattered flowers along the way. At that point all the trees in this world of the great trichiliocosm bent their crowns toward the seat of awakening. All the children who had been born on that very day now slept with their heads toward the seat of awakening. Likewise all the mountains that exist in this world of the great trichiliocosm, such as Mount Meru, bowed toward the seat of awakening.

19.6 All the way from the Nairañjanā River to the seat of awakening, the road had been beautified for a stretch of several miles by the gods of the desire realm. [F.135.a] At both sides of the road, they had magically erected a railing made from the seven types of precious stones. The road was shaded, at the height of seven palm trees, with a jeweled latticework and adorned with divine parasols, flags, and banners. At a distance of an arrow's flight, they had emanated a row of palm trees made of the seven types of precious stones and taller than the railing. Between all the palm trees, jewel garlands were strung. In between each pair of palm trees, a lotus pond [274] was built, filled with scented water, lined with golden sand, and covered in blue, yellow, red, and white lotuses. Jewel ledges and beryl staircases surrounded the ponds. The ponds resounded with the calls of ducks, storks, swans, geese, cranes, and peacocks. Eighty thousand divine maidens

sprinkled the path with flowers of divine scent. In front of each of the palm trees was a jewel podium on which eighty thousand divine maidens stood, proffering containers with powders of sandal and aloeswood, and holding up lighted incense burners with sandalwood. On each of these jewel podiums were also five thousand divine maidens singing celestial songs.

19.7 Monks, in this way the Bodhisattva proceeded on his way, emitting trillions of light rays, while the realms shook, music played from millions of instruments, a great rain with an abundance of flowers fell, millions of silken banners fluttered in the wind, millions of drums resounded as they were beaten, and horses, elephants, and bulls circumambulated the Bodhisattva. Hundreds of thousands of parrots, mynas, cuckoos, partridge, swans, sandpipers, peacocks, and cakrāvaka birds were drawn into the Bodhisattva's presence. Adorned with hundreds of thousands of auspicious signs, such was the road on which the Bodhisattva traveled on his way to the seat of awakening. [F.135.b]

19.8 On that night, the very night when the Bodhisattva set his aim on attaining full and complete awakening, the all-powerful Brahmā, the ruler of the great trichiliocosm, called out to his large retinue in the Brahma realm.

19.9 "Friends," he said, "you should be aware of this. The Bodhisattva, the Great Being, has donned the great armor. Without forsaking his great vow, protected by his solid armor, he is undeterred and has perfected all the conduct of a bodhisattva. He has reached the further shore of all the perfections and become a master of all the grounds of a bodhisattva. He is perfectly pure in his aspirations of a bodhisattva and joins in the five spiritual faculties of all sentient beings. [275] He has entered the secret locations of all the thus-gone ones and is beyond all paths of demonic activity. He is not dependent on others regarding the basis for acquiring merit. He is blessed by all thus-gone ones. He demonstrates the path to complete freedom for all sentient beings. He is a great captain who conquers the circle of Māra's army. He is the single hero of the trichiliocosm.

19.10 "He has accomplished all the medicines of Dharma and is the great king of physicians, wearing a silken headband of salvation. He is the great Dharma king who shines the bright light of knowledge. He is a great meteor-like king who, like a magnificent lotus flower, is unstained by the eight worldly concerns. He never forgets the dhāraṇīs of any teaching. He is like a great ocean, free from attachment and aversion. He is immovable and unshakable like the great central mountain. He is utterly stainless, pure, and in possession of a very wholesome mind, and thus he is like a great jewel. He has become a master of all phenomena and is, in all his actions, beyond intentions.

19.11 "The Bodhisattva, who is like the great Brahmā, proceeds to the seat of awakening with the desire to awaken to unexcelled, perfect, and complete buddhahood in order to tame the armies of Māra. [F.136.a] He proceeds in order to perfectly accomplish the ten powers, the fourfold fearlessness, and the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha. His aim is to turn the great wheel of Dharma and utter the lion's great roar. With the gift of Dharma, he will satisfy all sentient beings. He will purify the eye of Dharma of all sentient beings and annihilate all his opponents together with their doctrines. He goes to the seat of awakening to demonstrate the fulfillment of his previous vows and to gain a ruler's complete mastery over all phenomena. Friends, for these reasons you should pay homage to the Bodhisattva and joyfully assist him in every way possible!"

19.12 Then at that point the all-powerful Brahmā spoke these verses:

"He, by whose merits and glorious splendor the great path can be known—
Love, compassion, joy, and equanimity, as well as the absorptions and the types of higher knowledge—
Has practiced wholesome conduct for a thousand eons and now sets out for the Bodhi tree.
You should make offerings to that sage as he practices to fulfill his aspirations.

19.13 "Take refuge in him, and you will not meet or experience the fears of the lower realms or the lack of the freedoms; [276]
Instead you will find the happiness of desire-realm gods in the vast abode of Brahmā.
He went through hardship for six years, and now he departs for the Bodhi tree.
Well done! Let us all venerate this man with joy and devotion!

19.14 "He is the king of the trichiliocosm, the best of masters, the royal master of Dharma;
In the cities of Indra, Brahmā, Sūrya, and Candra, there is no equal to him.
When he was born, one trillion worlds quaked in six different ways;
Today he sets out for the supreme magnificent tree to conquer the armies of Māra.

19.15 "The crown of his head I cannot see, nor can the others here in the Brahmā realm;
His body, bearing the best of the excellent marks, is adorned with the thirty-two; [F.136.b]
His speech is beautiful, sweet, and pleasant to hear, a voice melodious like that of Brahmā;
His mind is calm and free from anger. Come, let's pay him homage!

19.16 "Intelligent ones who aim to transcend the perpetual bliss in the realms of Indra and Brahmā,
Or those who wish to cut the net of the fettering vines of disturbing emotions,
Or those wishing to attain immortality without hearing about it from others, which is an auspicious solitary awakening—
If anyone desires awakening, they should pay homage, in the three realms, to this guide.

19.17 "He has renounced the earth with its oceans, along with countless precious objects.
He has abandoned palaces with their oval windows and terraces, as well as conveyances,
And the land adorned with exquisite flowers, with beautiful parks, springs, and ponds.
He gave up his limbs, his head, and his eyes, and now he walks to the seat of awakening!"

19.18 Monks, the great Brahmā, who presides over the trichiliocosm, then made, in a single moment, all the worlds in the great trichiliocosm the same. The world had now become smooth, like the palm of a hand. There was no longer any gravel or rocks, and instead the world was filled with jewels, pearls, cat's-eye gems, conch shells, crystals, corals, gold, and silver. He covered this entire world of the great trichiliocosm in soft green grass, curled to the right in the pattern of a swastika, soft as the finest cloth, and pleasant to the touch. [277]

19.19 At that moment, all the great oceans had also become as peaceful as dry land, and all the beings who live in the waters had become free from any harm. When all the worldly guardians in the ten directions, such as Indra and Brahmā, saw how beautiful the world had become, they decided to venerate the Bodhisattva by adorning a hundred thousand buddha realms in the same way.
All other bodhisattvas who are beyond the world of humans and gods also wished to venerate the Bodhisattva, and therefore they adorned the limitless buddha realms in the ten directions with an array of offerings. All these buddha realms, even though they were adorned in different ways, now appeared as one single buddha realm. All the space between the worlds had disappeared, [F.137.a] as had the encircling black mountains and the smaller and greater perimeter walls. All these buddha realms could be seen permeated with the light streaming from the Bodhisattva.

19.20 At the seat of awakening, there were sixteen gods who guarded the place. Their names were Utkhalin, Sūtkhalin, Prajāpati, Śūrabhala, Keyūrabala, Supratiṣṭhita, Mahindhara, Avabhāsakara, Vimala, Dharmeśvara, Dharmaketu, Siddhapātra, Apratihatanetra, Mahāvyūha, Śilaviśuddhanetra, and Padmaprabha. It was these sixteen gods, all of whom had attained irreversible patience, who guarded the seat of awakening. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, they had adorned the seat of awakening. At a distance of eighty leagues, they had encircled the place with railings, built in seven

rows. Palm trees were also placed in seven circles, and a sevenfold lattice with bells of precious stones enfolded it. All of this was surrounded with seven threads made of precious materials.

19.21 The seat of awakening was covered with cloth made of gold from the Jambū River, a cloth studded with seven precious gems and woven with a golden thread. It was bestrewn with lotuses of gold from the Jambū River, scented with aromatic essences, and covered by a jewel canopy. All the beautiful and excellent trees that grow and are venerated in all the different worlds in the ten directions, including the worlds of gods and humans, now manifested at the seat of awakening. [278] Likewise all the different species of flowers that grow in water as well as on land manifested there at the seat of awakening. Moreover, the bodhisattvas in all the various worlds in the ten directions now became visible at the seat of awakening, adorning the place with their immeasurable accumulations of merit and wisdom. [F.137.b]

19.22 In this way, the gods who guarded the seat of awakening magically manifested such displays at that place. They were so magnificent that when the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, and demigods witnessed them, they began to conceive of their own abodes as nothing more than charnel grounds. As they saw the displays, they felt great respect and exclaimed with joy, "How great! What an inconceivable manifestation of meritorious ripening this is!"

19.23 At the Bodhi tree itself there were four deities: Veṇu, Valgu, Sumanas, and Ojopati. These four deities of the Bodhi tree also wished to venerate the Bodhisattva, and therefore they modeled the Bodhi tree to give it perfect roots, trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, as well as a perfect height and circumference. It was beautiful, nice to behold, wide, and, with its height of eighty palm trees and a corresponding circumference, very imposing. This was indeed a magnificent and beautiful tree. It was encircled by jewel platforms that were built in seven rows. Jewel palm trees were also placed around it in seven circles, and a sevenfold lattice with bells of precious stones enfolded it. All of this was surrounded with seven threads made of precious materials that formed the outer ring.
Like the coral tree or the kovidāra tree, this was a tree that one could never tire of beholding. This place, where the Bodhisattva was to take his seat with the intention of attaining full and complete awakening, had become the essence of indestructible diamond, harder than any diamond in the great trichiliocosm.

19.24 Monks, as the Bodhisattva was walking toward the seat of awakening, rays of light streamed forth from his body. The light pacified all the lower realms and caused all unfortunate states to cease. All the painful feelings of beings in the lower realms came to a halt. [F.138.a] [279] All beings with impaired faculties now recovered their senses. Anyone who suffered from disease was healed. Anyone feeling discomfort attained happiness. All who were struck with fear found

release. Anyone living in bondage was freed from his or her ties. Anyone suffering from poverty discovered wealth. All the people tormented by disturbing emotions found release from their anguish. Those who were starving had their stomachs filled. All the ones who were parched were relieved of their thirst. Pregnant women gave birth easily. Those who were old and weak gained perfect strength.

At that moment all sentient beings were relieved of the harms inflicted by attachment, anger, ignorance, wrath, greed, cruelty, ill will, envy, and jealousy. At that moment no one experienced dying, moving to the next life, and taking birth. At that moment everyone engendered love, altruism, and a feeling that all beings are each other's mothers and fathers.

19.25 This can also be expressed in verse:

All the way to the hell of Ultimate Torment,
The hell beings presented a horrible sight.
These beings had their suffering pacified
And experienced feelings of happiness.

19.26 The beings born as animals,
Which harm each other in countless ways,
Were touched by the light of the Lord,
And, for their good, gave rise to a loving mind.

19.27 Spirits, as many as there are in the world,
Pained by hunger and thirst,
Discovered food and drink
Through the power of the Bodhisattva.

19.28 All unfortunate states came to a halt,
And the lower realms dried out.
All beings gained happiness
And were fulfilled with divine pleasure.

19.29 Those without eyes and ears,
And all others with impaired faculties,
Regained their full senses
And obtained beautiful limbs. [280]

19.30 Attachment and anger
And other disturbing emotions that harm beings—
In that moment all these disturbing emotions were pacified,
And beings were filled with happiness. [F.138.b]

19.31 The ones who had lost their minds regained their composure;
Those living in poverty found wealth.
Those stricken with sickness were healed;
Those who were bound were freed.

19.32 There was no miserliness nor animosity,
No ill will or strife.
All beings interacted in harmony,
Their minds full of loving kindness.

19.33 Just as a father and mother
Cherish their only child,
At that moment all beings felt
Parental love for each other.

19.34 The web of the Bodhisattva's light rays
Streamed out all around in the ten directions
And illuminated an inconceivable number of realms,
As numerous as grains of sand in the Ganges.

19.35 The Black Mountains
And the surrounding perimeter walls disappeared.
All the vast worlds
Now appeared as one.

19.36 They could be seen as clearly as the palm of a hand,
Composed of all kinds of jewels.
In order to venerate the Bodhisattva,
All realms were well adorned.

19.37 The attendants at the seat of awakening
Were a group of sixteen gods.
Up to a distance of eighty leagues,
They adorned the seat of awakening.

19.38 All great displays
In all the limitless millions of realms
Now manifested at this place
By the power of the Bodhisattva.

19.39 The gods, nāgas, yakṣas,
Kinnaras, and mahoragas
Now came to think of their celestial palaces
As nothing more than charnel grounds.

19.40 When gods and humans witnessed this display,
They were filled with amazement.
"How great is this manifestation of merit,
Which results in such an auspicious juncture!" [281]

19.41 Without any effort,
Whether physical, verbal, or mental,
All the Bodhisattva's goals, wishes, and intentions
Were fully accomplished.

19.42 Even the wishes of others were fulfilled
Through his actions in the past.
The ripening of those actions
Now produced such perfect results.

19.43 The four deities at the seat of awakening
Adorned the seat of awakening
To make it even more supreme
Than the heavenly coral trees.

19.44 The displays at the seat of awakening
Were created by these four deities.
To describe their qualities in words
Would be utterly impossible. [F.139.a]

19.45 Monks, the light that streamed from the body of the Bodhisattva illuminated the abode of Kālika, the king of nāgas. The light was pure and stainless and gave rise to joy as it satisfied the bodies and minds that it touched. It cleared away all disturbing emotions and brought joy, happiness, trust, and supreme enjoyment to all sentient beings. When Kālika, the king of the nāgas, saw how the light illumined his own abode, he spoke these verses in front of his retinue:

19.46 "I see a light like that of Krakucchanda, or the brightness of Kanakamuni;
It is like seeing the stainless and faultless light of Kāśyapa, the Dharma king.
Surely a being with supreme features, helpful activity, and wisdom light is here;
That is why this abode of mine is bright and adorned with this golden light.

19.47 "Up to now, our isolated home has been filled with darkness as a result of our previous negative actions;
Even the far-reaching rays of the sun and moon do not penetrate this place.
The pure light from fire, jewels, lightning, and the stars also do not penetrate this place;
Neither do the light rays of Indra, Brahmā, or the demigods shine through. [282]

19.48 "Yet today this house is bright with a beauty that resembles the sun;
Our minds are filled with joy, and our bodies feel at ease and soothed.
Even the rain of warm sand falling on my body feels cool.
It is clear that the One Who Practiced Good Conduct for Many Millions of Eons is walking toward the Bodhi tree.

19.49 "Quick, go get beautiful nāga flowers, fine and sweet-smelling cloths, pearl necklaces,
Ornaments and bracelets, powders, and our finest incense.
Offer him the melodious sounds of song and music, and beat the finest drums.
Go now! Make offerings to the benefactor who is worthy of everyone's respect."

19.50 Kālika then stood up and, with the nāga daughters, looked in the four directions.
He saw the Bodhisattva, shining with splendor like the central mountain.
He was surrounded by millions of gods, demigods, Brahmā, Indra, and the yakṣas;
Joyfully they venerated him and showed him the way. [F.139.b]

19.51 The king of the nāgas became overjoyed and respectfully made offerings to the Supreme One in the world;
With devotion he prostrated at the Sage's feet and stood in front of him.
The nāga daughters also joyfully and respectfully venerated the Sage;
They scattered flowers, incense, and perfumes, and played music.

19.52 Overjoyed with the Lord's perfect qualities, the king of the nāgas joined his palms.
"Guide! The best in the world! Wonderful to see your face, like the full moon!
As I saw the omens foretelling the previous sages, I see the very same signs in you.
Today you will conquer Māra's army and attain your desired state.

19.53 "This is why in the past you practiced discipline, generosity, and restraint, and gave up all possessions;
This is why you cultivated discipline, ethical conduct, love, compassion, and the power of forbearance. [283]
This is why you were diligent, steadfast, delighting in concentration, and letting your insight blaze;
Today all your aspirations will be fulfilled and you shall become victorious.

19.54 "Since other trees with their leaves, flowers, and fruits bow to the Bodhi tree,
Since a thousand vases filled with water circumambulate you,
Since hosts of cāṣa birds,[10] overjoyed, make affectionate sounds,
Since flocks of swans and cranes playfully take to the sky
And joyfully circle clockwise above the Sage, today you will become a worthy one.

19.55 "Since hundreds of buddha realms are filled with beautiful golden light,
Since the lower realms in their entirety come to a halt and the suffering of beings ceases,
Since showers fall in the abodes of the sun and the moon, and a soft breeze blows,
Today you will become a leader who delivers beings from birth and old age in the three realms.

19.56 "Since the gods give up their delight in pleasure and come to venerate you,
Since Brahmā and the gods of the Brahmapurohita class abandon the bliss of concentration,
And likewise all the others in the three realms arrive here,
Today you will become the king of physicians who delivers beings from birth and old age in the three realms. [F.140.a]

19.57 "Since the path that you walk on today has been swept by the gods,
A path that the lords Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa also traversed,
Since in your footsteps stainless and perfect lotuses spring forth, breaking out of the earth,
Onto which you tread with powerful steps, today you will become a worthy one.

19.58 "Trillions of demons, as many as there are grains of sand in the Ganges,
Are unable to move you from under the branches of the Bodhi tree, or to shake you.
You have made billions of offerings, as many as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, [284]
Always acting for the benefit of the world—this is why you shine here today.

19.59 "The planets, the moon, the stars, and the sun may fall from the sky to the ground,
The mightiest mountains may move from their places, and oceans may dry up,
Some learned person might magically display each of the four elements,
Yet it is impossible that you would go to the king of trees and rise before attaining awakening.

19.60 "Guide, in seeing you I have fortuitously obtained great prosperity;
I have made offerings to you, spoken of your qualities, and strived for awakening.
May I and all my nāga wives and children become free from this existence.
Your gait is like the walk of an elephant in rut—may we walk like you!"

19.61 Monks, at this point Suvarṇaprabhāsā, the chief queen of Kālika the nāga king, came to see the Bodhisattva. She was surrounded and escorted by many nāga girls, who were holding various types of cloth, parasols made of assorted jewels, different pearl necklaces, a variety of precious jewels, an array of garlands, a myriad of unguents and powders made by gods and humans, and containers with diverse perfumes. The nāga girls attended to the Bodhisattva while they sang melodious songs accompanied by music. In this way, as the Bodhisattva proceeded on his way, they besprinkled him with showers of flowers made of various jewels and praised him with these verses:

19.62 "You are unerring, fearless, confident, and brave; [F.140.b]
You are not depressed, but intrepid, joyous, and hard to dominate.
You are not attached, not angry, not deluded, and without desire;
You are dispassionate and liberated. Homage to you, O Great Sage! [285]

19.63 "You are a physician who removes pain, and a guide for those who need guidance;
You are the supreme physician who liberates beings from suffering.
Considering those without refuge or protection,
You have manifested as a home and a refuge in this threefold world.

19.64 "Since the congregation of gods is pleased and joyful,
They cause a great rain of flowers to fall from the sky.
Since they toss down plenty of the finest cloth,
You will become victorious today. So be joyful!

19.65 "Approach the lord of trees and sit there without fear!
Conquer Māra's army and become free from the web of disturbing emotions!
Just as the victorious lords of the past attained awakening,
So you will also attain supreme, sacred, and peaceful awakening!

19.66 "For many millions of eons you have aimed for this;
For the sake of liberating beings you have gone through hardship.
Now the time has come for your wishes to be fulfilled;
So go to the lord of trees and connect with supreme awakening."

19.67 Monks, the Bodhisattva then thought to himself, "Where did the previous thus-gone ones sit when they attained unsurpassed, genuine and perfect awakening? They sat on a bed of grass!"
At that point hundreds of thousands of gods from the pure realms descended into the atmosphere. They knew the Bodhisattva's thoughts and said: [286] "Yes, that is how it is. Holy Man, that is correct. The previous thus-gone ones used a seat of grass as they attained unsurpassed, genuine and perfect awakening."

19.68 Monks, at the right side of the road the Bodhisattva now noticed a grass seller, whose name was Svastika, who was busy cutting grass. The grass was green, soft, fresh, and beautiful. It coiled to the right and resembled the neck of a peacock. It was as soft to the touch as divine cloth, [F.141.a] with the sweetest scent and the most beautiful color.
At this sight the Bodhisattva left the road, and he went to the grass seller Svastika and spoke to him with sweet words. His words were authoritative, informative, and clear. His speech was uninterrupted, captivating, and pleasant to hear. It was affectionate, worthy to be remembered, encouraging, satisfying, and delightful.

19.69 His words were not harsh. They were free from stammering, and they had no animosity. They were not erratic but smooth, gentle, sweet, and pleasant to the ear. It was a speech that delighted both the body and the mind and cleared away all attachment, anger, delusion, strife, and quarrels. His voice was like the call of the cuckoo bird, the kunāla bird, and the partridge. It sounded like a drum or a melodious chant. It caused no harm but was true, clear, and genuine. His voice had a resonance like the voice of Brahmā, or the gushing of waves on the ocean, or the sound of rocks hitting against each other. It was a voice praised by the lord of the gods and the lord of the demigods. It was hard to measure its profundity and depth. It rendered powerful demons powerless and eliminated opposing doctrines.

19.70 He spoke with the strength of the lion's roar, the neighing of a horse, the trumpeting of an elephant, and with a voice resounding like that of a nāga. His voice was like the clapping of a thundercloud, pervading all buddha realms in the ten directions. It roused all sentient beings in need of guidance. It was unconfused, harmless, and without hesitation. It was appropriate, logical, spoken at the right time, in a timely manner, and contained hundreds of thousands of teachings. It was smooth, unimpeded, and with uninterrupted eloquence. [F.141.b] He spoke with a single voice, yet was heard in all languages. His voice caused all meanings to be known, produced all types of happiness, demonstrated the path to liberation, proclaimed the accumulations necessary for the path, did not ignore his audience, pleased all retinues, [287] and conformed with the teachings of all buddhas.

19.71 It was with such words, spoken in verse, that the Bodhisattva addressed the grass seller Svastika:

"Svastika, quick, hand me the grass!
Today this grass will be very meaningful to me.
Once I have conquered Māra and his armies,
I will experience the peace of unexcelled awakening.

19.72 "That peace, for the sake of which, for many thousands of eons,
I have practiced generosity, constraint, renunciation,
And ethical and disciplined conduct, as well as austerities—
That peace will come to fruition today.

19.73 "The power of forbearance and the power of diligence,
The power of concentration and the power of insight,
The power of merit, the power of realization, and the power of liberation—
Today I will accomplish those.

19.74 "The power of insight and the power of means,
The power of miracles and unattached love,
The power of correct discernment and complete truth—
Today I will accomplish those.

19.75 "If today you grant me this grass,
You shall reap the power of limitless merit.
For you this is none other than a sign heralding
That you will become an unsurpassed teacher!"

19.76 Svastika, hearing these beautiful and sweet words spoken by the Guide,
Became joyful, elated, and thrilled with delight.
Taking a sheaf of soft, fresh, and tender grass,
He stood before the Bodhisattva and spoke these words, his heart overflowing with joy:

19.77 "If this grass can help you attain the supreme state of immortality—
The awakening, supremely peaceful, so hard to find, the path that previous buddhas traversed—
Then please wait a moment, O Great Ocean of Qualities of Immeasurable Glory.
I myself shall awaken first to the supreme state of immortality."

19.78 The Bodhisattva replied:

"Svastika, without practicing disciplined conduct and austerities for many eons,
You will not attain awakening by sitting on a seat of fine grass. [F.142.a] [288]
Yet when an intelligent person is elevated through the tools of insight and merit,
Then the sages make a prediction and say, 'You will later become a stainless victorious one.'

19.79 "Svastika, if it were possible to hand awakening to another being
By making awakening into a lump of alms food, I would surely grant this to everyone!
When I attain awakening, you should know that I will distribute immortality.
You must come, listen, and apply yourself to the teaching, and then you will become stainless."

19.80 The Guide took a bundle of soft and perfect grass;
As he departed with the stride of a lion and a swan, the earth shook.
The multitudes of gods and nāgas joined their palms, rejoiced, and thought, [344]
"Today he will conquer the hordes of demons and gain immortality!"

19.81 Monks, as the Bodhisattva was walking toward the Bodhi tree, the gods and bodhisattvas realized that this was the moment when the Bodhisattva, having sat there, would attain awakening and become a truly perfect awakened one. Accordingly, they decided to decorate another eighty thousand bodhi trees.

Some of the bodhi trees were made of flowers and were one hundred thousand leagues high. Other bodhi trees were made of odoriferous substances and were two hundred thousand leagues high. Some bodhi trees were made of sandalwood and were three hundred thousand leagues high. Still other bodhi trees were made of cloth and were five hundred thousand leagues high. Some bodhi trees were made of jewels and were one million leagues high. Other bodhi trees were made of all sorts of jewels and were one trillion leagues high.

At the root of each of these bodhi trees, they erected a suitable lion throne draped in various kinds of divine cloth. By some of the bodhi trees they also prepared a lotus throne, or a throne made of fragrant substances, or a throne made of various precious materials.

19.82 The Bodhisattva [289] now rested evenly in the absorption known as *playful array*. [F.142.b] As soon as the Bodhisattva began to rest in this absorption of playful array, immediately an identical bodhisattva appeared, with his body beautifully adorned with all the excellent marks and representations, sitting upon each of the lion thrones at the root of each of the bodhi trees.

At that point the bodhisattvas and the gods each perceived that the Bodhisattva was resting in equilibrium upon their particular lion throne and not on those set forth by the others. The power of the Bodhisattva's absorption of playful array produced similar perceptions in the beings in hell, those born as animals, those living in the realm of the lord of death, all gods and humans, and all other beings, regardless of their form of existence. All beings now witnessed the Bodhisattva sitting on the lion throne at the root of the Bodhi tree.

19.83 Nevertheless, in order to also satisfy the intellect of those who lacked dedication, the Bodhisattva picked up the bundle of grass, went to the Bodhi tree, and circumambulated it seven times. The Lord then arranged the grass so that the ends of the grass pointed inward and the roots pointed outward. In this way he arranged for himself a very fine seat of grass.

19.84 He then sat down like a lion, like a hero, in a powerful way, in a steady way, in a diligent way, in a forceful way, like an elephant, like a lord, in a natural manner, like a wise person, like an unsurpassed person, like a special one, like an exalted one, like a famous one, like one full of praise, like a generous person, like a disciplined person, like a forbearing person, like a diligent person, like a concentrated person, like an insightful being, in a wise manner, in a meritorious manner, like someone who has conquered the attacks of demons, and like someone who has perfected the accumulations.

In this way he sat down on the grass seat and crossed his legs facing toward the east. He then straightened his back, collected himself one-pointedly, and formed this firm resolve: [F.143.a] [T.285]

19.85 "On this seat my body may wither and rot,
And my skin, my bones, and my flesh may dissolve.
Yet until I attain awakening, so hard to find even through many eons,
I will not move my body from this seat."

19.86 *This concludes the nineteenth chapter, on approaching the seat of awakening. [290] [B13]*

20.

Chapter 20

THE DISPLAYS AT THE SEAT OF AWAKENING

20.1 Monks, as the Bodhisattva sat down at the seat of awakening, the gods of the six classes within the desire realm decided to protect the Bodhisattva from obstacles. These gods therefore took position in the eastern direction. Likewise the southern, western, and northern directions were taken over by other classes of gods.

Monks, when the Bodhisattva sat down at the seat of awakening, he began to emit a light known as *inspiring the bodhisattvas*. The light shone in all the ten directions, illuminating all the boundless and immeasurable buddha realms—the realms that filled the entire field of phenomena.

20.2 In the eastern direction this light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Lalitavyūha, who resided in the Vimala world in the Thus-Gone One Vimalaprabhāsa's buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he produced a miraculous manifestation whereby he was able to display all the buddha realms, in all directions to the end of space, as a single maṇḍala made of blue beryl.

20.3 At the same time Lalitavyūha made it so that the Bodhisattva, who was sitting at the seat of awakening, became visible to all sentient beings living in the five types of existences. These sentient beings pointed their fingers at the Bodhisattva and asked each other, "Who is this charming being? [F.143.b] Who is that beautiful person?" Then the Bodhisattva emanated other bodhisattvas in front of everyone. The forms of these bodhisattvas then sang this verse: [291]

20.4 "He is someone free from attachment, anger, stains and their habitual tendencies.
Light shines from his body in the ten directions, outshining all other lights.
For many eons he increased the accumulations of merit, absorption, and wisdom;
Śākyamuni, the most illustrious of great sages, now beautifies all places."

20.5 In the southern direction, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Ratnacchattrakūṭasaṃdarśana, who resided in the world Ratnavyūhā of the Thus-Gone One Ratnārcis' buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he sheltered the entire area with a single jewel parasol. Indra, Brahmā, and the world protectors now said to each other, "How come this jewel parasol appeared? Whose karmic result is this?" At that point, this verse was heard from the jewel parasol:

20.6 "He who donated trillions of jewels, fragrant substances, and parasols
To those without an equal who abide, their minds full of loving kindness, in the state of passing beyond suffering,
Is the benefactor endowed with the best marks, with strength like Nārāyaṇa.
This offering is for him, the master of good qualities, who has gone to the Bodhi tree!"

20.7 In the western direction, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Indrajālin, who resided in the Campakavarṇā world of the Thus-Gone One Puṣpāvali Vanarāji Kusumitābhijña's buddha realm. [F.144.a] Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he sheltered the entire area with a single jewel canopy.
The gods in all directions, [292] together with the nāgas, yakṣas, and gandharvas, said to each other, "Who created this display of light?" At that point, this verse was heard from the jewel canopy:

20.8 "He is a jewel mine, a jewel banner, and a delight to the three worlds;
He is the best of gems, renowned as a jewel, who delights in the true Dharma.
He has the diligence by which he will never be cut off from the Three Jewels;
This is to venerate the One Who Is About to Attain Supreme Awakening."

20.9 In the northern direction, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Vyūharāja, who resided in the Sūryāvartā world of the Thus-Gone One Candrasūryajihmīkaraprabha's buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he revealed within the courtyard the complete displays of qualities of all buddha realms contained in all the worlds in the ten directions.
Seeing this, some bodhisattvas asked each other, "Who created such displays?" At that point, this verse was heard from each of the displays:

20.10 "The enormity of his merit and wisdom has purified his body;
His disciplined action, austerities, and truthful Dharma have purified his speech;
His conscientiousness, devotion, love, and compassion have purified his mind.
This is to venerate him, the Leader of the Śākyas, who has gone to the king of trees." [F.144.b]

20.11 In the southeastern direction, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Guṇamati, who resided in the Guṇākarā world of the Thus-Gone One Guṇarājaprabhāsa's buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. [293] As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he miraculously emanated within the sacred area a multistoried palace endowed with all perfect qualities.
The members of Guṇamati's retinue asked, "Who has created such a display?" The multistoried palace then resounded with this verse:

20.12 "It is merely a trace of his qualities
That the gods, demigods, yakṣas, and mahoragas will ever possess.
With such traits he was born into a royal family of many qualities.
Now this Ocean of Qualities sits under the branches of the Bodhi tree."

20.13 Then, in the southwestern direction, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being Ratnasambhava, who resided in the Ratnasambhava world of the Thus-Gone One Ratnayaṣṭi's buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he emanated within the sacred area a limitless and boundless number of pavilions made of precious stones. Then from these celestial pavilions, this verse was heard:

20.14 "He who has renounced the ocean and the land along with all precious objects,
Who abandoned his palace with its fine oval windows and terraces, and also his harnessed carriages,
Ornate pavilions, exquisite flowers and garlands, parks, wellsprings, and assembly halls,
Giving up his feet, hands, head, and eyes—he now sits at the seat of awakening."

20.15 Then, in the northwestern direction, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Meghakūṭābhigarjitasvara, who resided in the Meghavatī world of the Thus-Gone One Megharāja's buddha realm. [F.145.a] Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. [294] As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he manifested a cloud of gum benjamin and aloeswood above the sacred area and caused a rain of sandalwood dust to fall. The cloud then resounded with this verse:

20.16 "He, shining with the light of confidence in knowledge, spreads the cloud of Dharma all throughout the three realms;
He, free from attachment, makes the sacred Dharma—the nectar that takes beings beyond suffering—fall like rain.
He will cut the fettering vines of attachment and negative emotions, along with their habitual tendencies,
And blossoming forth with concentration, miracles, powers, and strengths, he will grant to beings a fount of faith."

20.17 Then, in the northeastern direction, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Hemajālālaṃkṛta, who resided in the Hemajālapratichannā world of the Thus-Gone One Ratnacchatrābhyudgatāvabhāsa's buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he emanated appearances of bodhisattvas, each adorned with the thirty-

two marks, on each of the palaces and pavilions. Each of these manifestations of bodhisattvas held up flower garlands from both the human and divine realms. They all bowed to the Bodhisattva and, as they offered the flower garlands, they sang this verse:

20.18 "Who praised a million buddhas
And respectfully developed great faith?
Who speaks with a beautiful voice, like the melody of Brahmā?
To him, who now has arrived at the seat of awakening, I bow." [F.145.b]

20.19 In the quarter down below, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Ratnagarbha, who resided in the Samantavilokitā world of the Thus-Gone One Samantadarśin's buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. [295] As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he displayed lotuses made of gold from the Jambū River within the beryl maṇḍala. At the center of the lotuses, one could see the upper body of many women, in perfect shape and appearance and adorned with various jewelry. In their hands they proffered many types of jewelry, such as necklaces, bracelets, armbands, gold threads, and pearl necklaces. As they offered these along with flower garlands and silken tassels, they bowed in the direction of the seat of awakening and the Bodhisattva, and sang this verse:

20.20 "He always bowed to the buddhas, the hearers,
The solitary buddhas, and his masters.
Disciplined, mindful, joyful, and without pride,
To him, who is full of qualities, you should bow down!"

20.21 In the quarter above, the light encouraged the bodhisattva, the great being, Gagaṇagañja, who resided in the Varagaṇā world of the Thus-Gone One Gaṇendra's buddha realm. Surrounded and escorted by an infinite number of bodhisattvas, he proceeded to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was sitting. As a way to venerate the Bodhisattva, he stood in the middle of the sky and brought down a rain of objects never before seen or heard of in any of the buddha realms in the ten directions. It rained down many types of flowers, incense, perfumes, flower garlands, ointments, powders, cloths, ornaments, parasols, banners, streamers, banners of victory, [F.146.a] jewels, precious stones, gold, silver, pearls, horses, elephants, chariots, infantrymen, carriages, flowering trees, leaves, fruits, boys, girls, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas,

demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, Indra, Brahmā, the world protectors, humans, and nonhumans. Everyone felt full of joy and happiness, and no one made anyone afraid or caused anyone harm.

20.22 This can also be expressed in verse:

In brief, the offspring of the victorious ones from the ten directions
Arrive to pay homage to the benefactor who has attained awakening. [296]
You will hear only an approximate account of the displays of these bodhisattvas,
The bodhisattvas possessed of strength and beauty.

20.23 Some offer a million necklaces;
They arrive in the sky, loud like thunder.
Some display flowers and palaces in the expanse of space;
They arrive with jewel diadems adorning their hair.

20.24 Some proclaim emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness;
As they arrive on the ground, they roar like lions.
Some scatter beautiful flowers never seen before;
As they arrive, they roar like bulls.

20.25 Some reveal their bodies in a thousand colors;
As they arrive in space, they cry like peacocks.
Some proclaim the garlands of qualities of the son of the Well-Gone Ones;
As they arrive in space, they are like the full moon.

20.26 Some, like the sun, send forth rays of light;
As they arrive, they make all the abodes of Māra appear dark.
Some who have gathered the accumulation of merit
Arrive at the seat of awakening, bright as rainbows.

20.27 Some scatter a lattice of precious stones from the sky,
Shining like the beautiful new moon. [F.146.b]
They throw māndārava flowers and garlands of campaka flowers
Toward the Bodhisattva as he sits at the foot of the king of trees. [297]

20.28 Some arrive, making the earth shake with their two feet;
The shaking ground amuses the people.
Some proffer the central mountain on the palms of their hands
As they remain in midair, scattering flowers from baskets.

20.29 Some bring the four oceans on top of their heads;
As they arrive, they scatter and sprinkle perfume on the ground.
Some hold up various jewel staffs;
As they arrive, they point out the Bodhisattva from afar.

20.30 Some, like Brahmā, have peaceful forms;
Their peaceful minds rest calmly and their concentration is firm.
As they arrive, the pores of their bodies resonate with the beautiful sounds
Of limitless love, compassion, joy, and equanimity.

20.31 Some arrive like the god Indra;
They come surrounded by millions of gods.
At the Bodhi tree they join their palms
And scatter jewels like the ones possessed by Indra.

20.32 Some arrive like the guardians of the four directions,
Surrounded by gandharvas, rākṣasas, and kinnaras.
Like lightning, they bring down a rain of luminous flowers,
And praise the heroic one with the voice of gandharvas and kinnaras.

20.33 Some arrive with heavenly trees in bloom,
With fruits, flowers, and perfect scents. [298]
Among the leaves, the upper bodies of the buddhas' offspring are visible;
They bow to the center of the world and scatter flowers.

20.34 Some arrive proffering ponds with blooming lotuses;
They bring blue and white lotuses that have opened.
At the center of each of the flowers, there are beings endowed with the thirty-two marks,
Who praise the learned Bodhisattva and his undefiled mind.

20.35 Some arrive in bodies as big as the central mountain.
Standing in midair, they cast off their bodies;
Immediately they transform into fresh flower garlands,
And cover the realms of the victorious ones in all the trichiliocosm.

20.36 Some arrive with eyes blazing like the fire at the end of an eon, [F.147.a]
Showing the dissolution and the creation.
From their bodies many Dharma gates are heard,
Causing millions of beings to abandon craving.

20.37 Some arrive with lips as beautiful as the bimba fruit;
Their perfect mouths speak with voices like the kinnaras.
They appear like maidens, well adorned with necklaces;
The gods who view them cannot get enough.

20.38 Some arrive with indestructible, vajra-like bodies;
They wade through the waters below.
Some arrive with their faces like the sun or the full moon;
Their rays of light and luster conquer the faults of disturbing emotions. [299]

20.39 Some arrive adorned with precious stones, holding jewels in their hands;
With these gems they cover billions of realms.
In order to benefit, delight, and satisfy many sentient beings,
They bring down a rain of scented and perfect jewel flowers.

20.40 Some arrive with the treasury of the precious great dhāraṇīs;
From the pores in their skin, hundreds of thousands of sūtras are heard.
With their confidence, intelligence, and exalted minds,
They cause realization in all proud and haughty beings.

20.41 Some arrive holding the central mountain like a drum;
Beating it, they fill the sky with sweet voices.
Their sound goes out to millions of realms everywhere:
"The Teacher is poised to awaken today, and subsequently to attain immortality!"

20.42 *This concludes the twentieth chapter, on the displays at the seat of awakening.*

21.

Chapter 21

CONQUERING MĀRA

21.1 Monks, in order to venerate the Bodhisattva, the other bodhisattvas manifested many such displays at the seat of awakening. The Bodhisattva himself, however, caused all the displays that ornamented all the seats of awakening of the past, present, and future buddhas in all the buddha realms in the ten directions to become visible right there at the seat of awakening. Monks, as the Bodhisattva now sat at the seat of awakening, he thought to himself, "Māra is the supreme lord who holds sway over the desire realm, the most powerful and evil demon. [F.147.b] [300] There is no way that I could attain unsurpassed and complete awakening without his knowledge. So I will now arouse that evil Māra. Once I have conquered him, all the gods in the desire realm will also be restrained. Moreover, there are some gods in Māra's retinue who have previously created some basic goodness. When they witness my lion-like display, they will direct their minds toward unsurpassed and complete awakening."

21.2 Monks, as soon as the Bodhisattva had this thought, a light known as *the light which conquers all demonic congregations* was emitted from the hair between his eyebrows. The light illuminated all demonic abodes in the entire great trichiliocosm, making them dark by comparison and causing them to shake. In fact the entire great trichiliocosm was bathed in an immense light.

21.3 From this light a voice called out to Māra, the evil one:
"Here is a pure being who has acted well for many eons.
As Śuddhodana's son he abandoned his kingdom;
He appeared as a benefactor seeking immortality.
He has arrived at the Bodhi tree, so you should now make an effort!

21.4 "Himself having crossed, he causes others to cross;
Himself liberated, he also liberates others.
Having found relief, he gives relief to others;
Having passed beyond suffering, he will cause others to transcend suffering.

21.5 "He will empty the three lower realms totally,
And fill the city of gods and humans. [301]
He, the Benefactor, will attain immortality,
And bestow absorptions, higher knowledge, immortality, and happiness.

21.6 "He will empty your city, O evil kinsman;
With your army powerless, you will be without an army and without allies.
When the Self-Arisen One, by his nature, pours down the rain of Dharma,
You will not know what to do or where to go."

21.7 Monks, Māra, the evil one, was aroused by these verses and had a dream with thirty-two omens. [F.148.a] What are these thirty-two? They are as follows:

1. He saw his abode being filled with darkness.
2. The abode was filled with dust, and rough with scattered pebbles.
3. Startled with fear and terror, he fled in the ten directions.
4. He lost his diadem and his earrings fell off.
5. His lips, throat, and mouth dried out.
6. His heart was beating fast.
7. The leaves, flowers, and fruits in his parks withered.
8. His lotus ponds were emptied of water and dried out.

9. All birds, such as swans, cranes, peacocks, cuckoos, kunālas, the two-headed pheasants, and so forth, had broken wings.
10. All his musical instruments—such as his drum, conch, clay drum, hand drum, tambour, lute, harp, cymbals, and tambourines—broke, fell into pieces, then into shreds, and fell on the ground.
11. His beloved kinfolk and retinue abandoned him, their faces cast down, while he stood aside and brooded.
12. His chief queen, Māriṇī, fell from her bed onto the ground and started beating her head with her fists.
13. Those among his sons who were the most diligent, powerful, glorious, and intelligent prostrated to the Bodhisattva, who was sitting at the supremely sacred seat of awakening.
14. His daughters wailed and cried out, "Oh no, father, oh no, father!" [302]
15. He was dressed in stained clothes.
16. With his head covered in dust and his face colorless and pale, he beheld himself as devoid of any vital force.
17. His palace with its corridors, skylights, and porticoes became covered in dust and crumbled down. [F.148.b]
18. All his generals from the realms of the yakṣas, rākṣasas, kumbhāṇḍas, and gandharvas placed their hands on their heads and fled while crying and wailing.
19. Whatever divine regents there are among the gods in the desire realm—Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Virūḍhaka, Virūpākṣa, Vaiśravaṇa, Śakra, Suyāma, Santuṣita, Sunirmāṇarati, Vaśavartin, and so forth—Māra, the evil one, saw all of them eagerly listening to the Bodhisattva with their faces turned toward him.
20. In the midst of battle, his sword could not be pulled from its sheath, and he himself was unwell and wailing.
21. His retinue abandoned him.
22. His vases full of auspicious items fell into a hole.
23. The priest Nārada pronounced a curse.
24. The gatekeeper Ānandita cried out in distress.
25. The canopy of the sky became covered in darkness.
26. The goddess Śrī, who lives in the desire realm, began to weep.
27. His faculties became ineffectual.
28. He lost his allies.
29. His lattices of jewels and pearls became silent, fell apart, tore, and fell down.
30. His whole dwelling swayed.

31. The trees and the turrets of his buildings tore and fell over.
32. The entire army of Māra was felled in a confrontation.

Monks, such were the thirty-two omens in the dream of Māra, the evil one.

21.8 When Māra awoke from this dream, he was so terrified that he gathered all his family members. When he saw that they had gathered along with his armies, his retinue, his generals, and his gatekeepers, he addressed them with these verses:

21.9 When Māra saw these omens, he became worried.
He summoned [303] the demon captain Siṃhahanu
And his sons and his retinue.
The evil kinsman then conferred with all of them: [F.149.a]

21.10 "Today I heard these verses sung from the sky:
'A being was born among the Śākyas adorned with perfect marks.
He practiced severe austerities for six years, and now has arrived at the Bodhi tree.'
You must make great effort!

21.11 "If the Bodhisattva becomes awakened, all by himself
He will awaken billions of beings.
When he attains immortality and reaches the cool state,
He will empty all our abodes.

21.12 "Come on! Let us advance with a great army!
We shall destroy that monk, alone at the king of trees.
Quick, mobilize the four army divisions!
If you wish to please me, do not delay this.

21.13 "Although the world may be full of worthy ones and solitary buddhas,
My force will remain unharmed when they pass beyond suffering.
Yet if he alone becomes a victorious one and a Dharma king,
He would never allow the line of uncountable victorious ones to be broken."

21.14 Monks, at that point the son of Māra, the evil one, who was named Sārthavāha, addressed his father in these verses:

"Father, why is your face so sad and pale?
Your heart is thumping and your every limb is shaking. [304]
Come now, tell me quick, what did you hear or witness?
Let us discover the truth and devise a plan."

21.15 With his pride vanished, Māra said:

"Son, listen to me. I had a bad dream, extremely terrifying.
If I were to tell everything now to the audience here,
You would faint and fall to the ground."

21.16 Sārthavāha said:

"When the time for battle has arrived, victory is of no bad consequence;
However, for the one who is killed, there is detriment.
If your dream conveys an omen of this kind,
It may be best to give up and not go to war, which would bring humiliation."

21.17 Māra replied:

"One with a determined mind will win in battle;
If we rely on firmness and correct action, victory will be ours.
When he sees me and my retinue,
He will be powerless but to rise and bow to my feet."

21.18 Sārthavāha said: [F.149.b]

"An army may be vast, but if it is weak,
A single powerful hero may win the battle.
Even if the universe were filled with fireflies,
They could be destroyed and eclipsed by a single sun. [305]

21.19 "Moreover: He who is proud and ignorant does not have much acumen;
If he is opposed to a shrewd person, he will not be able to think effectively."

21.20 Monks, Māra, the evil one, did not pay heed to Sārthavāha's warning. Instead, he gathered all four divisions of his great and powerful army. It was a terrifying army, so brave in battle that it would make anyone's hair stand on end. Such an army had never been seen before, or even heard of, in the realms of gods and humans. The soldiers were able to transform their faces in a trillion ways. On their arms and legs slithered hundreds of thousands of snakes, and in their hands they brandished swords, bows, arrows, darts, lances, axes, tridents, clubs, staffs, bludgeons, lassos, cudgels, discuses, vajras, and spears. Their bodies were covered in finest cuirasses and armor.

21.21 Some had their heads, hands, or feet turned backward, or their eyes facing backward. Their heads, eyes, and faces were ablaze. Their bellies, hands, and feet were deformed, and their faces brimmed with vehement ardor. Their mouths, with protruding ugly fangs, appeared contorted in the extreme, and their thick and broad tongues, rough like a turtle's neck or a straw mat, dangled from their mouths.
Like the eyes of a black snake, which are flush with poison, their eyes were blazing red, as if on fire. Some of them were vomiting poisonous snakes, while others, like garuḍas emerging from the ocean, grasped these poisonous snakes in their hands and ate them. Some ate human flesh and drank blood, chewing on human arms, legs, heads, and livers, and slurping entrails, feces, and vomit. Their terrifying bodies had many colors, such as brown, blue, red, black, and blazing yellow.

21.22 Some had ugly hollow eyes, like wells. Others had eyes that were gouged out, eyes that were ablaze, or disfigured eye sockets. [F.150.a] Some had ugly eyes, rolling and blazing. Some carried flaming mountains in their hands while playfully riding on other mountains as their mount. Others ran toward the Bodhisattva, carrying trees that had been uprooted. Some had ears like goats, demons, elephants, or pigs, or hanging ears. Others had no ears at all. Some had swollen bellies and weak bodies, with their bones sticking out. They had broken noses, bellies like barrels, and feet round as balls. [306] Their skin, flesh, and blood had dried out, and their ears, noses, hands, feet, eyes, or heads were cut.

21.23 Some were so thirsty for blood that they would cut each other's heads off. They would make snappy, ugly, terrifying, and rough sounds of *"Phut phut, picut, phulu phulu!"* Others would call, "Let's get rid of him! Grab that mendicant Gautama along with his tree! Let's make sure that he is caught, cut, slashed, tied, held, harassed, cut in pieces, gotten rid of, and destroyed!" They were disfigured and caused terror with their awful faces of foxes, jackals, pigs, donkeys, oxen, elephants, horses, camels, wild asses, buffaloes, rabbits, yaks, rhinos, and the eight-legged lion beast. Some had animal bodies like lions, tigers, wild boars, bears, monkeys, elephants, cats, goats, sheep, snakes, mongooses, fish, crocodiles, alligators, tortoises, ravens, vultures, owls, and garuḍas.

21.24 Some had misshapen forms. Some had just one head, [F.150.b] but others had two or more, some had even up to one hundred thousand. Some had no head at all. Some had just one arm while others had up to one hundred thousand. Others had no arms. Some had just one leg while others had up to one hundred thousand. Others had no legs at all. Some had poisonous snakes emerging from their bodily apertures—ears, mouths, noses, eyes, and belly buttons. They threatened the Bodhisattva as they danced around and brandished their many weapons, such as swords, bows, arrows, darts, tridents, axes, discuses, spears, lances, vajras, javelins, and other sharp weapons.
Some of them wore garlands of human fingers that they had cut off and strung together. Others wore on their heads bones, hands, and skulls, which they had strung into garlands, and some had their bodies covered in poisonous snakes. Some were holding skulls and rode on elephants, horses, camels, donkeys, and buffaloes. Some had their heads pointing down and feet up. Some had needle-like hair on their heads. Others had hair like oxen, donkeys, boars, mongooses, goats, sheep, cats, monkeys, wolves, or jackals.

21.25 They were vomiting poisonous snakes, spitting out lumps of iron, spewing fire, and producing a rain of flaming iron and copper. They sent rains with thunder, released bolts of lightning, [307] caused a rain of hot iron sands, gathered black clouds, and made storms arise. They sent rains consisting of masses of arrows, bringing darkness and causing swishing sounds as they ran toward the Bodhisattva.
Some of the soldiers swung their lassos, destroyed great mountains, stirred the vast oceans, jumped over tall mountains, and shook Meru, the king of mountains. In this way they came running, throwing their limbs in the air and rocking their bodies. [F.151.a] They cried out loudly in laughter, slapped and beat their chests, and disheveled their hair. Their faces were yellow, their bodies blue, their heads flaming with the hair streaming upward. Running around impetuously, darting here and there with eyes like a fox, they tried to frighten the Bodhisattva.

21.26 Old women approached the Bodhisattva and called out to him, "Oh no, son! Oh no, my son! Get up! Quick, get up and flee!" Awful forms of demonesses, flesh eaters, and hungry spirits—one-eyed, limping, and with hunger in their eyes—ran toward the Bodhisattva with outstretched hands, distorted faces, and terrifying cries. They were fearful and horrifying. Such an army of demons formed a big gathering, stretching eighty leagues on every side. Just like this single army, so too the armies of hundreds of zillions of evil demons, residing in the great trichiliocosm, spread themselves around the Bodhisattva in horizontal and upward directions.

21.27 On this topic, it is said:

Forms of yakṣas, kumbhāṇḍas, and mahoragas,
As well as rākṣasas, hungry spirits, and flesh eaters,
In any form that the world finds ugly and fierce,
All have been magically manifested there by these rogues.

21.28 They have one, two, three heads,
Up to a thousand faces.
One, two, three arms,
Up to a thousand arms.

21.29 There are also many with one, two, three legs,
Even some with a thousand legs. [308]
Some have a blue face and a yellow body;
Others have a yellow face and a blue body.

21.30 Their heads and bodies do not match;
Such is the army of soldiers approaching.

21.31 They have faces like tigers, snakes, and hogs,[11]
Elephants, horses, donkeys, and camels,
Monkeys, lions, or bears.
Such are the faces of the approaching army.

21.32 Many terrifying malevolent spirits approach,
With wild matted hair, sheep heads, crooked bones, and goiters; [F.151.b]
Their bodies are drenched with human blood.
Such are the malevolent spirits that approach.

21.33 Their legs are like the legs of an antelope;
Their eyeballs look like those of monkeys;
Their fangs look like elephant tusks.
Such are the faces of the approaching army.

21.34 The shape of their bodies is that of a crocodile;
Their two eyeballs are ablaze;
Their ears are like those of a goat.
Such are the faces of the approaching army.

21.35 Some hold up a staff in their hands,
Others brandish hammers, clubs, and tridents,
While some hold Mount Meru in their hands.
These are the terrifying forms of the approaching malevolent spirits.

21.36 They hold up sickles, brandish discuses, roll their eyes,
Lift great mountaintops in their hands,
And bring down storms and rains of rock and meteor.
These are the terrifying malevolent spirits approaching.

21.37 They blow hurricanes, bring down rainstorms,
Shoot off billions of lightning bolts,
Roar with thunder, and sway trees.
Yet the leaves on the Bodhi tree remain still.

21.38 The rain pours down in torrents;
Rivers overflow and flood the land.
So many terrifying things have appeared
That even inanimate trees fall over.

21.39 As they witness these terrible forms,
All of them ugly and misshapen.
Yet the One Who Has Qualities, Marks, and Splendor
Keeps his mind unshaken, like Mount Meru.

21.40 He sees all phenomena as illusion,
Like a dream, and like clouds.
Since he sees them in this manner that accords with the Dharma,
He meditates steadfastly, established in the Dharma.

21.41 Whoever thinks of "me" and "mine"
And clings to objects and the body,
Should be afraid and terrified,
Since they are in the clutches of ignorance.

21.42 The Son of the Śākyas has realized the essential truth
That all phenomena arise in dependence and lack reality.
With a mind like the sky, he is just fine,
Unperturbed by the spectacle of the army of rogues.

21.43 Monks, among the one thousand sons of Māra, the evil one, [F.152.a] there were some, such as Sārthavāha, who began to feel devotion toward me, the Bodhisattva. They all assembled on the right side of Māra, the evil one, while those who supported Māra took a stand on his left side.
Now Māra asked his sons, "What type of army should we use to subdue the Bodhisattva?"

21.44 Standing to his right, Māra's son Sārthavāha spoke this verse to his father:

"Would you want to wake up the leader of the nāgas?
Would you want to wake up the leader of the elephants? [309]
Would you want to wake up the king of the animals?
That is like wanting to disturb the leader of men from his ease."

21.45 Standing to his left, Māra's son Durmati replied:

"Even at the mere sight of us, people's hearts burst,
And so does the solid core of great trees.
Struck by my stare, what power would this monk have?
Or struck by death, what power would he have to live in this world?"

21.46 From the right side, Madhuranirghoṣa spoke:

"What solid core do trees have for that matter?
You say 'I will break him by staring,' but can you do that, people?
Even if you could destroy Mount Meru with your stare,
You could not even open your eyes in his presence.

21.47 "Moreover:
To cross the ocean using one's hands
And to drink its water is impossible for people.
Yet looking directly at the Bodhisattva's stainless face
Would be even harder than that."

21.48 From the left side, Śatabāhu said:

"My body has one hundred arms,
And with just one of them I can shoot off one hundred arrows.
O father, I will break the body of this monk!
Be happy and go now without delay."

21.49 From the right side, Subuddhi said: [310]

"If it is advantageous to have one hundred arms,
Why do bodily hairs not become arms?
You may hold a spear in each of your hands
And use them all, yet that will bring you nothing.

21.50 "Why is that?

Because of his love, the body of this sage [F.152.b]
Is inaccessible to poison, weapons, and fire.
Since the love that he feels transcends the world,
When you shoot your weapons, they turn into flowers.

21.51 "And moreover:
All the powerful ones in the sky, the earth, and the waters,
Whether humans or guhyakas, may hold up their swords and axes.
But when they go to the leader of men, who has the power of forbearance,
They all change from very strong, to strong, to weak."

21.52 On the left side, someone named Ugratejas called out:

"Invisible, I will enter his beautiful body
And then I will burn it,
Just like a low forest fire
Would burn a dry, hollow tree."

21.53 On the right side, Sunetra replied:

"You may burn the entire Mount Meru
And enter, invisible, into the earth,
But his vajra mind cannot possibly be burned
By the likes of you, even if you were equal in number to the grains of sand in the Ganges.

21.54 "Moreover:
It can happen that all mountains quake,
And it may be that the oceans dry up.
It is also possible that the sun and moon will fall from the sky,
And it may be that the earth will one day melt away.

21.55 "Yet it is impossible that the one who has set out
To benefit the world with a firm resolve
Should rise from the foot of the great tree
Before he attains awakening."

21.56 From the left side, Dīrghabāhugarvita said:

"Right here before you,
I could use my bare hands
To grind to dust
The sun, the moon, and the stars. [311]

21.57 "I could, with playful ease,
Get hold of all the water in the four oceans.
Father, I will get hold of this monk
And throw him to the end of the oceans.

21.58 "Father, may this army stand firm!
Do not be aggrieved!
I will uproot the Bodhi tree
And scatter it everywhere with my hands."

21.59 From the right side, Prasādapratilabdha said:

"You may proudly assume
That you can crush with your hands
All gods, demigods, and gandharvas,
Along with the earth, the mountains, and the oceans.

21.60 "Yet even thousands of beings like you,
As many as there are grains of sand in the Ganges,
Would be unable to move a single hair
On that wise Bodhisattva."

21.61 From the left side, Bhayaṃkara said:

"Father, for one who is set in the midst of a great army,
What is the use of excessive fear? [F.153.a]
He does not have an army. Where are his allies?
Why do you fear him?"

21.62 From the right side, Ekāgramati said:

"In the universe, the sun and the moon have no army,
And the universal monarch and the lion have no army.
Likewise this Bodhisattva has no army,
Yet he is capable of destroying Namuci single-handedly."

21.63 From the left side, Avatāraprekṣin said:

"He has no lances or spears, no clubs or swords,
No horses, elephants, chariots, or foot soldiers.
That single arrogant monk, sitting there—
Father, I will kill him today, please have no worries."

21.64 From the right side, Puṅyālaṃkāra said:

"His body is unshakable and indestructible like Nārāyaṇa's;
He wears an armor of forbearance and wields the sword of unbendable diligence;
The threefold liberation is his steed, and knowledge is his bow.
Father, through the force of his merit, the Bodhisattva will conquer Māra's army." [312]

21.65 From the left side, Anivartin said:

"The fire burning on the plains does not shy away from burning the grass;
The arrow shot skillfully cannot be stopped by a learned one;
The bolt of lightning shooting across the sky does not return.
I will not rest until I have conquered the son of the Śākyas."

21.66 From the right side, Dharmakāma said:

"When meeting wet grass, the fire retreats;
When the arrow hits a mountain peak, it rebounds;
The bolt of lightning, having hit the ground, sinks down.
Until the Bodhisattva obtains peaceful immortality, he will not retreat."

21.67 "And why?

Father, even if one could draw pictures in the empty sky,
Or gather the minds of all sentient beings, as many as there are, into one,
Or, my father, bind the sun, the moon, and the wind with a noose,
One could still not move the Bodhisattva from the seat of awakening."

21.68 From the left side, Anupaśānta said:

"With the great poison of my gaze, I can burn Mount Meru
And turn the waters in the great oceans to ashes.
So, father, look at the seat of awakening and that monk
As I now turn both of them to ashes with my gaze."

21.69 From the right side, Siddhārtha said: [313]

"You may be able to fill the world with poison
And put ablaze the great trichiliocosm,
Yet by a mere glance from the One Who Is the Source of All Good Qualities, [F.153.b]
Your poison will lose its toxicity.

21.70 "In the three realms, there are fierce poisons
In the form of attachment, anger, and delusion.
Yet none of them can be found in his body, nor in his mind,
Just as mud and dust cannot be found in the heavens.

21.71 "His body, speech, and mind are pristine,[12]
And he is filled with love for sentient beings.
No weapon or poison will be able to harm him,
So, father, please, let us all turn back."

21.72 From the left side, Ratilola said:

"I will play thousands of instruments
And send forth billions of well-adorned divine girls
Who will get him excited and lead him to our exquisite harem.
I will provide sexual pleasure and bring him under your control."

21.73 From the right side, Dharmarati said:

"He only delights in the pleasures of the Dharma,
The bliss of concentration and the significance of immortality,
And the joy of liberating sentient beings and the happiness of a loving mind.
He does not delight in the pleasures of passion."

21.74 From the left side, Vātajava said:

"I can at once swallow the sun and the moon
And the wind blowing through the sky.
Father, I will catch that mendicant this very day
And blow him away like a handful of husk."

21.75 From the right side, Māra's son named Acalamati said:

"Even if all gods and humans became
As swift and strong as you are
And gathered in a single place,
They would be unable to harm this peerless being."

21.76 From the left side, Brahmamati said:

"If there was such a fierce crowd of our men,
He could do nothing to wound your pride.
Since all tasks are accomplished by teams,
How could he harm you just on his own?"

21.77 From the right side, Siṃhamati said: [314]

"Lions have never been seen sitting on the ground in a row;
Those with a poisonous gaze do not team up.
Those splendorous beings that have courage because of being true,
Those supreme leaders of beings also do not congregate together."

21.78 From the left side, Sarvacaṇḍāla said:

"Father, you have not heard such heated voices before
As those your sons are calling out with now. [F.154.a]
Mustering diligence, speed, and power,
Let's quickly go and destroy that monk!"

21.79 From the right side, Siṃhanādin said:

"In the midst of the jungle, when the lion is not there,
Many jackals bark.
Yet when they hear the lion's frightening roar,
They flee in panic in all directions.

21.80 "In the same way, these ignorant sons of Māra,
As long as they have not heard the voice of the perfect man,
Raise their voices, opinionated and impudent,
While the lion of men remains silent."

21.81 From the left side, Duścintitacintin said:

"Whatever I wish for is quickly accomplished,
So why does he not look at us with circumspection?
He must be either deluded or ignorant
Since he does not rise up quickly and flee."

21.82 From the right side, Sucintitārtha said:

"He is neither a fool nor a weakling;
You yourselves are the fools, so extremely careless.
You have no idea about his valor;
The power of his insight will conquer you all.

21.83 "Even with the strength of demonic sons
Equal in number to the grains of sand in the river Ganges,
You would not be able to bend a single hair on his head,
So how much less could you kill him?

21.84 "Do not corrupt your minds;
Instead you should respect him with devotion.
He is about to become king of the three realms;
Turn back and do not make war."

21.85 In this way a thousand of Māra's sons, both good and bad, each further addressed Māra, the evil one, in verses. [315] At the end, Bhadrasena, the general of Māra, spoke these verses to him:

21.86 "All those who normally follow you, such as Śakra,
The guardians, the hordes of half kinnaras,
The leaders of the demigods, and the leaders of the garuḍas,
Now they all join their palms and bow to the Bodhisattva.

21.87 "So what need is there to mention those who do not follow you,
Brahmā and the luminous gods,
And the gods of the pure realms— [F.154.b]
They, too, all bow to him.

21.88 "Even those of your sons who are wise,
Who are powerful and smart,
Venerate the Bodhisattva
In accord with his essence.

21.89 "This army of yakṣas and other beings,
Which extends for eighty leagues,
Is seen in full by the All-Seeing One,
With a clear mind and without hatred.

21.90 "Since he is neither taken aback nor stirred
When seeing this wild and fierce army,
So hideous and frightening,
His victory is certain now.

21.91 "Wherever this army is found,
The cries of the jackal and the owl are heard.
When the calls of the crow and the donkey ring out,
It is wise to quickly retreat.

21.92 "Please look toward the seat of awakening!
Clever curlews, swans, cuckoos, and peacocks
Are circumambulating the Bodhisattva.
It is certain that today the victory will be his.

21.93 "Wherever this army is found,
Dust and soot rain from the sky.
Yet at the seat of awakening, a rain of flowers falls,
So heed my words and turn back!

21.94 "Wherever this army is found,
The ground is uneven and filled with thorns and prickles.
Yet at the seat of awakening, the ground is stainless like gold,
So it is better for the wise to retreat.

21.95 "The past nightmares
Will now come true. If you do not retreat,
He will reduce this army to dust,
Just as countries are destroyed by the sages. [316]

21.96 "When the supreme, masterful sage
Became angry with King Brahmadatta,
He burned the Daṇḍaka Forest
So that for many years no grass would grow.

21.97 "Whatever sages there are who practice disciplined conduct
And practice austerities,
He is supreme among them,
For he does not harm any living being.

21.98 "Have you not heard before
That the one whose body blazes with all the marks
And who walks away from his home
Will conquer disturbing emotions and attain awakening?

21.99 "The sons of the victors manifest such great powers
As an act of worship,
For isn't the Supreme Being
A worthy recipient of the best of offering rites?

21.100 "Since the immaculate hair between his eyebrows
Beautifies a trillion realms
And outshines all of us,
He will surely conquer Māra's army.

21.101 "Since the gods at the peak of existence
Are unable to see the crown of his head, [F.155.a]
So, surely, without being taught by others,
He will attain omniscience.

21.102 "Since Mount Meru and the surrounding ranges,
The sun, the moon, Śakra, Brahmā,
All the trees, and the best of mountains
All prostrate to the seat of awakening,

21.103 "It is certain that the one with the power of merit,
The powers of knowledge and wisdom,
And the powers of forbearance and diligence,
Will render Māra's factions powerless.

21.104 "Like an elephant stepping on a fresh clay pot,
Or a lion fighting a fox,
Or the sun effacing a firefly,
The Well-Gone One will obliterate our army."

21.105 Upon hearing these words, another son of Māra became enraged and, with bloodshot eyes, he said:

"Your praise for this lone person
Is without any bounds.
What could that single man be capable of?
Can't you see this great and terrifying army?"

21.106 Then from the right side, the son of Māra called Māraprамardaka said: [317]

"It is not necessary to help the sun in this world,
Nor the lion or the universal monarch.
The Bodhisattva sitting with resolve for awakening
Surely does not need any helpers."

21.107 At that point, in order to weaken the strength of the demons, the Bodhisattva turned his face, which resembled a blooming lotus with one hundred petals, toward them. Upon seeing the Bodhisattva's face, Māra took flight. But while fleeing, he had the thought that his army could withstand the sight of the Bodhisattva's face, and he once again turned back.

Assisted by his followers, he now began to hurl various weapons upon the Bodhisattva. However, even when they threw mountains as big as the central mountain at the Bodhisattva, the mountains all turned into flower canopies and celestial palaces. Those with poisonous gazes, those with poisonous snakes, and those with poisonous breath shot flames of fire at the Bodhisattva. Yet this circle of fire just turned into what seemed to be the Bodhisattva's halo of light.

21.108 The Bodhisattva now touched his right hand to his head. Māra perceived that the Bodhisattva was brandishing a sword in his hand, and so he fled toward the south. However, thinking that it could not be true after all, he again returned. [F.155.b] When he came back, the demons began to hurl all sorts of terrifying weapons at the Bodhisattva. They threw swords, arrows, darts, lances, axes, clubs, javelins, bludgeons, discuses, vajras, hammers, uprooted trees, rocks, lassos, and iron balls. However, as soon as the demons released the weapons, the weapons turned into garlands and canopies of flowers, and a cooling rain of flower petals fell on the ground. The flower garlands hung as adornments on the Bodhi tree.

21.109 When Māra, the evil one, witnessed the Bodhisattva's power and the displays that he performed, his mind was disturbed with jealousy and avarice. He called out to the Bodhisattva, "Listen, young prince, get up! Get up and relish your kingship—your virtue lies precisely in doing that! On what grounds could you ever attain liberation?" [318]

21.110 The Bodhisattva answered Māra, the evil one, with words that were firm, profound, vast, gentle, and sweet:
"You, evil one! Through just a single unstinting act of giving, you have become lord of the desire realm. I, on the other hand, have performed trillions of unstinting acts of giving. I have cut off my hands, legs, eyes, and my head, and given them to beggars. With the intention to liberate sentient beings, I have often given beggars my house, wealth, grains, beds, clothes, and parks."

21.111 Māra, the evil one, replied with this verse:

"Previously I made a wholesome act of giving;
It was an unstinting act, and you are my witness.
But you have no witness to your acts,
So there is no point in speaking of them, and instead you will be conquered."

21.112 The Bodhisattva replied, "Evil one, the earth here is my witness."
He then embraced Māra, the evil one, and his demonic retinue with thoughts of love and compassion. Like a lion, he was without fear, fright, anxiety, timidity, [F.156.a] disturbance, and perturbation. He had no goose bumps, which indicate fear. He now let his right hand slide over his entire body and then gracefully tapped on the earth—the hand that had the contours of a conch, a victory banner, a fish, a vase, a swastika, an iron hook, and a wheel. The hand's fingers were connected by a web. Its nails were exquisite and copper colored. Soft and supple, it looked perfectly youthful. All this was the result of limitless eons of gathering the accumulations of basic goodness. He then spoke this verse:

21.113 "This earth supports all beings;
She is impartial and unbiased toward all, whether moving or still.
She is my witness that I speak no lies;
So may she bear my witness."

21.114 As soon as the Bodhisattva touched this great earth, it shook in six different ways. It quivered, trembled, and quaked, and it boomed, thundered, and roared. Just as a Magadhan brass cauldron, when struck with a wooden log, chimes and reverberates, [319] so did this great earth sound and reverberate when struck by the Bodhisattva with his hand. [B14]

21.115 Then the earth goddess in this great trichiliocosm who is called Sthāvarā, along with her retinue of one billion earth goddesses, began to shake the entire great earth. Not far from where the Bodhisattva was sitting, she broke through the earth's surface and revealed her upper body, adorned with all sorts of jewels. She bowed toward the Bodhisattva, joined her palms, and said to him, "You are right. Great Being, you are right. It is just as you say. We bear witness to this. But still, my Lord, you alone are the supreme witness in the worlds of gods and humans and the supreme authority." [F.156.b]

Having spoken thus, the earth goddess Sthāvarā rebuked Māra, the evil one, in many ways, and praised the Bodhisattva again and again. She made a great display of her myriad powers and then disappeared together with her following there and then.

21.116 When the wicked one and his army heard that sound from the earth,
Frightened and disheartened, they all fled,
Just like jackals in the forest hearing the lion's roar,
Or crows taking flight when a rock is thrown.

21.117 Now Māra, the evil one, felt unhappy and full of suffering. Still, even though he was miserable and ashamed of himself, he was overpowered by pride to such an extent that he could not leave; he could not turn back and flee. Therefore, he turned to his men and spoke:

21.118 "All of you! Wait a while until we find out whether it is possible to arouse the Bodhisattva by polite persuasion. Such a jewel of a being should not be killed outright." [320]

21.119 Then Māra, the evil one, spoke to his daughters: "Girls, you must go now to the seat of awakening and examine the Bodhisattva. Does he have desires or not? Is he deluded or intelligent? Is he like a blind man, or does he know the country and seek advantage? And is he weak or strong?"

21.120 When they heard these words, these divine maidens went to the seat of awakening where the Bodhisattva was. They assembled in front of the Bodhisattva and began displaying the thirty-two ways of female trickery. What are these thirty-two ways? They are as follows:

1. Some of the girls partially covered their faces.
2. Some showed off their firm and voluptuous breasts.
3. Some smiled at him and flashed their teeth.
4. Some lifted their arms, waving them in the air to reveal their armpits.
5. Some flaunted their lips, red like bimba fruit.
6. Some looked at the Bodhisattva through half-closed eyes and then quickly closed their eyes.
7. Some showed off their half-covered breasts. [F.157.a]
8. Some loosened their clothes to reveal their hips adorned with girdles.

9. Some wore fine, transparent clothes that revealed their hips and their girdles.
10. Some made clinking sounds with their anklets.
11. Some showed their breasts adorned with strings of pearls.
12. Some showed off their half-naked thighs.
13. Some displayed jays, parrots, and myna birds sitting on their heads and shoulders.
14. Some cast sidelong glances at the Bodhisattva.
15. Some wore good clothes, yet let them hang improperly.
16. Some made the chains on their hips shake and twinkle.
17. Some mischievously moved back and forth in a flirtatious manner.
18. Some danced.
19. Some sang.
20. Some flirted and acted shy.
21. Some shook their thighs like a palm tree moved by the wind.
22. Some let out deep moans. [321]
23. Some dressed in transparent cloth with bells hanging from the string at their waist and walked around giggling.
24. Some stripped off all their clothes and jewelry.
25. Some showed off all their jewelry, both the secret and the apparent.
26. Some showed their arms, which had been rubbed with perfume.
27. Some displayed their earrings anointed with perfume.
28. Some covered their face with a veil and then suddenly revealed it.
29. Some laughed, played, and had fun, trying to attract each other's attention. But then they again pretended to be shy.
30. Some of them showed off their virgin bodies that had never given birth.
31. Some tried to lure the Bodhisattva with offers of love.
32. Some scattered flower petals on the Bodhisattva.

21.121 Standing before the Bodhisattva, they pondered what his thoughts might be as they looked at his face. Did he look at them with his senses aroused? [F.157.b] Or did he look into the distance? They looked to see if he was excited or not.

21.122 The face of the Bodhisattva, however, remained as pure and stainless as the orb of the full moon when it escapes the mouth of Rāhu, or the sun rising in the early dawn, or a golden pillar, or a blooming thousand-petaled lotus, or a sacrificial fire sprinkled with oil. Like the central mountain, it remained unmoving. Like the surrounding mountains, it was truly elevated. He guarded his senses well and, like the elephant, his look was that of someone with a mind well tamed.

21.123 Now the daughters of Māra, in a further attempt to arouse the Bodhisattva's desires, spoke these verses to him:

"Springtime is here, the best of seasons;
Let us frolic, dear, while the trees are in bloom.
Your body is so beautiful and attractive;
It is enticing, has auspicious marks, and is well adorned. [322]

21.124 "We were born beautiful and with perfect curves;
We are here to please gods and humans and grant complete satisfaction.
Awakening is hard to gain, so change your mind;
Quick, stand up and enjoy the prime of youth!

21.125 "It is for your sake that we have come here, all dressed up and adorned;
Come now, take a look at these divine girls so beautifully adorned.
Who would not be thrilled when enjoying the passion of love?
Even a decayed tree would be brought back to life!

21.126 "Our voices are soft and our scent is delicious;
Our faces look their best with diadems, earrings, and makeup.
Our faces have beautiful brows and are well anointed;
Our beautiful eyes are as pure and large as lotuses.

21.127 "Our faces resemble the full moon;
Our lips are like ripe bimba fruit;
Our teeth are white like conch shells, jasmine flowers, or snow.
So, O Beloved, look at us who ardently desire pleasure.

21.128 "Look at our firm and voluptuous breasts,
The beautiful three folds on our bellies,
And our broad and beautiful hips.
Lord, look at us, such beautiful maidens.

21.129 "Our thighs resemble the trunk of an elephant; [F.158.a]
Our arms are bedecked with abutting bracelets; [323]
Our hips are adorned with beautiful chains.
Lord, look at us, your servants.

21.130 "With the gait of a swan, we gently approach you;
Soft and beautiful, we talk of amorous love.
Beautifully adorned as we are,
We are experts in divine pleasures.

21.131 "We are well trained in singing, playing instruments, and theatrical performance;
We are born with perfect bodies for the sake of pleasure.
If you don't accept us now, as we crave pleasure,
You will quickly become a loser in this world.

21.132 "What man would run away when he sees a treasure?
You will be exactly like that, ignorant of the treasure, which is love,
If you remain ignorant of amorous passion
And fail to enjoy these young girls, who have come of their own will."

21.133 Monks, the Bodhisattva just smiled with unblinking eyes. He sat there smiling, with calm senses, physically at ease, resplendent, without attachment, free from anger, and without delusion. Like the king of mountains he was immutable, confident, unconfused, and untroubled. Since he had totally abandoned, all by himself, all disturbing emotions through his well-established intelligence and wisdom, he now spoke with soft and pleasant words in a tone that exceeded even the voice of Brahmā. His voice was like that of a cuckoo, pleasant and sweet sounding, as he addressed Māra's daughters with these verses:

21.134 "Desire results in a great deal of suffering; it is the root of suffering.
For the unwise, desire ruins their concentration, magical ability, and austerities;
The wise say that chasing women brings no satisfaction. [324]
I will satisfy the unskillful ones with wisdom.

21.135 "The thirst of someone who pursues desires increases evermore,
Just like one feels after drinking salty water.
If I were to engage in that, there would be no benefit to me or to others,
And I delight in being useful to both myself and to others.

21.136 "Your beauty is like water bubbles or foam; [F.158.b]
Like magical colors, it is merely mentally created.
Like a play or a dream, it is unstable and impermanent;
It deludes the minds of childish beings.

21.137 "The eyes are like water bubbles—they are enclosed in a membrane,
Like clotted blood is enclosed in a suppurating ulcer.
The belly is one big load of urine and excrement, excreting filth;
This mechanism of suffering has emerged from karma and disturbing emotions.

21.138 "It is the deluded people with childish minds, not the wise ones,
Who mistakenly perceive the body as beautiful.
This makes them spin for a long time in cyclic existence, the source of suffering;
Their suffering, experienced in hell, is extremely painful.

21.139 "From the crotch, awful smells are leaked;
The thighs, the calves, and the feet are joined together like a mechanical contraption.
When I examine you, I see that you are like an illusion,
Which has deceptively emerged from causes and conditions. [325]

21.140 "When seeing that sensual enjoyments are without good qualities,
And that they lead away from the noble path of wisdom,
And that they are the same as poisonous plants or fires, or like angry vipers,
Only fools would call them 'happiness.'

21.141 "Whoever becomes a slave of women through desire
Will stray from discipline, from concentration, and lose common sense.
Wallowing in pleasure, he will be far removed from wisdom
If he discards his joy in the Dharma and delights in desire.

21.142 "I have neither attachment nor anger;
I do not perceive anything permanent, attractive, or with a self.
I do not feel dislike or joy;
My mind is free, like the wind in the sky.

21.143 "Even if the whole world were filled with the likes of you
Who besieged me here, for eons on end,
I would not feel anger, attachment, or delusion,
Because the mind of the victorious ones is like the sky. [F.159.a]

21.144 "Although the gods and goddesses in their purity and splendor
Have no blood or bones,
They all live in great fear
Since they lack permanence and cannot endure."

21.145 At that point Māra's daughters, skilled as they were in female deception, felt even greater lust, haughtiness, and pride. They displayed love gestures, showed off their adorned bodies, and tried even further female trickery in their attempts to seduce the Bodhisattva. [326]

21.146 On this topic, it is said:

The most seductive and sweet girls, Tṛṣṇā, Rati, and Arati,
These three graceful ones hastily arrived, sent by Māra.
They danced like the shoots of young creepers on a tree blowing in the breeze
To stir lust in the prince sitting under the tree branches.

21.147 Among all seasons, springtime is the best;
At this time men and women frolic, and darkness and dust disappear.
Cuckoos, swans, and peacocks call out, and flocks of birds fill the air;
The time to experience the joys of pleasure has arrived.

21.148 For thousands of eons he delighted in discipline, austerities, and hardships;
He is immutable like the king of mountains, with a body like the rising sun.
Like roaring thunder, his beautiful voice resounds like that of the king of beasts;
This person, who benefits others, utters only meaningful words.

21.149 Desire, disputes, hostility, and strife bring the fear of death;
Ignorant fools engage in them continually, yet the skilled ones renounce them.
This is the time when the Well-Gone One attains immortality,
So today he will conquer Māra and become a worthy one with the ten powers.

21.150 After many magical displays, they said, "You, with your lotus-like face, listen to us.
You will become a king, a supreme ruler, a powerful master of the earth;
Flocks of beautiful women will play thousands of instruments for you.
Of what use is the dress of a sage to you? Give that up and enjoy pleasures instead."

21.151 The Bodhisattva replied: [327]

"I will be the master of the three realms, venerated by gods and humans; [F.159.b]
I will be a king who travels by the wheel of Dharma, endowed with ten powers.
A million seekers, and those with no more need for learning, will always bow to me;
Because I enjoy the Dharma, I no longer seek joyful objects."

21.152 The daughters said:

"For as long as your youth has not passed and you are in your prime,
For as long as disease has not struck you and you are not old and gray haired,
For as long as you have your beauty and youth, and we, too, are happy,
For so long you should enjoy the pleasures of love with a smile on your face."

21.153 The Bodhisattva replied:

"Until I attain perfect freedom and immortality, so difficult to attain,
Until I am rid of the suffering and bondage in the realms of gods and demigods,
Until old age, disease, and death show their angry faces,
For so long I will train on the auspicious path that leads to the city of fearlessness."

21.154 The daughters said:

"In the divine realm you, like Śakra, will be surrounded by divine maidens;
In the Heaven Free from Strife, the Heaven Fully Free from Strife, and the Heaven of Joy, you will be praised by the best of immortals.
In the realm of Māra, enthralled by amorous women, you will find the pleasures of love;
Relish playing with us—it will bring great pleasure!"

21.155 The Bodhisattva replied: [328]

"Desire is ephemeral like dew on the tip of grass, or like autumn clouds;
Desire is terrifying like the wrath of the nāga girls.
Śakra, the gods in the Heaven Free from Strife, and the gods in the Heaven of Joy, all fall under the sway of Māra;
Desire plagues all ignoble ones, so how could anyone rejoice in that?"

21.156 The daughters said:

"Look at these beautiful trees with fresh leaves and blooming flowers;
They resound with the cries of pheasants, cuckoo birds, and the humming of bees.
On the ground grows fresh green grass, so soft and thick;
Will you, the lion of men, enjoy yourself with us young girls in a pleasure grove?"

21.157 The Bodhisattva replied:

"All of these trees produce shoots and flowers according to seasons,
And bees also seek out flowers because of suffering from hunger and thirst.
Since everything that grows from the ground will wither under the sun, [F.160.a]
I have resolved to actualize the nectar that all victorious ones have enjoyed."

21.158 Māra's daughters insisted:

"Look at us! Our faces are like the moon and like fresh lotus flowers;
Our speech is soft and pleasant, and our teeth as white as snow or silver.
Such beauties are rare among the gods, so how about among humans?
These women that you have here are even desired by the highest of gods."

21.159 The Bodhisattva replied:

"I see the body as impure, filled with masses of worms;
It easily breaks and perishes, and is thoroughly without pleasure. [329]
Yet I will attain that imperishable state, venerated by the wise,
The state that brings ultimate happiness to the animate and inanimate worlds."

21.160 The daughters now put on sixty-four displays of amorous behavior;
They rang their anklets and girdles and let their clothes slip off.
Struck with the arrow of desire, infatuated, with smiles on their faces, they said,
"Lord, do we appear so ugly to you that you don't share our love?"

21.161 Knowing the faults in all of saṃsāra, the Stainless One replied,
"Desire is like a sword, a spear, a trident, or a razor blade smeared with honey;
It is like the head of a viper or a fire pit—that much I have realized.
So, since women steal one's virtues, I have abandoned their company."

21.162 With all the billions of skills that induce amorous infatuation,
The girls were unable to seduce the Well-Gone One who has the gait of a young elephant.
So with shame and embarrassment, they now bowed to the feet of the Sage;
Giving rise to respect, joy, and love, they praised the Benefactor:

21.163 "Your face is like the spotless center of a lotus, or the harvest moon;
Your luster is like the flames of a sacrificial fire, or the shine of the golden mountain.
May your wishes and vows, which you have made in hundreds of lives, be fulfilled;
Now that you yourself have crossed, please liberate all suffering beings."

21.164 They praised the one who is like the bayur tree, or the campaka; [F.160.b]
They circumambulated the Supreme Being, who was immutable like a majestic mountain.
Returning, they bowed their heads to their father and told him,
"Father, this master of gods and humans has no fear or anger. [330]

21.165 "With a smiling face he looks on with eyes like lotus petals;
Never does he look at others with attachment or a frown.
Mount Meru may tremble, the oceans dry up, and the sun and moon fall,
But never will He Who Sees the Faults of the Three Existences come under the sway of amorous women."

21.166 When Māra, the evil one, heard these words, he felt even more miserable and unhappy. Angry and disappointed, he told his daughters, "Oh my, that stupid fool, so ignorant that he doesn't see your beauty and good looks! How can it be that we are unable to get him away from the seat of awakening?"

21.167 Then once again, the daughters of Māra spoke to their father in verse:

"Although we speak to him softly and lovingly, he does not get aroused;
Even though we show him the most secret of things, he does not get hostile.
No matter what acts he witnesses, he remains without delusion;
Although he sees the entire body, his thoughts remain profound.

21.168 "He clearly realizes the faults of women;
He is far removed from lust and has no desire.
Neither in divine abodes, nor here on earth, is there a human or a god
Capable of gauging his mind and actions.

21.169 "Father, we tried every female trick on him!
With all our lust, surely his heart should have melted!
Yet, although he saw it all, his mind wasn't distracted even once;
Like the foremost king of mountains, he was immutable. [331]

21.170 "He accumulated the splendors of hundreds of virtues and qualities;
For many millions of eons he has practiced ethics and disciplined conduct.
The gods and Brahmā, pure beings possessing the splendor of virtue,
Pay homage to him and touch their heads to his feet.

21.171 "Once he conquers Māra's army,
He will surely attain sacred awakening, just as the victorious ones did in the past. [F.161.a]
Father, he does not seek fights or quarrels with us;
Even though our forces are powerful, our task would be a difficult one.

21.172 "Father, look at the sky, where millions of perfect Bodhisattvas,
With jewels on the top of their heads, respectfully wait.
On their limbs these sources of wealth are adorned with flower garlands;
They possess the ten powers and have come here to venerate him.

21.173 "Everything animate, and even the inanimate, too,
Trees, mountains, gods, yakṣas, and garuḍas,
All bow down to that mountain of qualities.
Father, it would be better to leave him alone today."

21.174 "Moreover:
One will not cross where one cannot reach the end;
One will not dig where one cannot pull out the root.
One cannot make him angry, or even make him suffer with forbearance;
One can do nothing that would make him unhappy."

21.175 Monks, at that point the eight goddesses dwelling in the tree of awakening—Śrī, Vṛddhi, Tapā, Śreyasī, Vidu, Ojobalā, Satyavādinī, and Samaṅginī—[332] honored the Bodhisattva, glorified him evoking the sixteen types of splendor, and praised him:

21.176 "Sacred One, you are beautiful,
Like the moon during the bright fortnight.
With your pure mind, you are radiant,
Like the sun at dawn.

21.177 "Pure Being, you have bloomed,
Like a lotus in a pond.
Pure Being, you roar,
Like a lion with a mane, moving in the jungle.

21.178 "Supreme Being, you shine forth,
Like the king of mountains in the middle of the ocean.
Pure Being, you are elevated,
Like the ring of surrounding mountains.

21.179 "Supreme Being, you are hard to fathom,
Like the ocean rich in jewels.
Protector of the World, your mind is vast,
Like the unlimited sky.

21.180 "Pure Being, your mind is firm;
Like the earth, you sustain all beings. [F.161.b]
Supreme Being, your mind is never turbid;
Like the lake Anavapta, it is always calm.

21.181 "Supreme Being, your mind is without a fixed abode;
Like wind, it never lingers anywhere in the world.
Supreme Being, you are hard to meet with;
Like the king of brightness, you are free from all conceit.

21.182 "Sacred One, you are very powerful;
Like Nārāyaṇa, you are hard to tame.
Protector of the World, your resolve is firm;
You will not move from the seat of awakening.

21.183 "Like a lightning bolt released from the hand of Indra,
Supreme Being, you cannot be turned back.
Supreme Being, you will attain your aim in full;
Soon you will be endowed with the complete ten powers."

Monks, in this way the goddesses in the Bodhi tree glorified the Bodhisattva evoking the sixteen types of magnificence.

21.184 Monks, at that moment the gods of the pure realms tried to discourage Māra in sixteen different ways. What were these sixteen? They were: [333]

"Evil one, you are lost;
You are brooding like an old crane.
Evil one, you are powerless,
Like an old elephant sinking in a swamp.

21.185 "Evil one, you are on your own,
Like a loser pretending to be a hero.
Evil one, you have no one with you,
Like someone suffering from a contagious disease, abandoned in a forest.

21.186 "Evil one, you are weak,
Like a young bull pained by a heavy load.
Evil one, you are thrown on your back,
Like a tree tossed about by the wind.

21.187 "Evil one, you are on the wrong path,
Like a traveler who has lost his way.
Evil one, you are the lowest of the low,
Like a poor man who gets envious.

21.188 "Evil one, you are garrulous,
Like an impudent crow.
Evil one, you are overcome with pride,
Like an ungrateful ruffian.

21.189 "Evil one, today you will flee,
Like a jackal at the sound of a lion's roar. [F.162.a]
Evil one, today you will be scattered about,
Like a bird tossed around by the roaring wind.

21.190 "Evil one, not knowing when the time is right,
You are like a beggar whose merit has run out.
Evil one, today you will be abandoned,
Like a broken pot full of dust.

21.191 "Evil one, today you will be restrained by the Bodhisattva,
Like a snake by a spell.
Evil one, you are completely powerless,
Like Uruṇḍa, who lost his arms and legs."

21.192 Monks, in these sixteen ways the gods from the pure realms tried to discourage Māra. And, monks, the gods who attended upon the Bodhisattva now also tried to break Māra's resolve in sixteen ways. What were these sixteen? They were:

21.193 "Evil one, today you will be defeated by the Bodhisattva,
Like an enemy soldier by a hero. [334]
Evil one, today you will be held down by the Bodhisattva,
Like a weak wrestler by a powerful one.

21.194 "Evil one, today you will be outmatched by the Bodhisattva,
Like a firefly by the sun.
Evil one, today you will be scattered by the Bodhisattva,
Like a handful of chaff by a strong wind.

21.195 "Evil one, today you will be terrified by the Bodhisattva,
Like a jackal by a lion.
Evil one, today you will be felled by the Bodhisattva,
Like a great sāl tree whose roots have been cut.

21.196 "Evil one, today you will be destroyed by the Bodhisattva,
Like a hostile city by a great king.
Evil one, today you will be dried up by the Bodhisattva,
Like the water-filled footprint of a cow.

21.197 "Evil one, today you will flee from the Bodhisattva,
Like a criminal escaping execution.
Evil one, today you will be sent swirling by the Bodhisattva,
Like a swarm of bees by the heat of fire.

21.198 "Evil one, today you will be hurt by the Bodhisattva,
Like a lawful king who has lost his kingdom.
Evil one, today you will brood because of the Bodhisattva,
Like an old crane with clipped wings. [F.162.b] [335]

21.199 "Evil one, today you will be deprived of livelihood by the Bodhisattva,
Like a weary traveler without provisions in a wilderness.
Evil one, today you will be weeping because of the Bodhisattva,
Like someone shipwrecked at sea.

21.200 "Evil one, today you will be depleted of life force by the Bodhisattva,
Like grass and trees by the fire at the end of an eon.
Evil one, today you will be crushed by the Bodhisattva,
Like a mountaintop by a mighty thunderbolt."

Monks, although the gods who attended upon the Bodhisattva tried to discourage Māra, the evil one, in these sixteen ways, Māra would not be deterred.

21.201 On this topic, it is said:

Although hosts of deities ask him to turn back, Antaka does not pay heed;
Instead he says, "Tear him up! Beat him! Destroy him! Don't let him escape alive!
If he is liberated, he will liberate my realm and other realms as well;
But the only liberation in store for this mendicant is to get up and flee."

21.202 The Bodhisattva said:

"The king of mountains, Mount Meru, may move and all beings may cease to be;
All the stars, the planets, and the moon may fall from the sky to the earth;
It is possible that all beings may think and act in unison and the great oceans may dry out;
But it is impossible that someone like me would ever move from the king of trees."

21.203 Māra replied: [336]

"I am lord of desires and master of the universe.
I rule over gods, demigods, humans, and animals;
All of them fall under my control.
So get up! Since you are in my realm, follow my orders!"

21.204 The Bodhisattva said:

"If you are master of sense pleasures, you are clearly not a master at all;
Look who I am in reality—I am master of the Dharma.
If you are the master of sense pleasures, you should not go to the lower realms;
While you watch powerlessly, I shall attain awakening."

21.205 Māra replied:

"Monk, what are you doing here in the wilderness on your own?
It is not an easy task to find that which you seek.
Bhṛgu, Aṅgiras, and others who exerted themselves in austerities [F.163.a]
Did not attain that supreme state, so forget about you, an ordinary man."

21.206 The Bodhisattva said:

"With a mind possessed by anger and full of desire for the divine realms,
And a belief that the self is either permanent or impermanent,
And the thought that liberation is a place you can go to,
With such mistaken preconceptions, past sages practiced austerities.

21.207 "Not knowing the truth, they preached the existence of a soul,
Variously claiming that this soul is all-pervasive, confined to locations, eternal,
With form, without form, with qualities, without qualities, [337]
An agent, and not an agent. This is what they claimed.

21.208 "But today, sitting here on this seat, I will attain stainless awakening;
I will defeat you, Māra, and repel your army and soldiers.
I will explain to the world about the origin and arising of things,
And also about nirvāṇa, the cool state where suffering is pacified."

21.209 Māra, upset, angry, and furious, shouted harsh words:

"Catch that Gautama, who sits alone in the wilderness, and bring him quickly to me!
Take him to my palace, shackle, fetter, and yoke him, and make him my gatekeeper!
I will watch him suffer and cry out uncontrollably in many different ways, a slave of the gods."

21.210 The Bodhisattva replied:

"It is possible that someone can make drawings in the empty sky,
Or catch the blowing wind with a lasso,
Or make the bright sun and moon fall from the sky to the earth,
Yet you, or countless beings like you, will never force me away from this tree."

21.211 The powerful army of demons came forth.
With wild cries, playing conches and various drums, they asked,
"When you see this terrifying army of Māra,
Oh, our son, our dear child, are you not annihilated already?

21.212 "You are as bright as gold from the Jambū River, or the pericarp of the campaka flower;
You are youthful, praised and honored by gods and humans. [338]
But today you will meet your doom in this great battle;
You will come under the control of Māra, like the moon seized by the demigod."

21.213 With the voice of Brahmā and the call of the cuckoo bird, [F.163.b]
The Well-Gone One spoke to the hordes of yakṣas and rākṣasas:
"He who hopes to remove someone like me from this perfect tree
Is a fool who tries to frighten space itself.

21.214 "No one can harm me here beneath this tree,
Not even someone who can destroy the trichiliocosm and count its motes of dust,
Not even someone who can draw all the water in the oceans through a single straw,
Not even someone who can split the supreme diamond mountain in a single instant."

21.215 Māra, being thus restrained, became angry;
He held aloft his unsheathed, sharp sword.
"Monk, quick, get up and do as I tell you,
Or I will cut you right away like a bamboo twig or dūrvā grass."

21.216 The Bodhisattva replied:

"Even if this trichiliocosm were filled with demons,
And each of them brandished a sword as large as Mount Meru,
They could not bend a hair on my body, let alone kill me.
Do not disbelieve me; I am reminding you of my firm resolve." [339]

21.217 With faces of camels, oxen, and elephants, and terrifying eyes,
With venomous snakes for arms, with horrible poisonous eyes,
They hurled erupting volcanoes at him,
As well as trees with their roots, and copper and iron.

21.218 They gathered like clouds from the four directions,
Roaring and raining down bolts of lightning, iron balls,
Swords, spears, sharp axes, and poisoned arrows.
They shattered the earth's surface and pulverized trees.

21.219 Some had one hundred hands and shot one hundred arrows.
From their mouths they shot out poisonous snakes and fire,
While seizing crocodiles and other aquatic creatures from the ocean.
Some transformed into garuḍas and pounced at snakes.

21.220 Infuriated, some hurled iron balls the size of Mount Meru,
As well as blazing mountain peaks.
Hitting the ground, they made the earth quake
And stirred up the underground masses of water.

21.221 Some jumped in front of him and some attacked him from behind;
Yelling out, "You child!" they attacked from the left and from the right.
Their hands and feet were turned the wrong way, and their heads were afire;
Blazing lightning bolts sprang forth from their eyes.

21.222 As he witnessed this army of demons, ugly with unnatural forms,
This pure being understood that they were like an illusion. [F.164.a]
"There is no Māra here, no army, no being, and also no self;
Like the moon reflected in a pond, so does this threefold universe revolve. [340]

21.223 "There is no eye, no man, no woman, and no self;
There is no ear, no nose, no tongue, and no body.
No one created these phenomena and no one experiences them;
They arise in dependency and are empty both from within and without."

21.224 As he proclaimed the truth that phenomena are empty,
The yakṣas who are agreeable to discipline
Perceived the weapons in their hands to be flower garlands.
Such was the result of the words spoken by the One Who Always Speaks the Truth.

21.225 He gracefully ran his right hand over his body from head to toe—
The hand, which was adorned with a fine web,
Which had beautiful copper-colored nails, sparkling like gold from the Jambū River,
And was marked with a thousand-spoked wheel, and was auspicious with the merit of virtue.

21.226 He stretched out his hand, like a lightning bolt striking from the sky,
And said, "This earth is my witness.
In the past I have made millions of elaborate sacrifices
And never denied those who petitioned me.

21.227 "Water and fire and wind are my witnesses,
And so are Brahmā, the lord of beings, the moon, the sun, and the stars.
The buddhas in the ten directions are my witnesses;
My discipline, practice, and the superior branches of awakening are all my witnesses.

21.228 "Generosity, discipline, and patience are my witnesses;
Diligence, concentration, and knowledge, [341]
The four limitless contemplations, and the five higher knowledges are my witnesses.
In fact all the gradual practices of awakening are my witnesses.

21.229 "However many beings there are in the ten directions,
With all their strength of merit, discipline, and wisdom,
And all their many unrestricted sacrifices,
They do not equal even a hundredth of the qualities in a single hair of mine."

21.230 He gracefully touched his hand to the earth
So that the earth resounded like a copper vase.
As Māra heard this, he fell to the ground,
And then heard the words, "Strike! Catch this friend of darkness."

21.231 As Māra's body started to sweat, his splendor disappeared and his face grew pale;
Māra now saw himself overcome by old age.
He beat his chest and cried out in fear, with no protector in sight;
Māra's mind was confused and his thoughts befuddled.

21.232 His elephants, horses, conveyances, and chariots all fell to the ground;
The yakṣas, kumbhāṇḍas, and flesh eaters were terrified and ran.
Disoriented, they could not find their way, and without resting place or protection, [F.164.b]
They fled like birds seeing a forest fire.

21.233 Parents, children, sisters, and brothers asked about them:
"Where were they seen? Where have they gone?"
And in this way they started to argue and fight with each other:
"Such suffering has befallen us, and there are no prospects for living." [342]

21.234 The great army of demons, so utterly unshakable,
Was now all gone, dispersed, and no more together.
For seven days they did not see each other,
And when they finally did see their phantasmal forms, they said, "Great to see you alive."

21.235 The goddess in the tree felt compassion;
She took her vase with water and sprinkled the friend of darkness.
"Quick, get up! You must depart without delay!
For this is what happens to those who pay no heed to the words of the Master."

21.236 Māra replied:

"I did not listen to the kind and helpful advice of my sons,
And offended against a perfectly pure being.
Therefore I now reap suffering, fear, misfortune, grief, ruin,
Lamentation, loss of honor, and this miserable state."

21.237 The goddess replied:

"A fool who offends against those who are faultless
Shall himself meet with many troubles—
Fear, suffering, calamities, misery,
Lamentation, murder, and bondage."

21.238 The leaders of gods, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and rākṣasas, Brahmā, Indra, and the gods in the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations
And the Heaven of Joy all proclaimed his victory and called out,
"You have conquered Māra's army! Hero of the World, be victorious!"

21.239 They offered garlands of pearls, crescent moons, parasols, flags, and banners,
And showered him with flowers and powders of aloe, tagara, and sandalwood. [343]
They played music and sang,
"Sit at the tree, O Hero, O Lion Who Conquers His Enemies.

21.240 "At this supreme seat, you have conquered with love the wicked army of demons.
Hero, today you shall attain awakening!
The ten powers, the unique qualities, the distinct realizations,
And the experiences of a buddha you shall attain today.

21.241 "In order to tame Māra, you entered this battle.
There were 360 million beings who witnessed
The power and might of a perfect bodhisattva,
And 240 million who formed the wish for the perfect awakening of a buddha!"

21.242 *This concludes the twenty-first chapter, on conquering Māra.* [F.165.a]

22.

Chapter 22

PERFECT AND COMPLETE AWAKENING

22.1 Monks, once the Bodhisattva had destroyed his demonic opponents, vanquished his enemies, triumphed in the face of battle, and raised high the parasols, standards, and banners of conquest, he settled into the first meditative concentration. That state is free from desires, free of factors connected with evil deeds and nonvirtues, accompanied by thought and analysis, and imbued with the joy and pleasure born of discernment.

When he had brought about the cessation of thought and analysis, he became perfectly quiet in and of himself, and therefore his mind became concentrated. Through this he settled into the second meditative concentration, which is free of thought and analysis and is imbued with the joy and pleasure born of meditative absorption.

22.2 Through disenchantment with joy, he remained impartial, maintained mindfulness and introspection, and experienced physical pleasure. He thus settled into the third meditative concentration, which is unconnected with joy. The noble ones call such a person [344] *the impartial one dwelling on pleasure that is imbued with mindfulness*.

Through relinquishing pleasure at that moment, and having formerly relinquished pain in the past, both mental pleasure and displeasure vanished. Thus he settled into the fourth meditative concentration, which is perfectly pristine impartiality and mindfulness, unconnected with pleasure or pain.

22.3 While the Bodhisattva's mind—purified and cleansed, lucid, free of basic and subsidiary afflictions, gentle, adaptable, and immovable—was immersed in this way, in the early station of the night he produced the intent to actualize the knowledge that sees wisdom with the divine eye, and so he directed his mind toward that purpose.
The Bodhisattva, with the pristine divine eye beyond that of humans, looked at sentient beings. He saw them dying and being born, in all their beauty and ugliness, in favorable and unfavorable circumstances, degenerating or advancing precisely in accordance with their actions. With this understanding he thought: [F.165.b]

22.4 "Alas! Sentient beings engage in negative physical, verbal, and mental conduct. Harboring wrong views, they revile the noble ones. As they engage in the actions associated with wrong views, once their bodies collapse and they die, they fall into bad migrations and are born among the hell realms. Yet other sentient beings engage in positive physical, verbal, and mental conduct. Harboring the correct view, they do not revile noble ones. Since they engage in the actions associated with the correct view, once their bodies collapse and they die, they are born into pleasant existences in the god realms."

22.5 In this manner, with his pristine divine eye beyond that of humans, the Bodhisattva saw sentient beings dying and being born, in all their beauty and ugliness, in favorable and unfavorable circumstances, degenerating and advancing, respectively, precisely in accordance with their actions. Monks, this was indeed how, during the first station of the night, the Bodhisattva actualized knowledge, removed darkness, and lit the light. [345]

22.6 Then, while his mind—purified and cleansed, lucid, free of basic and subsidiary afflictions, supple, flexible, and immovable—was immersed in this way, in the middle station of the night the Bodhisattva produced the intent to actualize the knowledge that sees the wisdom of recollecting past lives, and so he directed his mind toward that purpose.

22.7 In this way he recollected the previous lives of himself and other sentient beings, starting with one, two, three, four, and five lifetimes, then ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty more lifetimes, then one hundred lifetimes, one thousand lifetimes, one hundred thousand lifetimes, then many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes, ten million lifetimes, a billion lifetimes, ten billion lifetimes, a trillion lifetimes, [F.166.a] and a quadrillion lifetimes, then several billion, several tens of billions, several trillions, and several quadrillions of lifetimes, all the way up to the lifetimes in an eon of destruction, an eon of formation, an eon of both destruction and formation, and several eons of both destruction and formation. He remembered the former lives of himself and others in the greatest detail, thinking,

22.8 "In that place I had this name, this surname, this family, this caste, this diet, this lifespan, stayed for this duration, and experienced these kinds of pleasure and pain. After falling from there, I was born here. After falling from there, I was born here…"

22.9 Then, while his mind—purified and cleansed, lucid, free of basic and subsidiary afflictions, supple, flexible, and immovable—was immersed in this way, during the final station of the night, just at the break of dawn, right at the time of night when the morning drum is beaten, the Bodhisattva produced the intent to actualize the knowledge that brings suffering and its origin to an end and realizes the insight that exhausts defilements, and so he directed his mind to that purpose.

22.10 He thought, [346] "How miserable is this world! It is anguished by birth, old age, sickness, death, departure, and rebirth, but it does not know how to remove itself from this massive heap of pure anguish, marked foremost by old age, sickness, and death. Alas! If only beings understood how to extinguish this massive heap of pure anguish marked foremost by old age, sickness, and death."

22.11 Then the Bodhisattva continued to think, [F.166.b] "What is the prerequisite for old age and dying to take place? And what is the causal condition of aging and death?" It then occurred to him, "Aging and death happen when there is birth. Birth is the causal condition of old age and death."

22.12 Then the Bodhisattva thought again, "What is the prerequisite for birth to take place? What is the causal condition of birth?" It then occurred to him, "Birth happens when there is existence. Existence is the causal condition of birth."

22.13 Then the Bodhisattva wondered, "What is the prerequisite for existence to emerge? What is the causal condition of existence?" It then occurred to the Bodhisattva, "Existence occurs when there is clinging. Clinging is the causal condition of existence."

22.14 Then the Bodhisattva wondered, "What is the prerequisite for clinging to occur? What is the causal condition of clinging?" It then occurred to him, "Clinging occurs when there is craving. Craving is the causal condition of clinging."

22.15 Then the Bodhisattva thought, "What is the prerequisite for craving to take place? What is the causal condition of craving?" It then occurred to him, "Craving occurs when there is feeling. Feeling is the causal condition of craving."

22.16 The Bodhisattva then wondered, "What is the prerequisite for feeling to take place? What is the causal condition of feeling?" It then occurred to him, "Feeling happens when there is contact. Contact is the causal condition of feeling." [347]

22.17 Then the Bodhisattva thought, "What is the prerequisite for contact to occur? What is the causal condition of contact?" It then occurred to him, "Contact happens when the six sense fields are present. The six sense fields are the causal condition of contact."

22.18 Then the Bodhisattva wondered, "What is the prerequisite for the six sense fields to emerge? What is the causal condition of the six sense fields?" It then occurred to him, "The six sense fields emerge when there is name and form. Name and form is the causal condition of the six sense fields."

22.19 The Bodhisattva then thought, "What is the prerequisite for name and form to come into being? [F.167.a] What is the causal condition of name and form?" It then occurred to him, "Name and form come into being when there is consciousness. Consciousness is the causal condition of name and form."

22.20 Then the Bodhisattva wondered, "What is the prerequisite for consciousness to form? What is the causal condition of consciousness?" It then occurred to him, "Consciousness emerges when there are formations. Formations are the causal condition of consciousness."

22.21 The Bodhisattva then pondered, "What is the prerequisite for formations to form? What is the causal condition for formations?" It then occurred to him, "Formations come into being when there is ignorance. Ignorance is the causal condition of formations."

22.22 Then, monks, the thought occurred to the Bodhisattva, "Ignorance provides the causal condition for formations. Formations provide the causal condition for consciousness. Consciousness provides the causal condition for name and form. Name and form provides the causal condition for the six sense fields. The six sense fields provide the causal condition for contact. Contact provides the causal condition for feeling. Feeling provides the causal condition for craving. Craving provides the causal condition for clinging. Clinging provides the causal condition for existence. Existence provides the causal condition for birth. Birth provides the causal condition for old age and death, lamentation, pain, despair, and torment. Such is how this massive heap of pure anguish comes into being." [348]

Monks, through considering and ruminating over these factors, which had never before been heard, there dawned in the Bodhisattva wisdom, vision, knowledge, intelligence, prudence, and insight, and a light began to shine.

22.23 Then the Bodhisattva thought, "What must be absent for old age and death not to occur? What must be prevented to eliminate old age and death?" It then occurred to him, "When there is no birth, old age and death do not happen. Old age and death are prevented by preventing birth." [F.167.b]

22.24 Then the Bodhisattva pondered, "What must be absent for birth not to happen? What must be prevented to eliminate birth?" The thought then occurred to him, "When there is no existence, birth does not take place. Birth is eliminated by preventing existence."

22.25 The Bodhisattva then considered, "What must be absent to avoid everything down to formations to manifest? What must be prevented to eliminate formations?" It then occurred to him, "When there is no ignorance, formations do not form. Preventing ignorance prevents formations. By preventing formations, consciousness is prevented, and so on, until birth is prevented, thus putting an end to old age and death, anguish, lamentation, pain, despair, and torment. Such is how this massive heap of pure anguish is brought to an end."

Monks, through considering and ruminating over these factors that had never before been heard, there dawned in the Bodhisattva wisdom, vision, knowledge, intelligence, prudence, and insight, and a light began to shine.

22.26 Monks, on that occasion I accurately understood four truths. I understood: (1) the defiled is suffering, (2) the source of the defiled, (3) how the defiled is brought to cessation, and (4) the path that leads to the cessation of the defiled. I accurately understood the defilement of desire, the defilement of craving, the defilement of ignorance, and the defilement of beliefs. I understood where exactly these defilements come to an end without leaving any residue, [349] and where exactly these defilements vanish and disappear without leaving any residue.

22.27 I accurately understood the identity of ignorance, the source of ignorance, the cessation of ignorance, and the path leading to its cessation. I understood where exactly all ignorance without exception vanishes and disappears. And further I accurately understood the precise identity of formations, the source of formations, the cessation of formations, and the path leading to their cessation. [F.168.a] I accurately understood the precise identity of consciousness, the source of consciousness, the cessation of consciousness, and the path leading to its cessation.

22.28 I accurately understood the precise identity of name and form, the source of name and form, the cessation of name and form, and the path leading to its cessation. I accurately understood the precise identity of the six sense fields, the source of the six sense fields, the cessation of the six sense fields, and the path leading to their cessation.

22.29 I accurately understood the precise identity of contact, the source of contact, the cessation of contact, and the path leading to its cessation. I accurately understood the precise identity of feeling, the source of feeling, the cessation of feeling, and the path leading to its cessation. I accurately understood the precise identity of craving, the source of craving, the cessation of craving, and the path leading to its cessation.

22.30 I accurately understood the precise identity of clinging, the source of clinging, the cessation of clinging, and the path leading to its cessation. I accurately understood the precise identity of existence, the source of existence, the cessation of existence, and the path leading to its cessation. I accurately understood the precise identity of birth, the source of birth, the cessation of birth, and the path leading to its cessation.

22.31 I accurately understood the precise identity of old age, the source of old age, the cessation of old age, and the path leading to its cessation. [350] I accurately understood the precise identity of death, the source of death, the cessation of death, and the path leading to its cessation. I accurately understood precisely how this massive heap of pure suffering, with its anguish, lamentation, pain, despair, and torment comes into being and how it ceases. [F.168.b] I accurately understood the precise identity of suffering, the source of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to its cessation.

22.32 Thus, monks, sure enough, during the final station of night, just at the break of dawn, right at the time for the beating of the morning drum, the Bodhisattva—the being, the good being, the supreme being, the great being, the ox among men, the elephant among men, the lion among men, the bull among men, the hero among men, the champion among men, the adept among men, the lotus among men, the white lotus among men, the supreme beast of burden among men, the unexcelled charioteer among men—reached unexcelled, perfect and complete awakening, attaining the threefold knowledge. He did so through knowledge that consists of one-pointed insight into everything that might be known, understood, attained, realized, and actualized via the wisdom of the noble ones.

22.33 Monks, then the gods said, "Friends, let us scatter flowers! The Blessed One has reached perfect awakening!" But just then, some gods who had seen buddhas before came together and told the others, "Friends, since perfect and complete buddhas of the past all produced and manifested a sign, do not toss flowers until the Blessed One has made a sign."

Monks, the Thus-Gone One knew that the gods were in doubt, so he ascended into the sky to the height of seven palm trees, and while seated there he uttered this phrase of exultation:

22.34 "The path has been interrupted; [351]
Impurities have been extinguished.
The outflows have dried up and flow no longer;
The path, now ended, I travel no longer.
This is called t*he end of suffering*!"

The gods thus strewed the Thus-Gone One with celestial flowers, [F.169.a] piling them up to his knees.

22.35 Monks, when the Thus-Gone One reached complete awakening in this manner, a thick darkness was lifted, craving was purified, beliefs were eradicated, the afflictions were rattled, the splinter was removed, the knot was untied, the flag of pride was brought down, the flag of righteousness was lifted, latent formations were uprooted, the suchness of phenomena became known, the absolute was comprehended, the realm of phenomena was understood, the nature of sentient beings was ascertained, those oriented toward reality were approved of, those oriented toward mistakenness were disapproved of, the indeterminate were accepted, the faculties of sentient beings were seen in all their variety, the conduct of sentient beings was understood, the cure for the illnesses of sentient beings was comprehended, and the medicinal concoction of immortality was employed. He became the king of physicians, who would liberate beings from all suffering and establish them in the bliss of nirvāṇa; he took his seat on the magnificent royal throne of the thus-gone ones, the essence of the thus-gone ones. He discovered the means to complete liberation and entered the city of omniscience, where he mingled perfectly with all buddhas and became inseparable from the comprehension of the realm of phenomena.

22.36 Monks, the Thus-Gone One abided on the seat of awakening for the first seven days, reflecting, "Here I have brought an end to the suffering of birth, old age, and death, which has been happening since time immemorial." [B15]
Monks, indeed, the very moment that the Bodhisattva attained omniscience, all beings throughout all the worlds in the ten directions instantly became ecstatic. All the worlds were flooded with bright light, including even the dark spaces between them that were riddled with evil. [F.169.b] [352] All the worlds throughout the ten directions shook in six ways: they quivered, trembled, and quaked, wobbled, rocked, and swayed; they vibrated, shuddered, and reeled, rattled, shook, and convulsed; they clattered, rattled, and clanged, boomed, thundered, and roared.

All the buddhas offered congratulations to the Thus-Gone One for reaching perfect and complete awakening and conferred upon him religious gifts. With these religious gifts, this trichiliocosm became covered with a jewel parasol, and from that jewel parasol issued forth a network of light rays, which illuminated the immeasurable and innumerable worlds throughout the ten directions.

22.37 Then the bodhisattvas and gods throughout the ten directions uttered an expression of joy:

22.38 "An adept among beings, a lotus on the lake of wisdom, has appeared. Untainted by mundane concerns, he will cause a cloud of great compassion to mass, which will shower throughout the realm of phenomena. The gentle rain of Dharma, medicine to living beings, will cause all the seeds of the roots of virtue to sprout, bring growth to the saplings of faith, and yield the fruits of liberation."

22.39 On this topic, it is said:

Since he defeated Māra, along with his hordes, he is indeed a lion among men.
When this teacher actualized the bliss of concentration
And attained the threefold knowledge by means of the tenfold power,
Many tens of millions of buddha realms throughout the ten directions trembled.

22.40 Those bodhisattvas who had previously come desiring the Dharma
Bowed before his feet and said, "Are you not tired?
We have witnessed the army, as terrifying it was,
Vanquished by the strength of your insight, merit, and diligence." [353]

22.41 Parasols were carried by the buddhas of one hundred billion realms, [F.170.a]
Who said, "Well done, Great Being! You overpowered the demonic hordes
And attained the sublime state, deathless and free of anguish.
Swiftly shower down the rain of true Dharma throughout the three worlds."

22.42 The best of beings throughout the ten directions extended their arms
And said in the voice of a cuckoo's call,
"Just as we attained awakening, you too have reached the pristine state;
We are just like butter and clarified butter."

22.43 Then the goddesses of the desire realm perceived that the Thus-Gone One on the seat of awakening had attained higher knowledge, fulfilled his purpose, and become victorious in battle. He had vanquished the demonic opponents, raised parasols, standards, and flags, and become a hero, a supreme victor, a man, a great man, a supreme physician, and a great remover of thorns. Like a lion, he was fearless and without worry. Like an elephant, he was gentle. Since he had relinquished the three stains, he was stainless. He was knowledgeable, since he had actualized the threefold knowledge. He had reached the other shore, since he had crossed the four rivers. He was of royal caste since he upheld the single jewel parasol, a priest of the three worlds since he had abandoned evil actions, a mendicant since he has cracked open the eggshell of ignorance, an ascetic since he had perfectly transcended all attachment, a gentleman since he had eradicated afflictions, a hero since he did not let the banner fall, a powerhouse since he was endowed with the ten powers, a jewel mine since he was replete with all the gems of the Dharma.

22.44 Knowing this, the goddesses approached the seat of awakening and praised the Thus-Gone One with these verses:

"Having defeated the demon hordes
At the trunk of the king of trees,
He sits there unshakable like Mount Meru,
Fearless and silent.

22.45 "Through practicing generosity, discipline, and restraint
For many tens of millions of eons,
He attained perfect sublime awakening
And therefore shines here today. [F.170.b] [354]

22.46 "Through practicing discipline, vows, and austerities
For many tens of millions of eons
While seeking awakening,
He outshines Śakra and Brahmā.

22.47 "Through wearing the strong armor of forbearance
For many tens of millions of eons,
He embraced suffering
And therefore shines like gold.

22.48 "Through the strength and intensity of his valor
Over many tens of millions of eons,
He drove away his opponents
And thus triumphed over Māra's army.

22.49 "Through his concentration, higher knowledge, and wisdom
Enacted over many tens of millions of eons,
He revered the best of sages
And is therefore honored now himself.

22.50 "Through his insight, learning, and accumulations,
Developed over the course of tens of millions of eons,
He has benefited tens of millions of sentient beings
And thus swiftly attained awakening.

22.51 "He has triumphed over the demon of the aggregates
And likewise over the lord of death and the demon of afflictions.
He has also triumphed over the demon of the gods—
Thus he has no anguish.

22.52 "This god of gods,
Revered even by the gods,
Is worthy of reverence throughout the three worlds
As a field for those seeking merit.

22.53 "He yields the fruit of immortality;
He is a sublime object of veneration.
When a donation is given to him, the result is never-ending
Until the attainment of supreme awakening.

22.54 "The hair between his eyebrows radiates light,
Illuminating many tens of millions of locales.
Outshining even the sun and the moon,
He is a light unto all sentient beings.

22.55 "His form is handsome—
Sublime and well-proportioned.
Replete with the best of characteristics and poised to be of benefit,
It is worthy of reverence throughout the three worlds.

22.56 "His eyes are pristine:
They spontaneously see
The myriad insentient and sentient,
The locales and multitudes of beings. [355]

22.57 "His ears are pristine:
They hear infinite sounds,
Those of gods and humans
And those of the victorious ones' Dharma.

22.58 "His tongue is long
And as melodious as a cuckoo's voice.
Let us listen to him speak about the Dharma,
An ambrosia that brings great peace.

22.59 "Even witnessing Māra's army,
His mind is unperturbed.
Even seeing the multitudes of gods,
His sensible mind is not ecstatic. [F.171.a]

22.60 "It was not with knives and arrows
That he defeated Māra's army.
Rather it was with truth, restraint, and austerity
That he overcame the villainous thugs.

22.61 "Without being displaced from his seat,
His body was unharmed.
On that occasion he was neither affectionate
Nor even angry.

22.62 "Those gods and humans
Who listen to the Dharma from you,
And strive to accomplish it,
Procure their desired acquisition.

22.63 "Through the merit of praising you,
O Victorious One, replete with the resplendence of merit,
May we all immediately become like you,
O Moon among Men!"

22.64 Once the guide, a bull among men, had awakened to buddhahood,
Hundreds of billions of realms trembled and Māra was vanquished.
Then, in the cadence of Brahmā and the melody of a cuckoo,
The Guide first spoke these verses:

22.65 "Merit, fully ripened, brings happiness and vanquishes all suffering.
The wishes of a person with merit will be accomplished;
They will overcome Māra, quickly reach awakening,
And attain nirvāṇa, the tranquil state of peace. [356]

22.66 "Thus who could get their fill of making merit?
Who could be satiated with listening to ambrosia-like Dharma?
Who could get enough of dwelling in deserted forests?
Who could get enough of working for the welfare of beings?"

22.67 Extending his hand, he said to the bodhisattvas:
"Respect has been paid, thus return to your own places."
All of them bowed to the feet of the Thus-Gone One
And returned to their own abodes, in magnificent arrays.

22.68 After witnessing the great demonic horde advancing
And the Well-Gone One toying auspiciously with them,
Beings, out of an unparalleled wish to reach awakening, said:
"May we vanquish Māra and his horde, and thus reach the deathless state."

22.69 Monks, even while the Thus-Gone One reached perfect and complete awakening seated on his lion's throne at the trunk of the tree of awakening, he simultaneously manifested such innumerable displays of awakened playful activity that they would not be easy to reveal even in an eon. [F.171.b]

22.70 On this topic, it is said:

The earth became as even as the palm of a hand;
Hundred-petaled lotuses in full bloom arose in a flood of light.
Hundreds of thousands of gods bowed down to the seat of awakening
And witnessed there the One Who Was First Heralded by a Lion's Roar.

22.71 Hundreds of trees in the trichiliocosm and also its mountains,
Along with Meru, king of mountains, bowed to the seat of awakening. [357]
Approaching the one with the ten powers, Brahmā and Śakra paid homage.
Such was the play of the Lion among Men while at the seat of awakening.

22.72 Hundreds of thousands of light rays radiated from his body,
Pervading the perfect realms of the victorious ones and pacifying the three lower realms.
Through this, the unfortunate states were dried up in a mere fraction of an instant,
And hardness, conceit, and hatred were rendered harmless to any sentient being.
Such was the play of the Lion among Men while he sat in his seat.

22.73 The resplendent tuft of hair on his forehead
Outshone the radiance of the sun, moon, jewels, fire, lightning, and gods,
And the crown of the Teacher's head was not beheld by any being whatsoever.
Such was the play of the Lion among Men while he sat in his seat.

22.74 By touching the earth with the palm of his hand, it trembled in six ways;
This shook Māra's hordes as if they were tufts of cotton.
Māra, brandishing an arrow, etched images in the earth.
Such was the play of the Lion among Men while he sat in his seat.

22.75 *This concludes the twenty-second chapter, on perfect and complete awakening.*

23.

Chapter 23

EXALTATION

23.1 Then the gods from the pure realms circumambulated the Thus-Gone One, who sat at the seat of awakening. They showered him with a rain of divine sandalwood powder and praised him with these fitting verses: [358]

23.2 "You are a light that has dawned upon this world!
Illuminating Lord of the World,
You have given eyes for abandoning afflictions
To this world gone blind!

23.3 "You are victorious in battle!
Through merit you have fulfilled your aim!
Replete with virtuous qualities,
You will satisfy beings!

23.4 "Sinless, you have crossed the mire
And stand on dry ground, O Gautama!
You will ferry across other sentient beings,
Who are carried away by the swift current!

23.5 "Your great insight exalts you!
You are without peer throughout the worlds! [F.172.a]
You are untainted by mundane concerns,
Like a lotus floating on water!

23.6 "With the torch of your insight,
You can awaken
This long-slumbering world,
Shrouded in the fog of darkness!

23.7 "Into the world of the living,
Chronically troubled with the disease of afflictions,
You have come, O King of Physicians,
To cure the world of all illnesses!

23.8 "Now that you have appeared, O Lord,
The unfortunate states will become vacant!
Gods and humans
Will become filled with happiness!

23.9 "Those who seek to behold you,
O Gentle Bull among Men,
Will never go to the lower realms
For thousands of eons!

23.10 "Those who listen to the Dharma
Will become scholars and be free of illness.
They will be profound and bring an end to the aggregates,
And be free from fear!

23.11 "As they sever the bonds of affliction,
They will all be free of clinging
And swiftly become liberated,
And thus attain the fruition of supreme virtue!

23.12 "They will be objects of generosity in the world,
Worthy of receiving gifts!
Donations to them will not diminish,
But become causes for all beings to reach nirvāṇa!" [359]

Monks, once the gods from the realm of the pure realms had praised the Thus-Gone One in this manner, they prostrated to the Thus-Gone One with palms joined and stood to one side.

23.13 Monks, then the luminous gods paid homage to the Thus-Gone One sitting at the seat of awakening with a plethora of flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, unguents, parasols, standards, and flags. When the offerings had been made, they circumambulated him three times and then praised him with these verses:

23.14 "Your mind is profound, O Sage, and your voice is sweet;
O Supreme Sage, your song-like voice is melodious like Brahmā's.
You have discovered the absolute awakening, most sublime!
Homage to you, who has reached the culmination of all melodious tunes!

23.15 "You are protection, an island, the highest goal!
You are the compassionate and loving lord of this world!
You are the supreme physician, remover of thorns!
You are the healer who brings sublime benefit!

23.16 "As soon as you saw Buddha Dīpaṃkara, [F.172.b]
You attained the cloud masses of love and compassion.
Release a torrential downpour of ambrosia, O Lord!
Quell the torment of gods and humans!

23.17 "Like a lotus you are untainted by the three worlds!
Like Meru you are immovable and unshakable!
Like a vajra your pledge is unwavering!
Like the moon you are replete with the best of all qualities!"

Monks, once the luminous gods had praised the Thus-Gone One so, they bowed to him with palms joined and stood to one side.

23.18 Then the gods from the Brahma realm, led by the son of gods, Subrahman, covered the Thus-Gone One sitting at the seat of awakening with a jewel net studded with many trillions of gems. They circumambulated him three times, then praised him with these fitting verses:

23.19 "With your virtuous and stainless insight, you radiate and shine.
You are replete with the thirty-two most sublime characteristics;
Attentive and intelligent, you possess wisdom.
Tireless One, to you we bow down.

23.20 "Utterly devoid of the three stains, you are stainless and pure.
Renowned throughout the three worlds, discoverer of the threefold knowledge,
You bestow insight into the threefold liberation.
We bow to you who possesses the three stainless eyes. [360]

23.21 "You have banished this foul dark eon, you of well-restrained mind;
Exalted in compassion and love, you work for the welfare of beings.
Sage Exalted in Joy, your mind is tranquil;
Deliverer from Doubt, you delight in impartiality.

23.22 "Exalted in discipline and austerity, you act for the welfare of beings;
Having purified your own conduct, you have reached the culmination of conduct.
As the teacher of the four truths, you delight in emancipation;
Being liberated yourself, you liberate other beings as well.

23.23 "When Māra, powerful and persistent, arrived,
You defeated him with your insight, diligence, and love,
And then you attained the deathless supreme state.
Vanquisher of the Villainous Hordes, to you we pay homage!"

Monks, once the gods of the Brahma realm, led by the god Subrahman, had praised the Thus-Gone One with these verses, [F.173.a] they bowed to him with palms joined and stood to one side.

23.24 Then those sons of Māra who were on the side of righteousness approached the Thus-Gone One and covered him with giant jewel parasols and canopies. Then with palms joined, they praised the Thus-Gone One with these fitting verses:

23.25 "When we, the dreadful army of Māra, appeared before you,
In your vast power, you vanquished instantaneously our terrifying demonic horde,
Without rising, moving, or saying a word.
Sage who accomplishes all aims and is honored in the three worlds, we pay homage to you!

23.26 "The trillions of demonesses, numerous as the grains of sand in the river Ganges,
Could not move or sway you from the trunk of the sublime Bodhi tree;
They made trillions of offerings to you, as many as the grains of sand in the Ganges.
That is why, O Lord, seated here today at the foot of the Bodhi tree, you shine!

23.27 "While pursuing the conduct of supreme awakening,
You gave up your dearest wives, beloved sons, servants, gardens, towns,
Your cities, kingdoms, harems, and elephants, [361]
Your heads, eyes, tongues, and feet—that is why you shine today!

23.28 " 'As a buddha, wearing the armor of concentration, miraculous power, and intelligence,
I myself will ferry across trillions of beings, swept away in the ocean of suffering,
In the ship of the sublime Dharma.' This aspiration that you repeatedly voiced
Is now fulfilled, and you will liberate all beings!

23.29 "By the merit of praising you, Most Eminent of Speakers, who gave eyes to the world,
May we all, rejoicing, aspire to omniscience!
As we attain the sublime and peerless awakening that all buddhas praise,
May we defeat the demon hordes and awaken to omniscience!" [F.173.b]

Monks, once the sons of Māra had praised the Thus-Gone One in this manner, with palms joined they bowed to the Thus-Gone One and stood to one side.

23.30 Then a god from the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations, surrounded and escorted by millions of gods, sprinkled the Thus-Gone One with golden lotuses from the Jambū River. Then, in his presence, they praised him with these verses:

23.31 "Your speech is gentle, calm, and forthright;
Free of the stains of darkness, you have realized the immortal state.
You deserve an unparalleled treatment in heaven and on earth;
Your intelligence is blazing—to you we bow!

23.32 "You bring joy and have abandoned afflictions and removed stains and blemishes;
With your joyous speech, you delight gods and humans! [362]
With the light rays from your stainless and effulgent sublime body,
You triumph over this world, like the master of gods and humans!

23.33 "Vanquisher of Foes, you are knowledgeable in the conduct of others;
Beloved in the world of gods and humans, you overturn the thoughts of others;
Brilliant and Wise One, you illuminate the conduct of others.
Walk here on this path traversed by those with the ten powers!

23.34 "Having relinquished the ubiquitous clinging to existence, suffering falsely construed,
May you train gods and humans by training their minds.
May you course in the sky throughout the four directions like the moon,
And so be a sublime eye and a final refuge in these three worlds!

23.35 "Though beloved in the world of gods and humans, you do not gravitate toward sense objects;
Without indulging in desire, you take pleasure in virtue.
Proclaimed far and wide, you are without equal in the three worlds;
You are the protector, the refuge, the only resort of beings here!"

Monks, once the gods from the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations, led by the god in charge, had praised the Thus-Gone One, with palms joined they bowed to him and stood to one side. [F.174.a]

23.36 Next the god Sunirmita, surrounded and escorted by an assembly of gods from the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, covered the Thus-Gone One with ribbons of silk studded with various gemstones, and in his presence praised him with these verses:

23.37 "You are the light of Dharma that has arisen from relinquishing the three stains;
You destroy delusion, beliefs, and ignorance, and unfold brilliance and glory!
You place in the deathless state those who indulge in the wrong path! [363]
You are an object of veneration here in the world, honored in heaven and earth!

23.38 "You are a physician skilled in healing, who dispenses the elixir of happiness.
Through the path of the previous victorious ones, you eradicate all illnesses of beings,
The lingering symptoms of false belief, affliction, and ignorance that has accumulated.
For this reason, you are the sublime physician and guide who courses upon the earth.

23.39 "Sunlight, moonlight, stars, firelight, and the luster of jewels,
The luster of Śakra and Brahmā—none of it shines in the presence of your splendor!
With your brilliance and illuminating insight, you are replete with radiance and glory!
To you whose extraordinary wisdom has directly manifested, we bow down!

23.40 "Consummate Guide, whose melodious speech relates what is true and untrue,
Whose mind is gentle, composed, with subdued sense faculties, and great calmness,
A teacher who can instruct the audiences of gods and humans in need of instruction,
To you, Sage of the Śākyas, bull among men, honored by gods and humans, we pay homage!

23.41 "In your intelligence, you hold wisdom instructions to be supreme and convey them throughout the three existences;
You remove the three stains and teach the threefold knowledge and the threefold liberation.
O Sage, you understand, according to intellect, who is a fitting vessel and who is not!
To you, unique in the trichiliocosm and honored in heavens and on earth, we pay homage!"

Monks, once the god Sunirmita and his entourage had praised the Thus-Gone One, with palms joined they bowed down to the Thus-Gone One and sat to one side.

23.42 Next the god Santuṣita, along with other gods from the Heaven of Joy, approached the Thus-Gone One as he sat at the seat of awakening and draped him with a vast patchwork of divine garments. [F.174.b] [364] Then he praised the Thus-Gone One in his presence with these verses:

23.43 "When you were dwelling in the Heaven of Joy, you taught the Dharma liberally.
That teaching of yours continues unabated; even today the gods practice the Dharma.
We cannot get enough of looking at you, nor can we get enough of listening to the Dharma;
Ocean of Good Qualities, Lamp of the World, to you we bow with head and heart.

23.44 "When you departed from the Heaven of Joy, you exhausted all unfortunate states;
Then, while seated at the Bodhi tree, you quelled the afflictions of all beings.
To those for whom you discovered vast awakening and defeated Māra,
With your aspiration now fulfilled, quick, turn the wheel of Dharma in detail!

23.45 "There are many thousands of beings throughout the ten directions;
Let the Dharma be heard by those who seek it!
May you make haste to turn the wheel in detail!
May you liberate those thousands of creatures from existence!"
Monks, once the god Santuṣita and his entourage had praised the Thus-Gone One, with palms joined they bowed to him and sat to one side.

23.46 Then the gods from the Heaven Free from Strife, led by the god Suyāma, went to where the Thus-Gone One was seated. When they arrived, they worshiped the Thus-Gone One sitting at the seat of awakening with a plethora of flowers, incense, garlands, perfumes, and unguents, and in his presence they praised him with these fitting verses:

23.47 "Who is superior to you, you who are without equal
In discipline, absorption, and insight?
To you, Thus-Gone One, adept in inclinations and liberation,
We pay homage with our heads bowed!

23.48 "We witness at the seat of awakening
The magnificent displays performed by the gods.
How you are worshiped by gods and humans!
No one else deserves this at all!

23.49 "It is not in vain that you have come,
Enduring great hardship in the process. [365]
Defeating the wicked one and his army
You attained unexcelled awakening. [F.175.a]

23.50 "You have illuminated the ten directions,
Lit up the three worlds with the lamp of your insight.
It is you who will remove the world's cataracts,
Bestowing upon it unexcelled eyes!

23.51 "Praising you for an eon
Will not even cover the pores of your body.
Ocean of Good Qualities, renowned throughout the world,
To you, Thus-Gone One, we pay homage with our heads bowed!"
Once the gods from the Heaven Free from Strife, led by the god Suyāma, had praised the Thus-Gone One, with palms joined they bowed to the Thus-Gone One and then stood to one side.

23.52 Then Śakra, lord of the gods, together with the gods from the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, paid homage to the Thus-Gone One with a display of flowers, incense, garlands, unguents, parasols, standards, and flags, then praised him with these verses:

23.53 "O Sage, you are unflappable, faultless, and ever stable, like Mount Meru!
With merit and splendor, your wisdom light is renowned throughout the ten directions!
O Sage, you previously paid homage to hundreds of thousands of buddhas,
And in their place, you have overcome the demon horde at the Bodhi tree!

23.54 "Source of discipline, learning, absorption, and insight, you are the banner of wisdom!
Destroyer of old age and death, you are the supreme physician, who gives eyes to the world!
O Sage, having cast off the three defilements and defects, your sense faculties are restrained, your mind composed!
To you, O Bull among Śākyas, Dharma King of Beings, we go for refuge!

23.55 "Your work to achieve awakening, exalted by the force of your perseverance, was infinite!
Your powers—the powers of your insight, skillful means, love, and great merit—
Were already infinite, O Blessed One, when you set out for the state of awakening!
Thus you have the strength of the ten powers today on the seat of awakening! [366]

23.56 "Seeing the infinite hordes of armies, the gods became anxious and frightened,
Lest the King of Mendicants in repose at the seat of awakening should be troubled. [F.175.b]
But the spirits did not frighten you, nor could they move your body;
Rather your hand struck hard, shaking them, and you defeated Māra's army.

23.57 "Just as the previous ones attained sublime awakening on the lion throne,
You have followed in their footsteps; you awakened and became the same as them.
Identical in heart and mind, you have attained omniscience.
Thus, Sublime Being in the World, Self-Arisen One, you are a field of merit for beings."
Monks, once Śakra, lord of the gods, together with the gods from the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, had praised the Thus-Gone One, with palms joined they bowed to the Thus-Gone One and sat to one side.

23.58 Next the Four Great Kings, together with the gods from the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, went to the place where the Thus-Gone One was. When they arrived, they paid homage to him. Hundreds of thousands of gods surrounded him, holding garlands and bouquets of abhimuktaka flowers, campaka flowers, jasmine flowers, nutmeg blossoms, and dhānuṣkāri flowers. Hundreds of thousands of celestial maidens surrounded him, singing divine songs. Thereafter they all praised the Thus-Gone One with these fitting verses:

23.59 "You whose speech is exceedingly melodious and whose cadence is captivating,
Who is soothing and clear minded like the moon,
Whose face is smiling and whose tongue is long,
To you, Supreme Enrapturing Sage, we pay homage!

23.60 "When your melodious speech,
A voice so sweet and beloved among gods and humans,
Resounds throughout all the worlds,
It surpasses the voice of all who can speak!

23.61 "It quells the afflictions of attachment, anger, and delusion;
It engenders pristine joy within nonhumans.
Upon hearing the Dharma with a stainless heart,
They all attain exalted liberation.

23.62 "You do not disparage the ignorant,
Nor are you ever drunk with conceit about your knowledge. [F.176.a] [367]
You are neither pompous nor timid,
Like a firm mountain in the middle of a sea.

23.63 "People here have profited well
Since such a being has appeared in the world!
Like the goddess of wealth who is the giver of riches,
You will bestow your Dharma throughout the whole world!"

Once the gods of the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, led foremost by the Four Great Kings themselves, had praised the Thus-Gone One in repose at the seat of awakening, they joined palms and bowed to the Thus-Gone One and stood to one side.

23.64 Then the gods of the sky approached the Thus-Gone One. As a way of paying homage to the Perfect and Completely Awakened One, the gods adorned the whole sky with a net of jewels and small bells. They offered him jewel parasols, jewel banners, jewel and silk brocade wreaths, ornate jewel earrings, flower wreaths, and pearl strands of various types held by gods who revealed the upper half of their bodies, as well as crescent moons. Upon making these offerings, in his presence they praised him with these verses:

23.65 "Dwelling constantly in the sky, O Sage,
We clearly see all the activities of beings as they are.
Looking at your conduct, O Pristine Sentient Being,
We do not see confusion in your focused mind.

23.66 "The sky is filled with the guides of humans,
Bodhisattvas who have come to pay tribute.
Since in this way they are bodies of space,
No harm is caused to the celestial mansions.

23.67 "Even though rains of flowers,
Enough to fill a world system to the brim,
Descend onto your body from the sky,
They are like rivers flowing into an ocean.

23.68 "We see parasols, flowers, earrings, and garlands,
Wreaths of campaka flowers,
Necklaces, moons, and crescent moons.
The gods bestrew you with them, yet they are not mixed together.

23.69 "There is no room here for even a hair—[F.176.b]
The whole sky is filled with gods.
They pay homage to you, Supreme Biped,
But you are neither proud nor overwhelmed." [368]

Once the gods of the sky had so praised the Thus-Gone One in repose at the seat of awakening, they joined palms and bowed to him and stood to one side.

23.70 Then the terrestrial gods, in order to pay homage to the Thus-Gone One, cleansed and anointed the entire surface of the earth, sprinkled it with perfumed water, strewed it with flowers, covered it with canopies of various dyed fabrics, and then offered it to the Thus-Gone One. Thereafter they praised him with these verses:

23.71 "The trichiliocosm has become as indestructible and firm as a vajra.
You sat on the seat of awakening by virtue of your vajra-hard position when you said:
'Even should my skin, flesh, bones, and marrow shrivel up right here,
I will not rise from this place without reaching awakening.'

23.72 "If you, Lion among Men, do not consecrate the entire trichiliocosm,
Then the whole thing will collapse
With the violent shock of the arrival of bodhisattvas,
The soles of whose feet will cause ten million realms to quake.

23.73 "An illustrious gift is gained by the terrestrial gods
Wherever the most sublime being happens to walk.
You illuminate darkness everywhere in the world;
Now that the trichiliocosm is a basis for worship, how much more so is your body?

23.74 "Should we take hold of all the lands of the trichiliocosm—
All the myriad hundreds of thousands of subterranean bodies of water,
And all the myriad livelihoods of beings in those places—
We would offer it all to you. May you use it according to your wishes! [369]

23.75 "Wherever you shall sit, travel, or rest,
And wherever the hearers, who are the children of the Well-Gone Gautama,
Shall preach or listen to the Dharma,
We dedicate all the roots of virtue for the sake of awakening!"

Once the terrestrial gods had praised in this manner the Thus-Gone One sitting in repose at the seat of awakening, they bowed to him with palms joined and stood to one side.

23.76 *This concludes the twenty-third chapter, on exaltation.* [F.177.a]

24.

Chapter 24

TRAPUṢA AND BHALLIKA

24.1 Monks, while the Thus-Gone One was being praised by the gods after he had reached perfect and complete awakening, he stared at the king of trees without blinking and without getting out of his cross-legged position. Seven days passed in this way while he was at the foot of the Bodhi tree experiencing bliss from the sustenance of concentration and joy.

24.2 Then, once the seven days had passed, the gods from the desire realm approached the Thus-Gone One, carrying tens of thousands of vases containing scented water. The gods from the form realm also approached the Thus-Gone One, carrying tens of thousands of vases containing scented water. When they arrived, they bathed the Bodhi tree and the Thus-Gone One with the scented water. Innumerable gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas anointed their own bodies with the scented water that had come into contact with the body of the Thus-Gone One. This engendered among them the intention set on unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening. Even after the gods and the others had returned to their respective realms, they did not part from the scented water and desired no other scent. [370] Through the joy and the supreme joy that are born from respectfully taking to heart the Thus-Gone One, they became irreversible from unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening.

24.3 Monks, then a god named Samantakusuma, who had joined in that very audience, bowed down to the feet of the Thus-Gone One, and with palms joined said to him, "What, O Blessed One, is the name of the absorption in which the Thus-Gone One remained for seven days without moving from the cross-legged position?"
Monks, thus addressed, the Thus-Gone One answered the god, *"Array of the food of joy,* O divine son, is the name of the meditative absorption in which the Thus-Gone One remained for seven days without moving from the cross-legged position." [F.177.b]

24.4 Monks, the god Samantakusuma then praised the Thus-Gone One with these verses:

"Your feet are covered with wheels
And shine with the brilliance of stainless, thousand-petaled lotuses.
The crowns of gods brush your feet;
To your feet, replete with splendor, I bow down!"

24.5 When he bowed to the feet of the Well-Gone One,
The god became delighted.
He said this, which was soothing to gods and humans,
And removed their doubt:

24.6 "You give joy to the Śākya clan;
You bring an end to attachment, anger, and delusion.
You bring the culmination of all wishes;
Please dispel the doubts of gods and humans.

24.7 "You have gained immeasurable omniscience,
A buddha with the ten powers.
So, Victorious One, why do you remain at the center of the earth
In the cross-legged pose for seven days?

24.8 "What are you staring at for seven days,
With your eyes that are like blooming hundred-petaled lotuses
As you gaze, O Lion among Men,
With your unblinking and pristine eyes

24.9 "Is it your aspiration
That makes you remain cross-legged
For seven days at the king of trees?
Or is it common to all the lions of speech? [371]

24.10 "With teeth so even and pure,
And with the supremely fragrant breath of one with the ten powers,
Please speak words of unadulterated truth,
And thus bring joy to gods and humans!"

24.11 The Moon-Faced One replied:
"Listen, divine son, to what I say!
I will briefly offer
A response to these questions.

24.12 "Just as a king does not leave the place
Where he was consecrated by his kinfolk
For a duration of seven days,
Since that is the duty of kings,

24.13 "So also victorious ones, even with the ten powers,
When consecrated, their aspirations fulfilled,
Remain in the cross-legged position
At the center of the earth for seven days.

24.14 "Just as a warrior stares
At vanquished enemy troops,
Buddhas too, at the seat of awakening,
Stare at the afflictions, now destroyed.

24.15 "Attachment and anger, born from delusion,
Are like the foes of beings.
Like thieves with their stolen goods,
I have destroyed them here. [F.178.a]

24.16 "Here I destroyed manifold forms of pride
And arrogance too, so that they exist no more.
I relinquished all defilements,
And the highest wisdom has dawned in me.

24.17 "Here the ignorance that drives the thirst for existence
And induces inappropriate actions—
A network of roots including latent formations—
Was burned up by the intense fire of wisdom.

24.18 "Here the belief in 'I' and 'mine'
And its tangle of faults,
With roots that extend far, knotted tight with obscurations,
Has been severed by the blade of wisdom.

24.19 "Here those enduring deceptions of mine
Have at long last ended in destruction.
The aggregates, along with the clinging to them,
I have discerned through my wisdom.

24.20 "The dualistic delusions, erroneous fixations,
Which eventually land one in hell,
I have removed here
So that they are certain never to arise again. [372]

24.21 "Here the forest of obscurations
Has been burned away by the fire of my roots of virtue.
I have utterly burned up
The fourfold misconception, too.

24.22 "The harmful garland of thoughts
Strung on the thread of conceptions,
I have utterly reversed
With the rosaries of the branches of awakening.

24.23 "The sixty-five travails,
The thirty impure delusions,
And the forty misdeeds
I eliminated here at the center of the earth.

24.24 "The sixteen uncontrolled things,
The eighteen elements,
And the twenty-five pains
I eliminated while sitting at the center of the earth.

24.25 "The twenty streams of passion
And the twenty-eight fears of beings
I utterly transcended
Through the force and commitment of my perseverance.

24.26 "Likewise five hundred roars of buddhas
I perfectly comprehended here.
Phenomena, one hundred thousand strong,
I also perfectly comprehended.

24.27 "Here all the ninety-eight latent formations,
Down to the bottom of their roots
And all their sprouting shoots,
Were burned up by the fire of my wisdom.

24.28 "The reservoir of doubt and uncertainty,
Filled with the waters of views
From the river of craving—the fount of nonvirtue—
Is dried up by the sun of my wisdom.

24.29 "When I rid myself of pretense and guile,
Here I cut down the forest of afflictions
That is teeming with deception, stinginess, hatred, and jealousy, [F.178.b]
And burned it up with the fire of my discipline.

24.30 "Here, through the medicine of wisdom most sublime,
I purged myself of the root of conflict
That induces the nausea of the lower realms—
Namely, disparaging remarks made toward noble ones.

24.31 "Here I reached the end of all crying,
Wailing, anguish, and lamentation,
Once I attained
The absorption and qualities born of wisdom. [373]

24.32 "Here I triumphed over all the streams of tormenting anguish,
With their tributaries and bends
Of conceit and negligence,
Once I attained the absorption in harmony with truth.

24.33 "Here I cut down with the ax of mindfulness
The entire dense jungle of afflictions,
Teeming with the trees of existence and overgrown with the roots of concepts,
And burned it up with the fire of my wisdom.

24.34 "Just as Śakra did to the lord of the demigods,
Here I destroyed with the sword of wisdom
The deceptive one who, self-obsessed,
Was powerful enough to rule over the three realms.

24.35 "Here at the center of the earth,
I cut through the entire snare of thirty-six courses of action
With the powerful sword of insight,
Then burned it up with the fire of wisdom.

24.36 "Here with the plowshare of trenchant insight,
I uprooted all the root afflictions
Along with their latent formations,
Which yield suffering and anguish.

24.37 "Here I cleansed the eye of wisdom,
Naturally pure in all beings;
With the great balm of insight,
I removed the thick cataract of delusion.

24.38 "Here, with the sunlight of mindfulness and tranquility,
I dried up the ocean of existence,
An expanse of craving churned up
By the intoxicated crocodiles of the four physical elements.

24.39 "Here I extinguished, with the cool water of liberation,
The great fire of lust,
With its billowing smoke of thought
Raging through the timber of objects.

24.40 "Here, with the gusts of fierce determination,
I drove away and dispersed
The cloud of latent formations,
With its lightning of proclivities and its thunder of concepts.

24.41 "Here I attained the absorption of pristine mindfulness
And struck down with a strong blow of the sword of knowledge
The enemies of conceptual mind and actions,
And the hostile way they reinforce existence.

24.42 "Here, having acquired love, I vanquished
The armies of persistent demon hordes
With disfigured shapes, bearing the highest crests
On chariots mighty with elephants and horses. [F.179.a] [374]

24.43 "Here I fastened down
The horse of the six sense fields,
Engorged with the five sense objects and ever careless with intoxication,
Once I attained the absorption of repulsiveness.

24.44 "Here I reached the end
Of infatuation and aggression,
The travails of conflicts and disputes,
Once I attained the absorption of wishlessness.

24.45 "Here I exhausted all conceits,
Thoughts, and concepts,
Rooted inside of me and out,
Once I attained the absorption of emptiness.

24.46 "Here I relinquished, without exception,
All the pleasures of gods and humans,
Up to the peak of existence,
Once I attained the absorption of signlessness.

24.47 "Here, once I attained the threefold liberation,
I completely released
All the fetters of existence
Through the power of my knowledge.

24.48 "Here, through witnessing causality,
I vanquished the three causal conceptions:
Conceptions of permanence and impermanence,
Self and lack of self, pleasure and pain.

24.49 "Here, at the trunk of the king of trees,
I severed with the blow of impermanence
The unfoldings of different karmas,
All rooted in the six sense fields.

24.50 "Here, with the sun of wisdom,
I dispelled the fog of delusion, debased with impurities,
Thick with views of arrogance and anger,
Thus illuminating what was darkened for so long.

24.51 "Here, with the boat of tenacity,
I crossed the great ocean of cyclic existence
With its crocodiles of passion and desire,
Its waves of craving, and its grasping at wrong views.

24.52 "Here I awakened to the realization
That scorches desire, anger, delusion,
And mental concepts,
Like grasshoppers fallen into a forest fire.

24.53 "Oppressed for so long—
For billions of countless eons—
On the road of cyclic existence,
Here I am revived, my torment now quelled. [375]

24.54 "Here I have realized the nectar,
Undiscovered by any other exponent,
Which brings an end to old age, death, anguish, and pain
For the benefit of the world.

24.55 "Here I have reached the city of fearlessness,
Where suffering born of craving by means of sensory experience,
And suffering based on the aggregates,
Will arise no more. [F.179.b]

24.56 "Here I have realized
The great enemies within, in all their multitudes.
Having bound and burned them up,
I have ensured that they can no longer appear.

24.57 "Here I have realized the nectar,
For the sake of which
I gave up my own flesh, my eyes, and many precious jewels
For billions of eons.

24.58 "Here I understood what was realized
By innumerable victorious ones in the past,
About which sweet and pleasing words
Are exclaimed throughout the world.

24.59 "Here I realized
The dependently arisen world to be empty,
Reoccurring in each moment of cognition
Like a mirage, or a city of gandharvas.

24.60 "Here I have purified the eye most sublime
By which I see all worlds,
Like fruit placed
In the palm of the hand.

24.61 "Here I recollected my former lives.
I attained the threefold knowledge,
Then remembered immeasurable myriad eons,
As if waking from sleep.

24.62 "What sets the errant gods and humans aflame
Are their misconceptions.
Yet here I drank the elixir of nectar,
Truly free of error.

24.63 "Here, after triumphing through the power of love,
I drank the elixir of nectar,
For the sake of which
Those with the ten powers had cultivated love for all beings.

24.64 "Here, having triumphed through the power of compassion,
I drank the elixir of nectar,
For the sake of which
Those with the ten powers cultivated compassion for all beings. [376]

24.65 "Here, having triumphed through the power of joy,
I drank the elixir of nectar,
For the sake of which
Those with the ten powers cultivated joy for all beings.

24.66 "Here, having triumphed through the power of impartiality,
I drank the elixir of nectar,
For the sake of which
Those with the ten powers cultivated impartiality for myriad eons.

24.67 "Here I drank the elixir of nectar
That has been drunk by those with the ten powers,
The victorious lions of yore,
More numerous than the sand in the river Ganges.

24.68 "The words that I said
Before Māra and his army were:
'I will not get out of the cross-legged position
Until I bring an end to old age and death.' [F.180.a]

24.69 "I destroyed ignorance
With blazing, vajra-hard wisdom,
And attained the state of the ten powers.
That is why I now abandon the cross-legged posture.

24.70 "I attained the level of a worthy one,
Exhausted all of my defilements,
And destroyed the demon horde.
That is why I now get out of the cross-legged posture.

24.71 "Here I rent asunder
The closed doors of the five obstructions
And cut through the vines of craving.
Now I get out of the cross-legged posture."

24.72 Then this moon among men
Rose slowly from his seat,
Accepted the ceremonial anointment,
And took his seat on a lion throne.

24.73 The assemblies of gods, using jewel pitchers
Filled with differently scented waters,
Washed the friend of the world,
Who reached the culmination of qualities and the ten powers.

24.74 Billions of gods,
Along with myriad goddesses,
Performed an immeasurable worship service,
With thousands of musical instruments all around.

24.75 Divine sons, it is thus
Reasonable, logical, and well grounded
Why victorious ones do not leave their cross-legged position
At the center of the earth for seven days. [377]

24.76 Monks, the perfect and completely awakened Thus-Gone One thus sat for the first seven days on that very seat, thinking, "Here I have reached unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening. Here I have brought an end to the sufferings of beginningless birth, old age, and death." During the second week, the Thus-Gone One wandered far and wide throughout the entire trichiliocosm. During the third week, the Thus-Gone One gazed at the seat of awakening without blinking and thought, "Here I awakened to unsurpassable, perfect and complete buddhahood, bringing an end to the sufferings of beginningless birth, old age, and death." Then, during the fourth week, the Thus-Gone One took a walk, but not as far, this time traveling from the eastern ocean to the western ocean. [F.180.b] [B16]

24.77 Then Māra, the evil one, approached the Thus-Gone One and said, "Since the time has now come for the Blessed One to pass into parinirvāṇa, may the Blessed One pass into parinirvāṇa! May the Well-Gone One pass into parinirvāṇa!" Monks, to these words of Māra the evil one, the Thus-Gone One replied, "Evil one, I will not pass into parinirvāṇa until my elder monks have become restrained, lucid, proficient, courageous, and learned; until they have embarked on the Dharma in an authentic way and become masters themselves; and until they can overcome opponents in concordance with the Dharma and teach the Dharma in conjunction with miracles. Evil one, I will not pass away into parinirvāṇa until the tradition of the Buddha, his teaching, and his community are well established in the world; and until infinite bodhisattvas are prophesied to reach unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening. Evil one, I will not pass away until all four of my assemblies become restrained, lucid, proficient, and courageous, and can teach the Dharma in conjunction with miracles." [378]

24.78 As soon as Māra, the evil one, had heard these words, he stepped aside and stood there anguished and depressed. Dejected, with his head hung low, he wrote on the ground with a stick, "He has gone beyond my range!"

24.79 Then three of Māra's daughters—Rati, Arati, and Tṛṣṇā—spoke this verse to Māra, the evil one:

"Father, why are you unhappy? [F.181.a]
Tell us who this man is!
We will bind him with the lasso of desire
And lead him like an elephant.

24.80 "Leading him, we will promptly
Bring him under your control.
So cast off your bad mood!
You are going to be elated."

24.81 But Māra, the evil one, replied:

"The Well-Gone One is the worthy one of the world;
He will never fall under the power of desire.
He has gone beyond my range;
This is why I grieve so strongly!"

24.82 Even though the girls had already experienced the deeds of the Bodhisattva and the power of the Thus-Gone One, out of their fickleness they did not listen to their father's words. They transformed into girls in the prime of youth, who had just reached maturity and, in order to bewilder the Thus-Gone One, they went before him, summoning all their womanly guiles. However, as the Thus-Gone One paid them no heed, they were transformed into decrepit old ladies. The girls then went before their father and said:

24.83 "It is indeed true what you said, father:
'He is not swayed by desire;
He has gone beyond my range.
This is why I grieve so strongly!'

24.84 "The form that we manifested to destroy Gautama
Would have broken his heart,
Had he only seen it.
Father, please do away with these decrepit bodies of ours." [379]

24.85 Māra, the evil one, told them:

"I am not aware of anyone in the animate or inanimate world
Who can change what has been done by the Buddha's power.
Go promptly and confess to the Sage the offense that you committed;
He will then return your bodies to their previous form as you wish."

24.86 So the daughters went and asked the Thus-Gone One for forgiveness, saying: "Well-Gone One, please forgive our offense! Blessed One, forgive the offense that we childish, stupid, uncultivated, unskilled, ignorant women committed with the wish to insult the Blessed One!" [F.181.b]

24.87 The Thus-Gone One spoke to them with these verses:

"You want to scrape through a mountain with your fingernails,
Chew through iron with your teeth,
Penetrate a mountain with your head,
And measure an unfathomable depth.
Thus do I forgive the offense
That you girls have committed.

24.88 "Why is that? Because it is an advancement in the training of the noble Dharma to understand a fault to be a fault, to confess it, and to vow to abstain from it henceforth."

24.89 Monks, during the fifth week, the Thus-Gone One dwelt in the domain of the nāga king Mucilinda. Since the weather that week was intemperate, the nāga king Mucilinda, worried that the Blessed One's body would be harmed by the cold and the wind, came out of his abode, coiled his body around that of the Thus-Gone One seven times, and shielded him with his hoods. From the east as well, several more nāga kings arrived. Worried that the cold and wind would harm the

Blessed One's body, they too coiled their bodies seven times around the body of the Thus-Gone One and shielded him with their hoods. Just like the nāga kings from the east, nāga kings from the south, west, and north [380] also came, worried that the cold and wind might harm the Thus-Gone One's body. They too coiled their bodies around the Thus-Gone One's body seven times and shielded him with their hoods. That pile of nāga kings loomed at a height like that of Meru, king of mountains. Those nāga kings had never before known such bliss as during these seven days and seven nights, because of being close to the Thus-Gone One's body.

24.90 When seven days had passed, the nāga kings understood that the bad weather had let up, and so they unfurled their bodies from the Thus-Gone One's body. They then bowed their heads at the feet of the Thus-Gone One, circumambulated him three times, and returned to their respective homes. The nāga king Mucilinda also bowed his head to the feet of the Thus-Gone One, circumambulated him three times, and then set out for his domain. [F.182.a]

24.91 During the sixth week, the Thus-Gone One proceeded from the nāga king Mucilinda's domain to a banyan tree of a goat herder. On the way, on the bank of the Nairañjanā River between the nāga king Mucilinda's domain and the goat herder's banyan tree, the Thus-Gone One was spotted by some carakas, parivrājakas, vṛddhaśrāvakas, gautamas, nirgranthas, ājīvikas, and others as well. They asked him, "Blessed One, did Gautama fare happily during the unseasonable seven-day storm?"

24.92 Monks, at that time the Thus-Gone One spoke these meaningful words:

"Happy is the solitude of the contented one
Who has heard the Dharma and can see.
Happy is the abstention from injury, in this world,
Of the one restrained toward living beings.

24.93 "Happy is the freedom from desire
That transcends evil.
Happy is the subjugation of selfishness and pride.
These are indeed the supreme forms of happiness!"

24.94 Monks, seeing the world ablaze with birth, old age, sickness, death, anguish, lamentation, suffering, discontent, and strife, the Thus-Gone One next uttered this meaningful verse: [381]

"This world is tormented
By sounds, sensations, tastes, forms, and smells.

Even while frightened of existence,
Due to craving after existence, beings continue to pursue existence."

24.95 During the seventh week, the Thus-Gone One sat at the trunk of a bodhi tree. During that time, two learned and clever merchant brothers from the north, Trapuṣa and Bhallika, were traveling back from the south, after having gained much profit, with a caravan of five hundred fully loaded carts carrying many kinds of merchandise.
They had two bullocks called Sujāta and Kīrti. These two bulls had no fear of being waylaid, and thus they could be employed where no other bullocks would pass. Wherever there was a threat, they would stand as though fastened to stakes. [F.182.b] They could not be goaded by a whip, but only by handfuls of lotus flowers, or garlands of jasmine flowers.
When this caravan of merchants approached the Bodhi tree, a goddess who lived in a forest of milk trees enchanted all the carriages, thus rendering them motionless. All the parts of the carriages, such as the harnesses and the rest, tore and split, and the wheels of the carriages sunk into the ground up to their axles. Even with everyone making great effort, the carts would move no farther.

24.96 Shocked and frightened, the members of the caravan thought, "Why have the carriages stopped here on this plain? What has happened?"
They brought out the two bullocks Sujāta and Kīrti, but they also would move no farther, even though they were goaded with bunches of lotuses and garlands of jasmine. So the merchants thought, "Since even these two animals will not move, there certainly must be some threat up ahead."
Thus they dispatched scouts on horseback. When the scouts returned, they reported, "There is no threat whatsoever."
The goddess then revealed her form and consoled the members of the caravan, saying, "Do not fear!" [382]

24.97 Now the two bullocks could lead the carts to where the Thus-Gone One was. When they arrived, they saw the Thus-Gone One blazing like the god of fire, well adorned with the thirty-two marks of a great being, shining with splendor, like the sun just after dawn.
Seeing him, the merchants were amazed and thought, "Is this Brahmā who has come here? Or is it Śakra, lord of the gods? Or is it Vaiśravaṇa, or perhaps the sun or the moon? Or is it some mountain god, or some river god?"
The Thus-Gone One then revealed his saffron robes, and so the merchants said, "This person in saffron-colored robes is a renunciant, so he is no threat to us." They had in fact developed devotion to him, and so they said among themselves,

[F.183.a] "It must be mealtime for this renunciant. What morsels do we have?"
A few members of the caravan said, "There is honey, gruel, and stripped sugar cane."

24.98 So, carrying the honey, gruel, and stripped sugar cane, they went to where the Thus-Gone One was seated, bowed down their heads to his feet, circumambulated him three times, and stood to one side. Then they requested the Thus-Gone One, "Please regard us with compassion and accept these alms!"
Monks, the Thus-Gone One then wondered, "It would not be appropriate for me to take these alms with my hands. What vessel did the previous perfect and complete awakened ones use to accept alms?" Right then the answer dawned on him. Monks, knowing that it was time for the Thus-Gone One to eat, at that very moment the Four Great Kings appeared from the four directions carrying four golden alms bowls. They offered them to the Thus-Gone One, saying to him, "Please regard us with compassion and accept these four golden alms bowls!"
Thinking, however, that those bowls were not appropriate for a monk, the Thus-Gone One did not accept them. [383] So the four kings came back with four alms bowls made of silver, four made of beryl, four made of quartz, four made of coral, four made of emerald, and four made of every gem. They offered them to the Thus-Gone One, but he declined, thinking that these were all inappropriate for a monk.

24.99 Monks, the Thus-Gone One then wondered what kind of alms bowls the previous thus-gone ones had used to accept alms. He understood that it was alms bowls made of stone, and so that thought dawned in the Thus-Gone One's mind. Then the great king Vaiśravaṇa said to the three other great kings, [F.183.b]"Friends, when the gods of the blue class gave us four stone alms bowls, we thought that they were for our use. But a god of the blue realm called Vairocana told us the following:

24.100 " 'Listen, these alms bowls are not to be used.
Preserve them! They will become honored as sacred objects.
A victorious one called Śākyamuni will appear;
Offer these alms bowls to him!'

24.101 "Friends, the time has now come
To offer a vessel to Śākyamuni.
Paying homage with the melodious sound of song and cymbals,
We will offer the begging bowls.

24.102 "He is a vessel made of Dharma and is indestructible,
While these vessels, made of stone, are destructible.
He will be unable to accept another bowl;
Let's go so that he can accept them!"

24.103 Then the four kings, together with their kinfolk and retainers, went to the Thus-Gone One holding those alms bowls in their hands and carrying flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, and unguents, playing cymbals and gongs, and singing songs. Having paid homage to the Thus-Gone One, they filled the alms bowls with divine flowers and offered them to the Thus-Gone One. [384]
Monks, the Thus-Gone One then thought, "These four devoted great kings are giving me four stone alms bowls. But four are too many for me. Yet if I were to accept only one, the other three would be upset. So I will take all four alms bowls and transform them into one."

24.104 Monks, the Thus-Gone One then extended his right hand and spoke to the great king Vaiśravaṇa in verse:

"Offer an alms bowl to the Well-Gone One!
You will become a vessel of the Supreme Vehicle.
By offering an alms bowl to the likes of me,
You will never be bereft of mindfulness and intelligence."

24.105 Monks, the Thus-Gone One [F.184.a] then accepted the alms bowl from the great king Vaiśravaṇa, regarding him with compassion. Having thus accepted it, he then spoke in verse to the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra:

"Whoever gives an alms bowl to the Thus-Gone One
Will never be bereft of mindfulness and insight,
And will spend his time happily at ease
Until awakening to the state of cool repose."

24.106 Monks, the Thus-Gone One then accepted the begging bowl from the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, regarding him with compassion. Having accepted it, he spoke in verse to the great king Virūḍhaka:

"Give a pristine begging bowl
To the Thus-Gone One, pure in mind,
And you will swiftly become pure in mind,
Worthy of veneration in the world."

24.107 Monks, the Thus-Gone One then accepted the alms bowl from the great king Virūḍhaka, regarding him with compassion. Having accepted it, he spoke to the great king Virūpākṣa in verse: [385]

"Give, with faultless intention and devotion,
A faultless vessel to the Thus-Gone One,
Who is faultless in discipline and conduct,
And your merit of generosity will be faultless."

24.108 Monks, the Thus-Gone One then accepted the alms bowl from the great king Virūpākṣa, regarding him with compassion. When he had accepted it, he transformed all four alms bowls into one through the power of his wish, and then said this meaningful verse:

"Since, in a previous existence, I offered alms bowls,
Filling them with fruit and making them lovely,
The four miraculous gods are now giving me
These four well-formed alms bowls."

24.109 On this topic, it is said:

This wise one, with insight into ultimate reality,
Gazed at the supreme tree of awakening for seven nights.
The earth trembled in six ways,
And then this lion among men rose, with the movements of a lion.

24.110 Like the lord of elephants, he slowly walked about, [F.184.b]
And eventually reached the trunk of the tree of liberation.
Like Mount Meru, the Sage sat there unshakable,
Absorbed in concentration and meditation.

24.111 At that time the two brothers Trapuṣa and Bhallika,
With their caravan of merchants
And carriages filled with riches,
Reached a grove of sāl trees in full bloom.

24.112 Instantly, through the Great Sage's radiance,
The wheels sunk into the earth up to their axles.
Seeing such a situation,
The merchant caravan was terrified.

24.113 Carrying swords, arrows, and spears,
They inquired who was dwelling in the forest like a deer.
They saw the Victorious One, who was like the sun in a cloudless sky
And whose face was like an autumn moon.

24.114 Without hostility or pride,
They bowed down, wondering who he was.
A deity said from the sky,
"He is a buddha acting for the welfare of the world.

24.115 "For seven days and nights,
This embodiment of compassion has not consumed food or drink.
If you want to assuage your own afflictions,
Feed this cultivated body and mind!" [386]

24.116 When they heard that sweet speech,
They bowed down to the Victorious One and circumambulated him.
Pleased, they decided with their companions
To feed the Victorious One.

24.117 Monks, at that time the herd of cows belonging to the merchants Trapuṣa and Bhallika was grazing at a neighboring village. There the cows were milked and yielded clarified butter, which the herdsmen brought to the two merchants, Trapuṣa and Bhallika, saying, "O my lords, please advise us! When we milked all your cows, they yielded clarified butter. Is this auspicious or not?"
Some priests, who were gluttonous by nature, said, "It is inauspicious, so a grand offering of this butter should be made to the priests." [F.185.a]
Monks, at that time, however, a priest named Śikhaṇḍī spoke. He had been a kinsman of the merchants Trapuṣa and Bhallika in a previous life. He had been reborn in the Brahma realm, and now manifested among them in the form of a young brahmin. He spoke the following verses to the merchants:

24.118 "In the past you made the aspiration:
'When the Thus-Gone One reaches awakening,
May he partake of our food
And turn the wheel of Dharma!'

24.119 "This aspiration has now been fulfilled.
The Thus-Gone One who reached awakening
Should be offered this food.
Once he has eaten, he will turn the wheel of Dharma.

24.120 "That your cows yielded clarified butter
Is very auspicious, and occurred under an auspicious constellation.
This is due to the meritorious actions
Of this great sage."

24.121 Once Śikhaṇḍī had inspired the merchants,
He returned to his own abode.
Trapuṣa and the others
Were all elated.

24.122 They combined without exception
All the milk of one thousand cows, [387]
Collected the cream from the top,
And respectfully prepared a meal.

24.123 They cleaned, polished, and sanitized
A jewel bowl called Moon,
Which cost one hundred thousand coins for just one ounce,
Then filled it to the brim with food.

24.124 Carrying honey and the jewel bowl,
They approached the trunk of the tree of liberation and said to the teacher,
"Venerable One, please accept and receive us!
We beg that you eat this well-prepared meal!"

24.125 Out of compassion for the two brothers,
And because he was aware of their previous intent to set out toward awakening,
The Teacher accepted and ate the food.
Once he had eaten, he tossed the bowl far into the sky.

24.126 A divine king called Subrahman
Retrieved the supreme jewel bowl,
And is still now performing worship with it
In the Brahma realm, together with his companions.

24.127 On that occasion, the Thus-Gone One delighted the merchants Trapuṣa and Bhallika tremendously with these verses:

"May divine auspiciousness, which accomplishes aims
And brings good fortune throughout the ten directions,
Fulfill all your aims!
May everything promptly be favorable! [F.185.b]

24.128 "Like a garland around your neck,
May there be glory at your right hand,
May there be glory at your left hand,
And may there be glory surrounding you!

24.129 "May the merchants who pursue wealth
And travel throughout the ten directions
Attain great profit,
And may that bring them happiness!

24.130 "Should you, for some reason,
Need to travel east,
May the constellations in that direction
Protect you!

24.131 "Kṛttikā and Rohiṇī,
Mṛgaśirā, Ardra, and Punarvasu,
Puṣya, and Aśleṣā—
These are the constellations in the east. [388]

24.132 "May these seven constellations,
Renowned world protectors,
The gods that dwell in the east,
Fully protect you!

24.133 "Their lord and king
Is known as Dhṛtarāṣṭra.
May this lord of all gandharvas,
Together with the sun, protect you!

24.134 "May his many sons, wise and mighty,
All ninety-one of whom are called Indra,
Especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.135 "In one area in the east,
There are eight goddesses:
Jayantī and Vijayantī,
Siddhārthā and Aparājitā,

24.136 "Nandottarā and Nandisenā,
Nandinī and Nandavardhanī.
May they especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.137 "In a quarter in the east there is a memorial called Cāpāla,
Inhabited and known by victorious ones, protector worthy ones.
May they especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.138 "May the quarters be safe for you!
May you not incur evil!
May you be protected by all deities,
And may you return with great profit!

24.139 "Should you, for some reason,
Have to travel to the south,
May the constellations in that direction
Protect you!

24.140 "Maghā and also
The two Phālgunī, Hasta,
And Citrā, the fifth. [F.186.a]
Along with Svātiś and Viśākhā, are in the south.

24.141 "Those seven constellations,
Renowned world protectors,
Dwell in the southern quarter.
May they protect you! [389]

24.142 "Their lord and king
Is called Virūḍhaka.
May that lord of all kumbhāṇḍas,
Together with the lord of death, protect you!

24.143 "May his many sons, wise and mighty,
All ninety-one of whom are called Indra,
Especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.144 "In one section of the south,
There are eight goddesses:
Śriyāmatī and Yaśamatī,
Yaśaprāptā and Yaśodharā,

24.145 "Suutthitā and Suprathamā,
Suprabuddhā and Sukhavyūhā.
May they protect you
With health and well-being!

24.146 "In a section of the south is a Padma memorial,
Continually shining with brilliance, always illuminating all.
May it too especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.147 "May the quarters be safe for you!
May you not incur evil!
May all deities protect you,
And may you return with great profit!

24.148 "Should you, for some reason,
Need to travel west,
May the constellations that dwell in that direction
Protect you!

24.149 "Anurādhā and Jeṣṭhā,
Mūlā and Dṛḍhavīryatā,
Āṣādhas and Abhijit,
And Śravaṇa—these are the seven.

24.150 "These seven constellations,
Renowned world protectors,
Dwell in the west.
May they always protect you!

24.151 "Their lord and king
Is known as Virūpākṣa.
May that lord of all nāgas,
Together with Varūṇa, protect you! [390]

24.152 "May his many sons, wise and mighty, [F.186.b]
All ninety-one of whom are called Indra,
Especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.153 "In a section of the west,
There are eight goddesses:
Alambuśā and Miśrakeśī,
Puṇḍarīkā and Āruṇā,

24.154 "Ekādaśā, Navanāmikā,
Śītā, and Kṛṣṇā Draupadī.
May they especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.155 "In a section of the west, there is a mountain called Aṣṭaṃga;
The sun and the moon also reside there.
May that mountain give you wealth
And protect you with health and well-being!

24.156 "May the quarters be safe for you!
May you not incur evil!
May you be protected by all deities,
And may you return wealthy!

24.157 "If for some reason
You should travel to the north,
May the constellations in that direction
Protect you!

24.158 "There are seven:
Dhaniṣṭhā, Śatabhiṣā,
The pair of Pūrva Aparā and Uttara Aparā,
Revatī and Aśvinī and Bharaṇī.

24.159 "Those seven constellations,
Renowned worldly protectors,
Reside in the north.
May they always protect you!

24.160 "Their lord and king
Is Kubera, borne by men.
May this lord of all yakṣas,
Together with Maṇibhadra, protect you!

24.161 "May his many sons, wise and mighty,
All ninety-one of whom are called Indra, [391]
Especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.162 "In a section of the north,
There are eight goddesses:
Ilādevī and Surādevī,
Pṛthvī and Padmāvatī,

24.163 "Mahārājā, Āśā,
Śraddhā, and modest Śirī.
May they especially protect you
With health and well-being!

24.164 "In a section of the north is Mount Gandhamādana. [F.187.a]
It is the abode of all yakṣas and bhūtas,
Has many peaks, and is pleasant to behold.
May it too protect you with health and well-being!

24.165 "May the quarters be safe for you!
May you not incur evil!
May all deities protect you,
And may you return wealthy!

24.166 "The twenty-eight constellations,
Seven dwelling in each of the four directions,
The thirty-two goddesses,
Eight dwelling in each of the four directions,

24.167 "The eight renunciates, the eight priests,
The eight towns throughout the lands,
And the eight gods, together with their Śakras,
May they all protect you!

24.168 "May you have good fortune going!
May you have good fortune returning!
May you have the good fortune of beholding your kinfolk!
May you have the good fortune of being beheld by your kinfolk!

24.169 "Lovingly cared for by numerous yakṣas with their Śakras
And by the worthy ones,
May you travel happily everywhere
And obtain the auspicious nectar.

24.170 "Always lovingly protected by Brahmā and Vāsava,
And by those free of outflows whose minds are liberated,
And also by the nāgas and yakṣas,
May your lives be preserved for one hundred autumns!"

24.171 The Peerless Guide, Lord of the World,
Then lauded their offerings as fortuitous, saying,
"Through this virtuous deed,
You will become victorious ones known as Madhusaṃbhava!"

24.172 This was the first prophecy made [392]
By the Victorious One, the Guide of the World.
The infinitely many bodhisattvas that were prophesied later
Cannot possibly turn back from awakening.

24.173 When they heard the Victorious One's prophecy,
The two brothers were elated and supremely pleased.
Together with their companions,
They went for refuge in the Buddha and the Dharma.

24.174 *This concludes the twenty-fourth chapter, on Trapuṣa and Bhallika.*

25.

Chapter 25

EXHORTATION

25.1 Monks, while the Thus-Gone One was seated at the foot of the Bodhi tree, in the privacy of solitude after he had first attained perfect and complete awakening, he had the following thought about the conventions of the world: [F.187.b]

25.2 "Alas! This truth that I realized and awakened to is profound, peaceful, tranquil, calm, complete, hard to see, hard to comprehend, and impossible to conceptualize since it is inaccessible to the intellect. Only wise noble ones and adepts can understand it. It is the complete and definitive apprehension of the abandonment of all aggregates, the end of all sensations, the absolute truth, and freedom from a foundation. It is a state of complete peace, free of clinging, free of grasping, unobserved, undemonstrable, uncompounded, beyond the six sense fields, inconceivable, unimaginable, and ineffable. It is indescribable, inexpressible, and incapable of being illustrated. It is unobstructed, beyond all references, a state of interruption through the path of tranquility, and imperceptible like emptiness. It is the exhaustion of craving and it is cessation free of desire. It is nirvāṇa. If I were to teach this truth to others, they would not understand it. Teaching the truth would tire me out and be wrongly contested, and it would be futile. Thus I will remain silent and keep this truth in my heart."

25.3 At that time he uttered these verses: [393]

"Profound, peaceful, stainless, lucid, and unconditioned—
Such is the nectar-like truth I have realized.
Were I to teach it, no one would understand,
So I will silently remain in the forest.

25.4 "I have discovered the supremely sublime and astonishing absolute,
The ineffable state, untainted by language,
Suchness, the sky-like nature of phenomena,
Completely free of discursive, conceptual movement.

25.5 "This meaning cannot be understood through words;
Rather it is comprehended through reaching their limit.
Yet when sentient beings, whom previous victorious ones took under their care,
Hear about this truth, they develop confidence in it.

25.6 "No Dharma at all exists here;
That which has no existence cannot be found.
For one who knows the chain of causation and action,
There is neither existence nor nonexistence here. [F.188.a]

25.7 "For immeasurable hundreds of thousands of eons,
I emulated the previous victorious ones,
But I did not attain forbearance
In which there is no self, no sentient being, and no life force.

25.8 "When I attained this forbearance
That nobody dies or is born here,
That the nature of all these phenomena is to be without self,
Then Buddha Dīpaṃkara made a prophecy about me.

25.9 "With my infinite compassion for the whole world,
I do not hesitate when others supplicate me.
These beings all have faith in Brahmā;
Thus, when he supplicates, I will turn the wheel of Dharma.

25.10 "It would only be suitable to bring forth this Dharma of mine
If Brahmā were to fall at my feet,
Supplicating me to explain the stainless and sublime Dharma,
And if there were intelligent beings of good disposition."

25.11 Monks, at that time the Thus-Gone One radiated light from the center of his forehead, which illuminated the entire trichiliocosm with its brilliance. Then, by means of the Buddha's power, Great Top-Knotted Brahmā, lord of the trichiliocosm, became aware of the Thus-Gone One's notion. [394] Having understood that the Blessed One was set on keeping the Dharma to himself without teaching it, he thought, "I will most certainly approach and solicit the Thus-Gone One to turn the wheel of Dharma!"

25.12 So right then Great Top-Knotted Brahmā addressed the other gods of the Brahma realms: "Friends! Even though the Thus-Gone One has awakened to unsurpassable, perfect and complete buddhahood, he is set on keeping the Dharma to himself without teaching it. Alas! This world is doomed! Alas, O friends, this world is really doomed! Thus we must surely go and solicit the worthy one, the perfectly and completely awakened Thus-Gone One, to turn the wheel of Dharma."

25.13 Monks, then the Great Top-Knotted Brahmā, surrounded and escorted by six million eight hundred thousand Brahmās, [F.188.b] went to the Thus-Gone One. When he arrived, he bowed his head to the feet of the Thus-Gone One, and with palms joined, said to him, "Thus-Gone One, even having awakened to unexcelled, perfect, and complete awakening, you are bent on keeping the Dharma to yourself without teaching it. Alas, Blessed One! This world is doomed! Alas, Blessed One, this world is really doomed! There are intelligent beings of good disposition with the potential, fortune, and ability to comprehend the meaning of what the Blessed One says. Such being the case, O Blessed One, please eloquently teach the Dharma! Please, O Well-Gone One, teach the Dharma!"

25.14 Then Brahmā spoke these verses:

"Having accomplished the orb of supreme great wisdom,
Radiating light rays throughout the ten directions,
Your wisdom rays could bring lotus-like people to bloom.
So then why today, Sun of Speech, do you remain indifferent?

25.15 "Coaxing sentient beings with the wealth of the noble ones,
You could soothe many tens of millions of creatures.
It is not suitable, O Friend of the World,
That you silently remain indifferent to the world!

25.16 "May you beat the kettledrum of the sublime Dharma!
May you blow the conch shell of the genuine Dharma!
May you erect the great sacrificial post of the Dharma!
May you light the great lamp of the Dharma! [395]

25.17 "May you rain down the waters of Dharma, most sublime!
May you ferry across all those wallowing in the ocean of existence!
May you liberate all those afflicted with severe illness!
May you quell those tormented by the fires of afflictions!

25.18 "May you teach the path to peace—
Joyous, auspicious, imperishable, and without sorrow.
Have compassion, O Protector, for those on the wrong path;
They are helpless, since they are not traveling on the path to nirvāṇa! [F.189.a]

25.19 "May you open the gates to liberation!
May you explain the inalienable way of Dharma!
May you, O Lord, cleanse the sublime eye of Dharma
For beings who are blind from birth!

25.20 "There is no one but you, O Protector, Moon among Men,
In the world of Brahmā, in the world of gods,
Or in the worlds of yakṣas, gandharvas, or humans
Who will remove birth and death from the worlds!

25.21 "Recruiting all the gods,
O King of Dharma, I beseech you!
Through this merit, may I also swiftly
Turn the wheel of Dharma, most sublime!"

25.22 Monks, in order to show kindness to the world of gods, humans, and nonhumans, the Thus-Gone One looked upon this world with compassion and silently acquiesced to Great Top-Knotted Brahmā. Indeed, once Great Top-Knotted Brahmā understood that this Thus-Gone One had silently acquiesced, he anointed the Thus-Gone One with divine sandalwood powder and divine aloeswood powder, became joyful and ecstatic, and then vanished that very instant.

25.23 Monks, in order to engender respect for the Dharma in the world, in order to increase the root of virtue by having Great Top-Knotted Brahmā repeatedly request the Dharma, and because the Dharma is exceedingly profound, the Thus-Gone One once again went into the privacy of solitude and had the following thought:

"This truth to which I awakened is profound, subtle, luminous, hard to comprehend, inconceivable, and beyond the intellect. Understood only by the clever and the wise, it is out of step with all worldly people and difficult to see. It is the abandonment of all aggregates, the cessation of all formations, a state of interruption through the path of tranquility, and imperceptible like emptiness. It is the exhaustion of craving, and [396] it is cessation free of desire. It is nirvāṇa. [F.189.b] If I were to teach this truth, and if others did not comprehend it, this would be harmful to me. Thus I will most certainly continue to keep it to myself."

25.24 Monks, by the power of the Buddha, Great Top-Knotted Brahmā once again became aware of this thought of the Thus-Gone One, and he went to see Śakra, lord of the gods.
When he arrived, he told Śakra, lord of the gods, "Understand, Kauśika, that the venerable, perfectly and completely awakened Thus-Gone One is bent on not teaching the Dharma and thus keeping it to himself! And since the worthy one, the perfectly and completely awakened Thus-Gone One, is bent on not teaching the Dharma and thus keeping it to

himself, alas, O Kauśika, this world is doomed! Alas, O Kauśika, this world is really doomed! Alas, this world will be plunged into the great darkness of ignorance! Why don't we then go and request that the worthy one, the perfectly and completely awakened Thus-Gone One, turn the wheel of Dharma? Because the thus-gone ones do not turn the wheel of Dharma without being requested!"

"Very well, my friend!" responded Śakra.

25.25 And so when the night had passed, Śakra, Brahmā, the earth gods, the sky gods, and the gods of the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the Heaven Free from Strife, the Heaven of Joy, the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations, the Brahma Realm, the Luminous Heaven, the Heaven of Great Fruition, the Heaven of Perfected Virtue, and the pure realms—many hundreds of thousands of divinities of beautiful appearances—illuminated the area surrounding the tree of liberation with their divine beauty and their divine luminosity, and approached the Thus-Gone One. They bowed their heads to the feet of the Thus-Gone One, circumambulated him, and stood to one side. [F.190.a] Then Śakra, lord of the gods, bowed down with palms joined in the direction of the Thus-Gone One and praised him in verse: [397]

25.26 "Your mind is completely liberated,
Like a full moon free of eclipse.
May you rise, O Victor in Battle!
May you shine the light of insight in this dark world!"

But at these words the Thus-Gone One remained silent. Then Great Top-Knotted Brahmā said to Śakra, lord of the gods, "O Kauśika, venerable, perfectly and completely awakened thus-gone ones are not requested to turn the wheel of Dharma the way you requested it."

25.27 So Great Top-Knotted Brahmā draped his robe on one shoulder, knelt on his right knee, and bowing down to the Thus-Gone One with palms joined, spoke this verse to him:

"May you rise, O Victor in Battle!
May you shine the light of insight in this dark world!
Beings will become knowledgeable.
O Sage, may you teach the Dharma!"

25.28 Monks, at these words the Thus-Gone One repeated to Great Top-Knotted Brahmā, "O great Brahmā, this truth to which I awakened is profound, subtle, luminous, hard to comprehend, inconceivable, and beyond the intellect. Understood only by the clever and the wise, it is out of step with all worldly people and difficult to see. It is the abandonment of all aggregates, the cessation of all formations, a state of interruption through the path of tranquility, and imperceptible like emptiness. It is the exhaustion of craving, and it is cessation free of desire. It is nirvāṇa. If I were to teach this truth, and if others did not comprehend it, this would be harmful to me. And these verses, O Brahmā, are my reply to you, time and again:

25.29 "My path, going against the stream, is profound.
It is difficult to see,
Since those blinded by desire do not see it.
Therefore teaching it will not be of any help.

25.30 "Beings, bound to their desires,
Are continuously swept away in the stream.
I discovered this with great effort;
Therefore teaching it will not be of any help!"

25.31 Monks, when Great Top-Knotted Brahmā and Śakra, lord of the gods, [F.190.b] understood that the Thus-Gone One would remain silent, these two great beings and their retinue of gods, saddened and dejected, disappeared then and there. And so the Thus-Gone One had thrice made up his mind to remain disinterested. [398]

25.32 Monks, at that time all sorts of negative, inauspicious opinions started to circulate among the people of Magadha. Some said that winds would no longer blow, and some that fires would no longer burn. Some said that rains would no longer fall, some that rivers would no longer flow, and some that crops would no longer grow. Some said that birds would no longer fly in the sky, and some that pregnant women would no longer give birth safely.

25.33 Monks, the Great Top-Knotted Brahmā knew the nature of the Thus-Gone One's thoughts, and he was aware of the opinions among the people of Magadha. So, at the close of night, he illuminated the entire area surrounding the tree of liberation with divine light beautiful in color, and he approached the Thus-Gone One. When he arrived, he bowed his head to the feet of the Thus-Gone One, draped his robe on one shoulder, knelt down on his right knee, and bending forward with palms joined, spoke in verse to the Thus-Gone One:

25.34 "Previously in Magadha, the Dharma was impure,
Therefore impurely construed talk has emerged there.
Thus, please, O Sage, open the gate of nectar!
They are ready to listen to the stainless Buddhadharma!

25.35 "With your goal accomplished, you reached independence.
Having removed the stain of the formation of suffering,
Your virtue is without increase or decrease.
Here in the best Dharma, you have reached perfection!

25.36 "O Sage, there is no one like you here in this world!
O Great Sage, how could you be surpassed?
Being the best, you shine here in the three worlds, O Lord,
Like the mountain in the realm of the demigods! [F.191.a] [399]

25.37 "Please have mercy on suffering beings!
It is never fitting for those like you to remain indifferent!
You are endowed with fearlessness and power!
Only you are able to deliver beings!

25.38 "May all these beings who endure pain for so long,
Including gods, renunciants, and priests,
Be healthy and free of fever!
They have no other refuge here!

25.39 "Gods and humans have been following you for so long,
Yearning for nectar with the virtuous thought,
'May the Dharma be proclaimed, the Dharma which is no less than
Exactly what the Victorious One understands!'

25.40 "Therefore we supplicate you, with your power so dynamic and benevolent,
May you train sentient beings that have long since strayed from the path!
They have longed to hear meanings unheard,
Like the feeble long to be nourished.

25.41 "The people, suffering from thirst, O Great Sage,
Are waiting in your presence for this water of Dharma.
Like a cloud over parched earth,
O Guide, satiate them with the rain of Dharma!

25.42 "Long lost, people roam throughout existence
Thick with wrong views and full of thorns.
Tell of the straight path, free of brambles,
By which nectar is attained when meditating upon it!

25.43 "The blind, who without a guide have fallen into ravines,
Cannot be led out by anyone else here.
You, Clever Bull, give rise to ardor
And rescue those who have fallen into steep ravines!

25.44 "An encounter with you,
O Sage, is always so long in coming.
Victorious guides appear on this earth only rarely,
Like an uḍumbara flower.
O Protector, please liberate sentient beings that have attained this opportunity!

25.45 "In your previous existences you had the thought,
'Once I myself have crossed, I will ferry others across!'
Now that you have surely reached the other shore,
Fulfill your solemn vow, you with the dynamic power of truth!

25.46 "O Sage, clear away the darkness with the lamp of Dharma!
Raise high the banner of the Thus-Gone One!
The time has come to utter melodious speech!
I beg you to resound like a lion, O You of Drum-like Voice!"

25.47 Monks, the Thus-Gone One then looked throughout the entire world with his awakened eye and saw sentient beings that were base, [F.191.b] mediocre, and advanced; those that were high, low, and middling; those of good disposition and [400] easy to purify, those of bad disposition and difficult to purify; those that can understand through just a cursory statement, and those for whom the words are paramount and who rely on a detailed explanation for their understanding. He thus saw that sentient beings were grouped into three categories: one that was sure to be wrong, one that was sure to be correct, and one was undetermined. Monks, just as when a person standing on the bank of a lotus pond sees some lotuses submerged in the water, some lotuses at water level, and some lotuses above the water, this was how the Thus-Gone One saw sentient beings situated in three groups when he looked throughout the whole world with his awakened eye.

25.48 Monks, the Thus-Gone One thought, "Whether I teach the Dharma or not, this group that is sure to be wrong will not understand the Dharma. And whether I teach the Dharma or not, this group that is sure to be correct will understand the Dharma. Yet the group that is undetermined will understand the Dharma if I teach it, but will not understand the Dharma if I do not teach it."
Monks, the Thus-Gone One then engendered great compassion, starting with the sentient beings situated in the undetermined group. Monks, from the perspective of his own perfect wisdom, the Thus-Gone One then understood the request made by Great Top-Knotted Brahmā and thus spoke to him with this verse:

25.49 "O Brahmā, the gates of nectar are opened
To those sentient beings of Magadha
With ears and with devotion,
Who constantly listen with attention and without doing harm."

Once Great Top-Knotted Brahmā understood that the Thus-Gone One had acquiesced, he rejoiced with satisfaction and glee. [F.192.a] Ecstatic and elated, he bowed with his head to the feet of the Thus-Gone One and vanished right there. [401]

25.50 Monks, on that occasion the earth gods then proclaimed and announced to the gods of the atmosphere: "Friends, today the venerable, perfectly and completely awakened Thus-Gone One has acquiesced to turn the wheel of Dharma. He will do this to benefit many beings, to bring happiness to many beings, to compassionately care for the world, for the welfare, betterment, and happiness of gods, humans, and the majority of beings. Listen, friends! The demigod realms will be reduced. The god realms will be filled. And many sentient beings in the world will reach complete nirvāṇa!"

25.51 Once the gods of the atmosphere heard this from the earth gods, they announced it to the gods in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings. The gods in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings told those in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. The gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three told those in the Heaven Free from Strife. The gods in the Heaven Free from Strife told those in the Heaven of Joy and the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations. The gods in the Heaven of Joy and the Heaven of Delighting in Emanations told those in the Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations. Finally they announced and proclaimed this to the gods of the Brahmā realms:

25.52 "Today, O friends, the venerable, perfectly and completely awakened Thus-Gone One has acquiesced to turn the wheel of Dharma. He will do this to benefit many beings, to bring happiness to many beings, to compassionately care for the world, for the welfare, betterment, and happiness of gods, humans, and the majority of beings. Listen, friends! The demigod realms will be reduced. The god realms will be filled. And many sentient beings in the world will reach complete nirvāṇa!"

25.53 Monks, then simultaneously all of them, beginning with the earth gods all the way up to the gods of the Brahma realm, announced in unison the same proclamation as before: "Today, O friends, the venerable, perfectly and completely awakened Thus-Gone One has consented to turn the wheel of Dharma. He will do this to benefit many beings, to bring happiness to many beings, to care compassionately for the world, for the welfare, betterment, and happiness of gods, humans, and the majority of beings. Listen, friends! The demigod realms will be reduced. The god realms will be filled. And many sentient beings in the world will reach complete nirvāṇa!" [F.192.b]

25.54 Monks, then the four gods of the Bodhi tree named Dharmaruci, Dharmakāma,[13] Dharmamati, and Dharmacārin [402] fell to the feet of the Thus-Gone One and asked, "Where will the Blessed One turn the wheel of Dharma?"
Monks, to their question the Thus-Gone One replied, "At the Deer Park by the Hill of the Fallen Sages, outside of Vārāṇasī."
They said, "O Blessed One, the city of Vārāṇasī has merely a limited population, and the Deer Park has only a limited amount of tree shade. There are other big cities, O Blessed One, that are wealthy, flourishing, secure, and pleasant, with abundant provisions, teeming with many people and creatures, and adorned with gardens, forests, and mountains. May the Blessed One please turn the wheel of Dharma in one of these other places!"

25.55 But the Thus-Gone One replied:

"Do not say such a thing, good sirs! And why?

25.56 "I performed sixty trillion sacrifices there;
I made offerings to sixty trillion buddhas there.
Vārāṇasī was the preferred place of the previous sages;
This place, exalted by gods and nāgas, is ever inspiring for Dharma.

25.57 "I remember that 91 billion previous buddhas
Turned the sublime wheel in that supreme grove named after the sages,
Where peace, tranquility, and concentration are actualized, and deer always dwell.
Thus I too will turn the sublime wheel in the supreme grove named after the sages."

25.58 *This concludes the twenty-fifth chapter, on exhortation.* [B17]

26.

Chapter 26

TURNING THE WHEEL OF DHARMA

26.1 Monks, at that point the Thus-Gone One had accomplished everything he had to do. [F.193.a] With nothing more to achieve, all his fetters had been cut. All negative emotions had been cleared away, along with his mental stains. He had conquered Māra and all hostile forces, and [403] now he joined the Dharma-way of all awakened ones. He had become omniscient and perceived everything. He possessed the ten powers and had discovered the fourfold fearlessness. All the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha had unfolded within him. Equipped with the fivefold vision, he surveyed the entire world with the unobscured eye of an awakened one and began to reflect:

26.2 "To whom should I teach this Dharma for the very first time? Who is pure, kindhearted, easy to train, and a good teacher able to purify others? Who has little desire, anger, and delusion? Who is open-minded and suffers because of never having heard the Dharma? Such a person I should teach first of all. One who understands my teaching will not turn against me."

26.3 Then, monks, the Thus-Gone One thought to himself, "Rudraka, the son of Rāma, is pure and kindhearted. It is easy for him to make others understand and purify them. He has only little desire, anger, or delusion. He is also open-minded, and now suffers because he has never heard the Dharma. He instructs his students in the practice of disciplined conduct that leads to a state of mind that is neither conscious nor unconscious. Now, where is he staying?"

26.4 At that moment the Thus-Gone One realized that Rudraka had died just one week before. The gods, too, bowed their heads to the Thus-Gone One's feet and said, "Lord, that is how it is. Well-Gone One, that is how it is. Rudraka, the son of Rāma, died just one week ago."

26.5 Monks, at that point I had the thought, "Oh no, how sad that Rudraka, the son of Rāma, died before hearing this well-prepared teaching! If only he had received my teaching, he would surely have understood it. [F.193.b] To him I would have explained this Dharma for the first time, and he would not have turned against me."

26.6 Monks, the Thus-Gone One again thought, "Now, where could there be another being who is pure and easy to train? Who would have all these qualities and not react against the teaching of Dharma?"
Monks, it then occurred to the Thus-Gone One, "Ārāḍa Kālāma is pure and has all the other qualities. He would not react against the teaching of Dharma." So the Thus-Gone One wondered, "Where would he be now?" Wondering, he realized that Ārāḍa Kālāma had passed away just three days earlier. [404]
The gods from the pure realms further clarified that matter for the Thus-Gone One, saying, "Lord, that is how it is. Well-Gone One, that is how it is. Ārāḍa Kālāma died just three days ago." The Thus-Gone One then thought, "Oh no, how sad that Ārāḍa Kālāma died before hearing this well-prepared teaching!"

26.7 Monks, at that point the Thus-Gone One once again reflected, "What other being is pure, has a good heart and all the qualities, and would not react against my presentation of the Dharma?"
Monks, it then occurred to the Thus-Gone One, "My five ascetic companions are pure and goodhearted. They will make good teachers who are able to purify others. They have but little desire, anger, or delusion. They would be open-minded, and they are now suffering because of not having heard the Dharma. When I was practicing under hardships, they helped me. They will understand the Dharma taught by me, and they will not turn against me."
Monks, at that point the Thus-Gone One decided, "My five ascetic companions will be the ones to whom I shall teach the Dharma for the first time!" [F.194.a]

26.8 Monks, the Thus-Gone One now further thought, "Where might these five companions be staying?" Scanning the entire world with his eye of an awakened one, he saw the five ascetics staying in the Deer Park in Vārāṇasī by a hill known as the Hill of the Fallen Sages.
After seeing this, he thought to himself, "If I teach these five excellent ascetics the Dharma before I teach anyone else, they will understand my Dharma when I teach it for the very first time."
Why is that? Monks, they have already practiced and they already possess pure qualities of accomplished scholars. They are intent on the path to liberation and are free from obstructing forces. [405]

26.9 Now, monks, having reflected in this way, the Thus-Gone One arose from the seat of awakening, making the trichiliocosm tremble. In due course, passing through the country of Magadha, he set off on his way to Kāśi. In Gayā, not far from the seat of awakening, an ājīvika mendicant spotted him from afar. Seeing the Thus-Gone One approaching, he came up to him and stood to one side.

26.10 As he stood to one side, monks, the ājīvika first made a pleasing conversation about various things with the Thus-Gone One, saying, "Venerable Gautama, your senses are calm, and your skin is bright, pure, and of yellow hue. Just as the autumn season, which is white and bright, becomes of yellow hue, so too your senses, Lord Gautama, are bright, and your round face is perfectly pure. Just as when the ripe fruit of the tāla tree is nipped off its stem, the severed area immediately becomes yellow, bright, and perfectly pure, [F.194.b] so too, Gautama, are your bright senses and your perfectly pure round face. Just as a necklace made of gold from the Jambū River, whose surface has the excellence of a shining meteor, when well fashioned by a skillful son of a goldsmith and thrown onto a white cloth becomes of vivid color, resplendent, perfectly pure, and exceedingly bright, just so, Venerable Gautama, are your calmed senses, bright skin color, and your perfectly pure round face. Venerable Gautama, with whom did you practice religion?"

26.11 Monks, the Thus-Gone One replied to the ājīvika with this verse:

"I do not have any teacher;
There is no one like me.
I alone am the perfect Buddha,
Cool and without any flaws."

26.12 The seeker then asked, "Gautama, surely you are not telling me that you have become a worthy one?" [406]
The Thus-Gone One replied:

"I am a worthy one of the world;
I am the unsurpassed teacher.
Among the gods, demigods, and divine spirits,
There is no rival to me."

26.13 The seeker asked further, "Gautama, surely you are not telling me that you have become a victorious one?"
The Thus-Gone One replied:

"The victorious ones should be known to be like me,
Who has exhausted all faults.
I have conquered all evil dharmas;
Therefore, my friend, I am indeed a victorious one."

26.14 The mendicant then asked, "Venerable Gautama, where will you go now?" The Thus-Gone One replied:

"I am on my way to Vārāṇasī.
When I arrive in the city of Kāśi,
I shall spread an incomparable light
To shine in this world of the blind.

26.15 "I am on my way to Vārāṇasī.
When I arrive in the city of Kāśi,
I shall beat the great drum of nectar
To be heard in this world of the deaf.

26.16 "I am on my way to Vārāṇasī.
When I arrive in the city of Kāśi,
I shall turn the wheel of Dharma
That has never been turned in this world." [F.195.a]

"May this come to pass, Gautama!" replied the ājīvika. "May this come to pass!" The mendicant then took off toward the south while the Thus-Gone One went north.

26.17 Monks, at this point Sudarśana, the king of the nāgas, invited the Thus-Gone One to stay with him in Gayā for some refreshments. The Thus-Gone One then proceeded to Rohitavastu and on toward Uruvela-Kalpa, Anāla, and the town of Sārathi. Monks, in all those places the laypeople invited the Thus-Gone One to stay and refresh himself.
In due course he arrived at the banks of the great river Ganges. [407] Monks, at that time the great river Ganges was swollen and flowed on the same level as its banks. Now, monks, since the Thus-Gone One wanted to cross the river, he approached a ferryman about this.

26.18 The ferryman told him, "Gautama, you must pay the crossing fee."
The Thus-Gone One replied, "Sir, I do not have any means to pay the crossing fee." Then he flew through the air from one shore to the other.
When the boatman saw this, he felt great regret, thinking, "Oh no, how sad! How could I refuse to give a ferry ride to such a venerable man worthy of being served!" He then fainted and fell to the ground.
Later the boatman recounted the story to King Bimbisāra: "Your Majesty, when I asked the mendicant Gautama to pay the crossing fee, he told me that he did not have money to pay the fare. Instead he just flew through the air from one bank to the other!" When King Bimbisāra heard this, he waived the crossing fee for monks from that day onward.

26.19 Monks, in this way the Thus-Gone One traveled through the land. Finally he arrived at the city of Vārāṇasī. At dawn he dressed, put on his mendicant robe, and took his alms bowl. Then he entered the city of Vārāṇasī to seek alms. [F.195.b] Soon he had acquired enough offerings and sat down for his meal.
He then proceeded to the Deer Park by Hill of the Fallen Sages to meet his five former companions. The five companions could see the Thus-Gone One approaching from a distance, and they began to scheme:

26.20 "Venerable ones, look, here comes that mendicant Gautama, that lazy, gluttonous one who has given up on his ascetic practices. Before, when he practiced austerities, he never managed to manifest any deep wisdom derived from the teachings of superior humans. How much worse are things now! He is not to be emulated as he walks around eating proper food and doing easy practices. [408] That lazy glutton! None of us should approach him to greet him or rise when he comes. Don't help him by holding his robes or his offering bowl. Don't offer him food or drink for refreshment, nor a place to rest his legs. We can, however, set up some spare seats and say, 'Venerable Gautama, these are spare seats. If you like, you may sit.' " The venerable Ājñātakauṇḍinya did not agree with this, but he did not voice his opposition, either.

26.21 Monks, the closer the Thus-Gone One came to his five former companions, the more uncomfortable they felt in their seats and wanted to stand up. They felt like birds caught in a cage with a fire burning below.
Just as birds tormented by a fire wish nothing more than to take off quickly and fly away, the closer the Thus-Gone One came to the five companions, the more uncomfortable they felt in their seats and wanted to get up. The reason they felt this way is that no living being is able to remain seated when beholding the Thus-Gone One. So the closer the Thus-Gone One came to the five companions, [F.196.a] the more overwhelming his splendor and radiance became. They began to quiver in their seats, and then their prior plan fell apart completely and they all stood up from their seats.

One went to greet him. One approached him and held his robe and alms bowl. One prepared a seat for him. One made a footrest. One brought water to wash his feet and said, "Welcome, Venerable Gautama! Welcome, Venerable Gautama! Please sit on this seat that we have laid out."

26.22 Monks, the Thus-Gone One indeed sat on the seat that had been arranged, and the five companions, who tried to make [409] diverse, happy, and pleasing conversation with the Thus-Gone One, sat a little apart. They spoke to the Thus-Gone One in the same way the ājīvika had addressed him earlier:
"Venerable Gautama, your senses are calm, and your skin is bright, pure, and of yellow hue. Just as the autumn season, which is white and bright, becomes of yellow hue, so too your senses, Lord Gautama, are bright, and your round face is perfectly pure. Just as when the ripe fruit of the tāla tree is nipped off its stem, the severed area immediately becomes yellow, bright, and perfectly pure, so too, Gautama, are your bright senses and your perfectly pure round face. Just as a necklace made of gold from the Jambū River, whose surface has the excellence of a shining meteor, when well fashioned by a skillful son of a goldsmith and thrown onto a white cloth becomes of vivid color, resplendent, perfectly pure, and exceedingly bright, just so, Venerable Gautama, are your calmed senses, bright skin color, and your perfectly pure round face. Venerable Gautama, with whom did you practice religion?"

26.23 The Thus-Gone One answered the five companions, "Monks, do not address the Thus-Gone One as 'venerable,' meaning 'long-lived,' or you will have failure, adversity, and unhappiness for a long time. Monks, I have actualized immortality and the path that leads to immortality. Monks, I am the awakened one, the omniscient one, the all-seeing one. I have become tranquil and have exhausted all faults.

26.24 "Monks, being the master of phenomena, I will teach you the Dharma. Come, listen and understand. Listen intently with open ears, and I will give you instruction and guidance. When I teach and guide you, you will also relinquish all faults and be liberated within a stainless and insightful state of mind. [F.196.b] When you attain realization, you will proclaim: 'Our births have been exhausted. The religious life has been led. That which ought to be done has been done—and nothing else. We therefore know an existence different from this ordinary life.'

26.25 "Did you not, monks, earlier say to yourselves: 'Venerable ones, look, here comes that mendicant Gautama, that lazy, gluttonous one who has given up on his ascetic practices. Before, when he practiced austerities, he never managed to manifest any deep wisdom derived from the teachings of superior humans. How much worse are things now! He is not to be emulated as he walks around eating proper food and doing easy practices. That lazy glutton! None of us should approach him to greet him or rise when he comes. Don't help him by holding his robes or his offering bowl. Don't

offer him food or drink for refreshment, nor a place to rest his legs. We can, however, set up some spare seats and say, "Venerable Gautama, these are spare seats. If you like, you may sit." ' "

26.26 Monks, as soon as the Thus-Gone One had uttered these words, every extremist symbol and banner that the five companions were wearing disappeared in an instant. Instead they each now found themselves dressed in the three robes of a mendicant with an alms bowl and their head shaven. Even their behavior was as if they had already been ordained for a hundred years. This truly was their "going forth"; this very ordination became the essence of monkhood.
Monks, right away the five monks bowed at the Thus-Gone One's feet and confessed their wrong behavior. In the Thus-Gone One's presence, [410] they developed their recognition of him as their teacher, as well as their love, devotion, and respect for him. Out of devotion they then gave the Thus-Gone One a refreshing and cleansing bath in a lotus pond with lotuses of many different colors.

26.27 Monks, after the Thus-Gone One had been refreshed by his bath, he thought to himself, "Where did all the previous thus-gone ones, the worthy ones, the perfect buddhas, turn the wheel of Dharma?"
Monks, at whichever place the previous thus-gone ones, the worthy ones, turned the wheel of Dharma, at that place there appeared one thousand jewel thrones, made of seven kinds of jewels. Then the Thus-Gone One, out of respect to the thus-gone ones of the past, circumambulated the first three thrones and then sat down crossed-legged on the fourth throne like a fearless lion. [F.197.a] The five monks prostrated to the Thus-Gone One with their heads at his feet and then sat down before him.

26.28 Monks, at that point the Thus-Gone One's body began to emit light rays that filled this trichiliocosm with bright light. This light illuminated the inhabitants of the entire world who were steeped in evil and darkness. The color and brilliance of this light even outshone that of the sun and the moon, those magical planets that are otherwise so highly praised for their great power. The light shone so brightly that it illuminated even places so dark that those beings who are born there cannot see their hands, even if they hold them right in front of their faces. Now even those beings were bathed in light so bright that they immediately saw and acknowledged each other, saying, "Oh my, there are other beings here! There really are!"

26.29 Then the whole trichiliocosm began to shake in six different ways and exhibited eighteen great signs. [411] It began to quiver, tremble, quake, wobble, thunder, and roar, each in three degrees of intensity. The world shook so violently that when the edge was down, the center was up; when the edge was up, the center was down; when the east was down, the west was up; when the west was up, the east was down; when the north was down, the south was up; when the north was up, the south was down.

26.30 At that point one could hear all sorts of pleasant and cheerful sounds. There were sounds that inspired love and made everyone serene. [F.197.b] There were inviting and refreshing sounds impossible to describe or imitate, agreeable sounds that do not produce fear. At that moment there was not a single being anywhere that felt hostile, frightened, or anxious. At that moment even the light of the sun and moon and the splendor of the gods, such as Śakra, Brahmā, and the world protectors, could not be perceived anymore. All beings who were living in the hells along with those born as animals and all those in the world of the lord of death became instantaneously free from suffering and filled with every happiness. No being had any emotion, such as hatred, delusion, envy, jealousy, pride, hypocrisy, arrogance, wrath, malice, or burning anguish. At that moment all sentient beings felt love for each other, wished each other well, and saw each other as parents and children. Then, from within the array of light, these verses rang out:

26.31 "Leaving the Heaven of Joy,
The Lord went to the mother's womb,
Took birth in the Lumbinī Grove,
And was lifted up by the husband of Śacī. [412]

26.32 "With the gait of a lion,
He took seven steps and, undistracted,
Spoke with the voice of Brahmā:
'I am the most excellent in the world.'

26.33 "In order to help all beings,
He abandoned the four continents and took ordination.
He first practiced austerities and hardships
Before going to the center of the earth.

26.34 "He conquered Māra and his army,
And gained awakening for the sake of the world.
He has come to Vārāṇasī
And will turn the wheel of Dharma.

26.35 "Brahmā and the other gods requested him
To turn the wheel of equanimity.
Engendering compassion for the world,
The Sage gave his consent.

26.36 "Keeping his firm promise,
He has come to the Deer Park at Vārāṇasī.
There he will turn the wheel
That is wondrous, glorious, and unsurpassed.

26.37 "The Lord practiced for a hundred billion eons. [F.198.a]
If you seek the Dharma that he discovered,
You should come in a hurry
To listen to the Dharma.

26.38 "Rare is the human condition and the arising of a buddha,
And extremely rare it is that someone develops faith.
It is rare to find freedom from the eight unfortunate states,
So listening to the Dharma is the most important activity.

26.39 "All these things have been found today:
The Thus-Gone One has appeared, and you have your freedom and faith.
Hearing the Dharma is the most precious thing
For one who renounces all mad carelessness.

26.40 "For the last billion eons,
You have never heard the Dharma.
This Dharma has been discovered today
By one who renounces all mad carelessness.

26.41 "Our Guide will turn the wheel of immortality,
So come quickly, everyone!
This voice now urges all of you gods,
From the earth up until Brahmā, to come."

26.42 Once the great divine voice had called the gods,
They at once abandoned their wealth
And all appeared
By the side of the Thus-Gone One. [413]

26.43 Monks, in order for the Thus-Gone One to turn the wheel of Dharma at the Deer Park by the Hill of the Fallen Sages in Vārāṇasī, the earth gods now formed a great circle around the Thus-Gone One. The circle was wonderful and beautiful to the eye. It was enormous with a circumference of seven hundred miles, and the gods adorned the sky above it with parasols, victory flags, banners, and canopies.

The gods from the desire and form realms then offered to the Thus-Gone One eight million four hundred thousand lion thrones, accompanied by this request: "Please consider us with love and take your seat on this throne. We pray that the Blessed One will then turn the wheel of Dharma."

26.44 Monks, at that time from all directions—east, south, west, and north, above and below—many millions of bodhisattvas who had made previous aspirations for this occasion came forth. They all bowed down at the feet of the Thus-Gone One and requested him to turn the wheel of Dharma. All the powerful gods in this billionfold universe, such as Śakra, Brahmā, the world protectors, and the other ones with the title of 'great lord,' [F.198.b] bowed their heads to the Thus-Gone One's feet. They all requested the Thus-Gone One to turn the wheel of Dharma with these words:
"May the Blessed One now turn the wheel of Dharma for the benefit and happiness of many beings, for the love of the world, for the well-being and happiness of great numbers of beings, both gods and humans. Well-Gone One, please make this offering of Dharma. Lord, please shower the rain of Dharma! Unfold the great victory banner of the Dharma! Blow the great conch of the Dharma! Beat the great drum of the Dharma!"

26.45 About this, it is said:

From throughout the trichiliocosm, Brahmā, Śakra, and many guardians
Appeared, and bowing their heads to the Victorious One, they said: [414]
"Great Sage, please remember your earlier promise when previously you said,
'I am the first and the best, I will end suffering for all beings.'

26.46 Sage, as you sat below the holy tree, you tamed Māra and his minions,
And the peace and sacredness of your supreme awakening felled the tree of disturbing emotions.
Now that all the intentions that you nurtured for a hundred eons have been fulfilled,
Look upon beings bereft of a protector, and turn the supreme wheel."

26.47 The light of the Well-Gone One illuminated hundreds of thousands of buddha realms,
Bringing many hundreds of sons of the buddhas through miraculous power
Who offered the Well-Gone One vast and manifold offerings,
Praised the Thus-Gone One's true qualities, and invoked the compassionate one thus:

26.48 "Like a compassionate cloud, a lightning bolt of wisdom, and a wind of insight,
For a thousand eons you have nourished beings with your thunderous voice.
Please pacify their thirst with the downpour from the rain cloud of the eightfold path;
May your powers, faculties, and concentration make the harvest of liberation bountiful.

26.49 "For many thousands of eons, you have trained well and rested in the suchness of emptiness;
You dispense the medicine of the Dharma and know the lives of sentient beings. [F.199.a]
For human beings, tormented by the hundred diseases of disturbing emotions,
Victorious Physician, please turn the supreme wheel of Dharma and liberate beings.

26.50 "For so long you increased the six perfections;
You performed and amassed an incomparable and immutable wealth of Dharma.
As you behold all these beings without protection, wealth, or guidance,
Noble Guide, please share the seven types of wealth and turn the wheel. [415]

26.51 "Seeking the awakening of the victorious ones, you joyfully relinquished your fortune,
Riches, treasures, gold, fine robes, beautiful flowers, ointments, scented powders,
Finest dwellings, your retinue of consorts, the kingdom, even your beloved son.
Perfect Buddha, please turn the supreme wheel.

26.52 "For a hundred eons you have likewise kept your discipline intact and pure,
Always training in patience and with your diligence never waning.
Sage, your concentration is supreme and your insight is a clairvoyant wisdom;
With your intent fulfilled, please remove the fever and turn the supreme wheel."

26.53 Monks, at that point a bodhisattva, a great being, known as the One Who Turns the Wheel When the Intent Is Formed, offered a Dharma wheel to the Thus-Gone One. It was an exquisite wheel adorned with all kinds of jewels, gems, and various other embellishments. It had a hub, a rim, and a thousand spokes. It was adorned with flower garlands, lattices of gold, tassels with bells, and the motifs of an elephant in rut, a filled vase, and a swastika. The wheel was adorned with various marks of auspiciousness, beautifully wrapped in divine fabrics and dyed in different colors. It was strewn with flowers of the heavens, adorned with fragrant garlands, and rubbed with perfumed ointments.

26.54 In this way it was a wheel as beautiful as can be. It came about through the power of previous aspirations made as the Bodhisattva had trained. It was truly a suitable offering to the Thus-Gone One. [F.199.b] Since all the previous thus-gone ones in succession had accepted this wheel, it possessed the unbroken blessings of all the buddhas. In fact this wheel had previously been turned by all former thus-gone ones, worthy ones, perfect buddhas, and therefore it was now offered to the Thus-Gone One to turn.

26.55 Once he had made his offering to the Thus-Gone One, the bodhisattva joined his palms and praised the Thus-Gone One with these verses:

"When Dīpaṃkara made the prediction for the Pure One,
He said, 'You will become a buddha, a lion among the lions of men.'
At that time I made the following aspiration:
'When I become perfectly enlightened, I will seek the Dharma.' [416]

26.56 "Today the best of beings have come here from the ten directions,
So many in number that they cannot be counted.
With joined palms they bow at the Thus-Gone One's feet
And request the joy of the Śākya clan to turn the wheel of Dharma.

26.57 "The offerings of the gods at the seat of awakening,
And the arrays of the sons of the victorious ones—
They all stand together, set forth for the wheel of Dharma.
The complete array could never be fully described.

26.58 "The heavens above this trichiliocosm are filled with gods,
And on earth demigods, kinnaras, and humans roam.
Yet no sound can be heard at this very moment
As everyone looks with a peaceful mind to the Victorious One."

26.59 Monks, the Thus-Gone One now spent the first part of the night in silence. During the middle part of the night, he gave an eloquent talk. Finally, during the last part of the night, he summoned the five excellent companions and said:

26.60 "Monks, there are two extremes that you should avoid when you have taken ordination. First do not follow self-indulgence, which is shallow, worldly, ordinary, [F.200.a] unworthy of a noble one, and attended by undesired consequences. In the long run it will prevent you from practicing your religion. You will become distracted and unable to develop nonattachment. You will not enter into the state of cessation nor develop higher knowledge, or attain the perfect awakening of nirvāṇa. On the other hand, straying from the middle way, you will not pass beyond suffering. If you mistreat your body so that it suffers and is harmed, you will face difficulties as can be observed right now, and in the future even further misery will fall on you.

26.61 "Monks, the Thus-Gone One teaches the Dharma by showing the middle way that does not fall into either of the two extremes. The Dharma that he teaches is one of correct view, intention, [417] speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration.

26.62 "Monks, there are also four truths of the noble ones. What are these four? Suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path that leads to the cessation of suffering.

26.63 "What is suffering? It is the pain that accompanies birth, growing old, falling sick, and dying. It also includes the suffering of meeting the unpleasant and parting from the pleasant. Not finding what is being sought is also suffering. In short the five perpetuating aggregates are suffering. This is what we call suffering.

26.64 "What is the origin of suffering? It is the craving that perpetuates existence, which is attended upon by the passion for enjoyment, and which finds pleasures here and there. That is the origin of suffering.

26.65 "What is the cessation of suffering? It is the complete and dispassionate cessation of craving that perpetuates existence, which is attended upon by the passion for enjoyment, and which finds pleasures here and there. This is the cessation of suffering.

26.66 "What is the path that leads to the cessation of suffering? It is exclusively the eightfold path of the noble ones. [F.200.b] This is the path that starts with correct view and ends with correct concentration. It is called the path that leads to the cessation of suffering—a noble truth.
"Monks, these four truths are the truths of the noble ones.

26.67 "Monks, this teaching I had not heard previously. I understood it by intensely and introspectively focusing my mind on suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.68 "Monks, this teaching I had not heard previously. I understood it by focusing intently on the origin of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.69 "Monks, this teaching I had not heard previously. I understood it by focusing intently on the cessation of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.70 "Monks, this teaching I had not heard previously. I understood it by focusing intently on the path that leads to the cessation of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest. [418]

26.71 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, suffering must be known. This I understood by focusing intently on suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.72 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, the origin of suffering must be abandoned. This I understood by focusing intently on the origin of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.73 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, [F.201.a] the cessation of suffering must be actualized. This I understood by focusing intently on the cessation of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.74 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, the path that leads to the cessation of suffering must be practiced. This I understood by focusing intently on the path that leads to the cessation of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.75 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, I have fully understood suffering. This I did by focusing intently on suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.76 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, I have abandoned the origin of suffering. This I did by focusing intently on the origin of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.77 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, I have actualized the cessation of suffering. This I did by focusing intently on the cessation of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.78 "Monks, within this teaching that I had not heard previously, I have practiced the path that leads to the cessation of suffering. This I did by focusing intently on the path that leads to the cessation of suffering. In this way my wisdom, vision, understanding, intellect, intelligence, knowledge, and insight became manifest.

26.79 "Monks, in this way I genuinely contemplated each of the four truths of the noble ones while I recited them three times. Still I did not develop the wisdom that sees their twelve aspects. Monks, therefore I did not make any claims of having awakened to unsurpassable, perfect and complete buddhahood, and I still lacked the insight of wisdom.

26.80 "However, monks, once I had recited the four truths of the noble ones three times, I developed the wisdom that sees their twelve aspects. At that point my mind was free and my insight was now free and pure. Monks, at that point I declared that I had awakened to unsurpassable, perfect and complete buddhahood. My wisdom vision had been developed, my births had been exhausted, I had carried out my religious practice, I had done what needed to be done, and I will not have another life."

26.81 On this topic, it is said: [419]

With the melody of Brahmā and the voice of a kinnara,
Emanating trillions of light rays,
He, who had cherished the truth for many millions of eons,
The Self-Arisen Śākyamuni, spoke these words to Kauṇḍinya:

26.82 "The eyes, ears, and nose are impermanent and baseless;
Likewise the tongue, body, and mind are also suffering, without self, and empty.
They are lifeless matter, inert like hay or a wall;
There is no self here, neither a person nor life force.

26.83 "All phenomena are causally produced;
Beyond limits and without consciousness, they are like space.
There is no agent and likewise no one who feels,
And no action that can be observed as performed, be it good or bad.

26.84 "Suffering arises based on the aggregates;
The water of craving makes it grow. [F.201.b]
On the path the aggregates are perceived to be the equality of phenomena;
Infinitely diminished in harmony with the law of decay, they cease.

26.85 "Through conceptual thinking, which is superficial,
Ignorance arises; it has no other source.
When you eliminate the cause of formations, there is no passing on;
Consciousness arises dependent on passing on.

26.86 "Likewise name and form appear from consciousness;
From name and form, the six sense fields appear. [420]
When joined with these six sense fields, it is said that contact appears;
Contact produces the three kinds of feelings.

26.87 "Even the smallest feeling is said to be accompanied by craving,
And craving produces all forms of clinging.
The clinging in turn perpetuates all existence,
And based on existence, one's birth occurs.

26.88 "Rooted in birth, the stages of old age, sickness, and death follow;
In this web of existence, there are many types of birth.
Likewise all beings appear from conditions,
With no self or person who transmigrates.

26.89 "Whoever has no thought or concept has found the true way;
Whoever has found the true way has no ignorance.
Whoever has brought this ignorance to a halt
Has exhausted all forms of existence for good.

26.90 "The Awakened One, the Thus-Gone One, the Self-Arisen One
Has severed this causation within himself.
Buddha can only mean someone who knows all causality;
It does not refer to the aggregates, sense sources, and elements.

26.91 "There is no place here for the heretics of other schools;
Here, in such practice of the Dharma, the emptiness has been proclaimed.
Those beings who are fortunate enough to understand this teaching
Are those who studied and were purified under previous buddhas." [421]

26.92 When the wheel of Dharma was turned
With its twelve aspects,
Kauṇḍinya understood the meaning,
And so the Three Jewels came to be.

26.93 The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha:
These are the Three Jewels.
Even up to the Palace of Brahmā,
The news went out from person to person:

26.94 "The Protector of the World
Has turned a stainless wheel.
The Three Jewels, which are so rare in this world,
Have now appeared." [F.202.a]

26.95 The five monks—
Kauṇḍinya and the rest—
Along with sixty million gods
Purified their eye of Dharma.

26.96 Others, however, say that there were eighty million deities
Present from the realm of form.
Their vision was purified
At the time of the turning of the wheel of Dharma.

26.97 The 84,000 humans
Who had congregated there
Purified their eyes
And were liberated from all unfavorable rebirths.

26.98 Immediately the Thus-Gone One's unbounded voice went out into the ten directions.
Its sweet and beautiful sound could be heard throughout the heavens:
"The Sage of the Śākyas, endowed with the ten powers, went to the Hill of the Fallen Sages
At Vārāṇasī, where he turned the one and only supreme wheel of Dharma."

26.99 Hundreds of buddhas residing in the ten directions all became silent.
All their attendants then asked the victorious ones,
"When we heard this voice, your teaching of Dharma by means of your ten powers fell silent.
Why did you become silent? Please tell us right away!"

26.100 They replied, "In the past, for hundreds of lives this Buddha strove diligently toward awakening,
And outshone as he did so many hundreds of thousands of bodhisattvas. [422]
Thus did the Benefactor become so thoroughly trained and attain the most auspicious awakening,
And it is because he has turned the Dharma wheel that revolves three times that we are silent."

26.101 When the hundred million beings heard this answer from the buddhas,
They developed the power of love and entered supreme and auspicious awakening.
Then they said, "Even we are able to follow in the footsteps of this Sage with all his glorious diligence and power.
Now may we swiftly become the best in this world; may we give to others the eye of Dharma."

26.102 At that point the bodhisattva, the great being, Maitreya said to the Blessed One, "Lord, these bodhisattvas, the great beings, who reside in the ten directions of the world, would like to hear from you in person in order to learn how you turn the wheel of Dharma. [F.202.b] Therefore, Lord, please be kind enough to explain what kind of wheel is the wheel of Dharma, which has been turned by the Thus-Gone One, the Worthy One, the Perfect Buddha."

26.103 The Blessed One replied, "Maitreya, the wheel of Dharma is profound because it cannot be grasped by the intellect. This wheel is hard to see because it is beyond duality. This wheel is hard to comprehend because it is not an object of conceptual investigation. This wheel is hard to discern because it is related to the sameness of wisdom and consciousness.

26.104 "This wheel is without any blemishes because it leads to the attainment of liberation, which is free from any obscurations. This wheel is subtle because it cannot be exemplified. This wheel is essential because it leads to the attainment of vajra-like wisdom. This wheel is indestructible because it preexists its own turning.

26.105 "This wheel is without mental elaboration because it is devoid of the sources of conceptual thinking. This wheel is undisturbed because of its infinite steadiness. This wheel encompasses everything because it is equal to the sky.

26.106 "Maitreya, this wheel of Dharma has the nature of the essence of all phenomena. It is a wheel with the power to teach. It is a wheel beyond birth, cessation, and enduring. It is a wheel without the all-ground. It is a wheel of the Dharma-way of nonconceptuality to its full extent.

26.107 "It is a wheel of emptiness, a wheel of signlessness, a wheel free of any intent. It is a wheel of the unconditioned, a wheel of solitude, a wheel without desire, [423] a wheel of cessation, and a wheel that engages with the enlightened mind of the thus-gone ones.

26.108 "It is a wheel that is unconfused regarding the realm of phenomena, a wheel that is undisturbed concerning authentic limit. It is a wheel without attachment and obscuration. [F.203.a] It is a wheel free from the two extreme views in the understanding of interdependence. It is a wheel without disturbance within the realm of phenomena beyond center and edge.

26.109 "It is a wheel of the effortless and ceaseless activity of the Thus-Gone One. It is a wheel beyond activity and nonactivity. It is a wheel utterly ungraspable. It is a wheel beyond effort and effortlessness, an inexpressible wheel. It is a wheel that is like the nature of phenomena. It is a wheel of entering the sameness of all phenomena within a single sphere.

26.110 "It is a wheel that never reverses and continuously bestows guidance and blessings on sentient beings that are deprived of freedom. It is a wheel of entering the way of the ultimate truth, which assumes nonduality. It is a wheel that genuinely subsumes the realm of phenomena. This wheel is immeasurable because it transcends all limits.

26.111 "This wheel cannot be enumerated because it is beyond something that can be counted. This wheel is inconceivable because it is beyond the realm of conceptual mind. This wheel is unequaled because it is beyond equality. This wheel is inexpressible because it is beyond all paths of audible words.

26.112 "It is limitless. It is without example because it is beyond exemplification. It is like the sky; it does not cease, yet neither is it permanent. Accepting interdependence does not disturb its peace; it is infinitely peaceful. It is reality itself. Its nature is none other than that, not like that, or neither.

26.113 "It speaks the languages of all beings. It suppresses all demonic forces and defeats the extremists. It is an escape from cyclic existence. It is the entering into the realm of the buddhas. It is understood by noble beings and realized by solitary buddhas. The bodhisattvas embrace it. It is praised by all the buddhas. It is indivisible from all the thus-gone ones. [B18]

26.114 "Maitreya, [F.203.b] such is the wheel of Dharma that the Thus-Gone One turns. It is when the Thus-Gone One turns this wheel that he is called a thus-gone one. Then he is called a perfectly awakened buddha, the one who naturally manifests, lord of Dharma, the guide, the perfect guide, the complete guide, the captain, the one with mastery over all dharmas, and the lord of the Dharma.

26.115 "He is also called the one who turns the wheel of Dharma, the liberal provider of the gift of Dharma, lord of the offerings, the one who grants offerings perfectly, the one who accomplishes disciplined action, the one who fulfills all aims, the teacher, the one who gives comfort, the hero, and the one who abandons disturbing emotions.

26.116 "He is also known as the one who has conquered in battle, [424] the one who hoists the parasol, the victory flag, and the banner, the one who shines, the radiant one, the one who dispels darkness, the torchbearer, the great king among physicians, the perfect healer, and the great remover of pain.

26.117 "He is the one who sees wisdom perfectly clear, the one who sees all around, the one who looks all around, the one with eyes in all directions, the one who shines in all directions, the one who lights up the world all around, the one who faces all directions, the universal sun, the universal moon, the one beautiful in every way, and the one who never abides and neither accepts nor rejects.

26.118 "He does not feel elated or depressed, and therefore he is known as the one similar to the earth. Since he is unshakable, he is known as like the king of mountains. He is known as the glory of the world because he possesses all the qualities of the world. Since he is clearly superior to the entire world, he is known as the one whose crown cannot be seen. He is called ocean-like because his profundity and depth are hard to fathom.

26.119 "He is called the source of the precious Dharma because he has perfected all the precious teachings that lead to awakening. [F.204.a] He is said to be like the wind because he does not rest anywhere. He is known to possess a nonclinging intellect because his mind is nonclinging, unfettered, and liberated. He is called the irreversible Dharma because of his realization that penetrates all phenomena. He is known as the fire-like one because he burns away all disturbing emotions, having given up all pretense.

26.120 "He is like the water because he is purified of evil and always has pure thoughts and stainless body and mind. He is like the sky because he has actualized the wisdom of the realm of phenomena, without center or edge, within the range of nonclinging wisdom.

26.121 "He is known as the one who abides in a liberated state of unobstructed wisdom because he has abandoned all the different obscuring phenomena. He is called the one with a body that issues forth entirely from the realm of phenomena because he transcends the path of space-like vision. He is called the supreme being because he has no disturbing emotions caused by worldly objects.

26.122 "He is called the nonclinging being, the one with the limitless intellect, the teacher of the Dharma that transcends the world, the spiritual preceptor of the world, the physician of the world, the most sublime in the world, [425] the one who is not stained by worldly concerns, the protector of the world, the most excellent in the world, the foremost in the world, lord of the world, the one honored by the world, the ultimate refuge of the world, the one who has gone beyond the world, the light of the world, and the one transcending the world.

26.123 "He is called the master of the world, the one who benefits the world, the one who serves the world, the one who knows the world, the one who has become the regent of the world, the excellent recipient of gifts, the one worthy of offerings, [F.204.b] the great field of merit, the great being, the supreme being, the most supreme being, the unexcelled being, the being with no one above, the unequaled being, and the unique being.

26.124 "He is called the one who always rests in equanimity, the one who rests in the equality of all phenomena, the one who has discovered the path, the teacher of the path, the one who shows the path, and the one who genuinely abides on the path.

26.125 "He is called the one who has transcended the domain of Māra and the one who has conquered the retinue of Māra. Since he is no longer subject to old age and death he is known as the one who discovered the cool quality. He is the one without darkness, the one without pains, the one without yearnings, the one without disturbing emotions, the one who has eliminated hesitation, the one who has conquered doubt, the one without attachment, the one who is free, the pure one, the one without desire, the one without anger, the one without delusion, the one who has exhausted defilements, the one without disturbing emotions, the one with power, and the one whose mind is utterly free.

26.126 "He is called the one with the realization of a liberated one, the all-knowing one, the great elephant, the one who accomplishes things that need doing, the one who removes the burdens, the one who postpones his own benefit, the one who has exhausted all bonds to existence, and the one who has been freed by the wisdom of equality.

26.127 "He is called the one who has perfected all supreme powers of the mind, [426] the one who has perfected generosity, the most sublime through discipline, the one who has perfected patience, the most sublime through diligence, the one who has discovered higher knowledge through concentration, [F.205.a] the one who has perfected knowledge, and the one who has accomplished aspiration.

26.128 "He is called the one who abides in great love, the one who abides in great compassion, the one who abides in great rejoicing, and the one who abides in great equanimity.

26.129 "He is called the one who is diligent in gathering sentient beings, the one who has discovered undimmed awareness of everything, the one who is each and everyone's refuge, the one of great merit, the one possessing great wisdom, and the one with perfect mindfulness, mode of thinking, and intellect.

26.130 "He is known as the one who attained the light because he possesses the branches of awakening, such as the foundations of mindfulness, the authentic eliminations, the bases of miraculous powers, the faculties and the powers, as well as tranquility and insight.

26.131 "He is the one who crossed the ocean of saṃsāra, the one who came to the other shore, the one who has reached dry land, the one who attained peace, the one who found fearlessness, and the one who is unharmed by the thorns of disturbing emotions.

26.132 "He is known as the person, the great person, the lion of a man, the one who is not subject to fear and the thrill of excitement, the elephant, the stainless one, the one who has abandoned the three stains, the knower, the one with the three types of insight, the one who has crossed the four rivers, and the one who has reached the other shore.

26.133 "He is known as the member of the royal class because he is the only one who carries the jewel parasol. He is known as the priest because he abandons misguided religions. He is known as the monk because he smashes the eggshells of ignorance. He is known as the spiritual practitioner because he is genuinely beyond attachment to money and gain. He is conversant with sacred knowledge. He is known as the one whose disturbing emotions have departed.

26.134 "He is called the powerful one, the holder of the ten powers, the blessed one, the one who has developed physical restraint, the king among kings, the king of Dharma, the one who turns and teaches the sacred and supreme wheel of Dharma, [F.205.b] the one who teaches a Dharma that is without strife, and the one who grants consecration into omniscient wisdom.

26.135 "He is the one who is bound with a stainless headband of liberation, great wisdom, and nonattachment. He is the one who possesses the gems of the seven branches of awakening. He is the one who has actualized all the distinctive qualities of the Dharma. [427] He is the one whose round face is gazed upon by all ministers and noble listeners. He is the one who is surrounded by his sons the bodhisattvas, the great beings. He is called the one who is exceedingly gentle through discipline, and the one who can easily predict the future awakening of a bodhisattva.

26.136 "He is called the one who is like Vaiśravaṇa, the one who grants the treasury of the seven noble riches, the one who sees clearly, the one who has renounced renunciation, the one who is in possession of all perfect kinds of bliss, the one who fulfills all hopes, and the one who sustains the entire world with assistance and happiness.

26.137 "He is said to be like Śakra, holder of the vajra of the power of wisdom, and the one with eyes that see all around. He is known as the one who sees all phenomena with unobscured wisdom, the one who is transformed through wisdom in every respect, and the one who displays the great dance of Dharma.

26.138 "He is like the moon, the one that beings never tire of beholding, the one with brilliant light that reaches everywhere, the light that grants friendly disposition and great delight, the light that sees all sentient beings face-to-face, the one that shines on the minds and thoughts of all beings so that they appear exactly as they are, the great array, and the one surrounded by the stars of those who learn and those who no longer learn.

26.139 "He is called the one like the disk of the sun, and the one who clears away the darkness of delusion. He is the king who holds the great banner. He is limitless and boundless light. He is the one who illumines all with the great light. He is never confused and so clarifies questions and offers predictions. [F.206.a] He is called the one who has conquered the great darkness of ignorance. He is called the one who perceives everything with the great light of wisdom. He is the nonconceptual one. He is called the one who sends light rays equally to all sentient beings in a limitless manner through his love, care, and great compassion. He is known as the one who possesses the maṇḍala of the profound perfection of wisdom that is hard to gain and hard to behold.

26.140 "He is called the one who is like Brahmā, the one whose path of a religious mendicant is exceedingly calm, and the one who is endowed with all the distinctive qualities of conduct on the path of mendicancy. He is the one with the supreme form beautiful to behold. He is the one with calm faculties, the one with the peaceful mind, the one who has perfected tranquility, the one who has obtained ultimate tranquility, the one who has obtained perfect discipline and tranquility, and the one who has perfected tranquility and insight. [428]

26.141 "Concealed and with senses subdued, he is very restrained like an elephant. He is stainless, pure, and calm like a lake. He is the one who has fully abandoned all obscurations of habitual tendencies and disturbing emotions. He is endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great being. He is called the supreme being. His body is beautifully embellished with the eighty excellent signs. He is the foremost among men. He is the one with the ten powers, the charioteer of those to be guided by the unexcelled being who possesses the four types of confidence, the teacher, and the one who has perfected the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha.

26.142 "He is the one whose physical, verbal, and mental activity is beyond blame. He is endowed with all supreme aspects and therefore is known as the one who has purified the surface of the mirror of wisdom. Because he has realized equality in relation to dependent origination, he is the one who abides in emptiness. Because he realizes the way of the ultimate truth, he is the one who abides in signlessness. Since he is unstained by any undertaking, he abides in wishlessness. [F.206.b]

26.143 "Since he cuts the stream of all formations, he is not within the sphere of performance. Since his sphere of wisdom is not disturbed regarding the authentic limit, he is known as the one who speaks the truth. Because he knows suchness, the realm of phenomena, to be like space, neither with nor without characteristics, he is known as the one who unerringly teaches suchness and nothing else.

26.144 "Since he understands that all phenomena are like an illusion, a mirage, a dream, a reflection of the moon in water, an echo, and a hallucination, he is known as the one who realizes the teaching that is free of disturbing emotions. Because he produces the cause of passing beyond suffering, he is meaningful to see and to hear. Because he has the heroic capacity to guide sentient beings, he is called the one who strides with unerring steps. Because he has cut through ignorance and the craving for existence, he is known as the one who is free from weariness.

26.145 "Because he correctly teaches the liberating path, he is known as the one who has built the bridge. Because he is not sullied by any demonic activities and places, he is known as the one who has defeated the enemies of demons and disturbing emotions. He has genuinely transcended the desire realm and therefore he is called the one who crossed the swamp of desire. He has genuinely transcended the form realm and therefore he is called the one who has put down the banner of pride. He has genuinely transcended the formless realm and therefore he is called the one who hoists the banner of wisdom.

26.146 "Because he is endowed with the Dharma body and the wisdom body, he is genuinely beyond all worldly concerns. He is called the great tree because he blossoms with precious wisdom of limitless qualities and is endowed with the fruits of liberation. [429] He is called the one who is like the udumbara flower because it is so rare for him to appear and be seen. He is said to be like the king of gems, the wish-fulfilling jewel, because he has genuinely fulfilled his aim of attaining nirvāṇa according to the way.

26.147 "For so long he has practiced renunciation, discipline, hardship, and religious practices in a firm and pure manner without wavering or getting weary, [F.207.a] and therefore he is known as the One with Firmly Planted Feet.[14]

26.148 "For so long parents, monks, priests, spiritual teachers, worthy people, and religious people have been protected and defended by him, and those who have taken refuge with him are never abandoned, so therefore he is said to have the soles of his feet marked with various swastikas, auspicious symbols, and thousand-spoked wheels.

26.149 "For so long he has abandoned killing and therefore he is the One with Broad Heels.
"For so long he has inspired others to abandon killing living beings, so he is the One with Long Fingers.
"For so long he has explained the benefits of desisting from killing, so he is called the Protector of Many People.

26.150 "For so long he has exerted himself in preparing his own hands and his own body by rubbing them with ghee and sesame oil, and then using his hands for bathing and anointing the bodies of parents, monks, priests, spiritual teachers, and worthy people as part of his devoted service to them, so he is the One with Soft and Smooth Hands and Feet.

26.151 "For a long time, with the net of the four means of attracting disciples— generosity, kind talk, meaningful actions, and practicing what one preaches—he has skillfully trained the multitudes of beings, so he is the One with Webbed Fingers and Toes.

26.152 "For so long he has been acquiring increasingly superior roots of virtue, so he is the One with Arched Feet.

26.153 "For so long he has circumambulated parents, monks, priests, spiritual teachers, worthy people, and memorials with relics of the thus-gone ones, respectfully listened to the Dharma, painted images, had his hair stand on end, and caused the same rapture in others by teaching the Dharma, so he is the One Who Has the Hair on His Head Curling to the Right.

26.154 "For so long, with great skill, he has paid respect and listened to the Dharma, understood it, memorized it, recited it, caused others to understand it, ascertained the meaning and the words, and with a mind of humility offered refuge to beings faced with old age, sickness, and death, [F.207.b] and respectfully explained the Dharma to them, so he is the One with Shanks like an Antelope.

26.155 "For so long he has steadfastly applied himself to praising the religious life of monks, priests, and other religious practitioners, and giving them all the necessary supplies. He has given clothing to the naked and never approached another man's woman. He has explained the virtues of spiritual practice [430] and preserved his self-dignity, and therefore he is the One Who Has His Private Parts Well Sheathed.

26.156 "For so long the loving actions of his body, speech, and mind have been directed toward not harming living beings, by means of guarding his arms and legs. Therefore he is the One with Long Hands.

26.157 "For so long he has known the right measure in eating and has only eaten a little in a restricted manner. He has given medicine to those weakened by the travails of self-control, never despised the poor or the base, never oppressed those who are without protector, repaired the broken memorials of the thus-gone ones, built memorials, and removed fear from those plagued by anxiety. Therefore he is the One with Proportions of a Perfect Circle like the Nyagrodha Tree.

26.158 "For so long he has served parents, priests, monks, spiritual teachers, and worthy ones by washing them, anointing them, and massaging them with oils. When it was cold he has used hot water in the sun, and when it was hot he has used cool water in the shade, offering them comforts depending on the season of the year. He has given them beds and seats covered with soft and pleasant cloth, and to the memorials of the thus-gone ones he has offered fragrant oils, banners of delicate cloth, flags, and threads of silk. Therefore he is the One with Smooth and Fine Skin.

26.159 "For so long he has never rejected any sentient being, and instead he has delighted in practicing love and patience while inspiring others to do the same by praising the good qualities of forgiveness and altruism. [F.208.a] To the memorials of the thus-gone ones and the statues of the thus-gone ones, he has offered golden ornaments, golden flowers, gold dust, and silken banners in golden color. He has also offered ornaments, golden vessels, and golden-colored garments. Therefore he is the One with Skin like Gold.

26.160 "For so long he has attended scholars and clarified what is virtuous and what is not. He has inquired about what is objectionable and what is not, what is to be practiced and what is not, which dharmas are bad, which mediocre, and which sublime. He has examined the meaning, evaluated it, and gained full certainty. He has cleaned away the insects, spider webs, faded flowers, various weeds, and sand from the memorials of the thus-gone ones. Therefore he is the One with Untangled Hair.

26.161 "For so long he has showed respect to parents, leaders, elders, holy people, monks, priests, beggars, destitute beings, and many others who have come to him, satisfying their wishes by providing them with food, drinks, bedding, medicine, clothes, homes, lamps, and all the manufactured necessities of life, plus wells and lotus ponds filled with cool water. Therefore he is the One with the Seven Protuberances.

26.162 "For so long he has showed respect to parents, monks, priests, spiritual teachers, and worthy ones, addressing them while bowing or prostrating, and protecting them from danger. [431] He has never shown disrespect to the weak, and never forsaken those seeking refuge. He has never abandoned his firm resolve. For this reason he is known as the One with the Torso like a Lion.

26.163 "For so long he has recognized his own faults and never pointed out the faults of others who have stumbled. [F.208.b] He has relinquished the cause of debate and has not engaged in divulging secrets that cause discord among others. In this way he has carefully guarded his speech, actions, and mind, and so he is the One with Broad Shoulders.

26.164 "For so long he has showed respect to parents, monks, priests, spiritual teachers, and worthy ones by rising for them, welcoming them, and addressing them honestly. Because he is an expert in the entire commentarial literature, he has been able to restrain beings in their desire to argue and instead has promoted his own Dharma-precepts in a tactful way. He has established others, such as well-intentioned kings and ministers, on the path of Dharma, which has duly furthered the cause of virtue. In this way he has upheld the totality of the teaching of the Thus-Gone One perfectly and inspired others to practice every virtue. For this reason he is the One with Round Shoulders.

26.165 "For so long he has given up all possessions and addressed beggars by pleasant names, whichever they may like to hear. Whenever they have approached, he has never felt contempt for them, disappointed them, or turned them away. Duly fulfilling their wishes, he has never wavered in his firm resolve to give up his wealth. For this reason he is known as the One with a Lion's Jaw.

26.166 "For so long he has totally given up divisive talk and has not accepted advice that might lead to dispute, shining with the complete harmony of concord. He has criticized divisive talk and praised the qualities of getting along in complete harmony. Therefore he is called the One with Forty Even Teeth.

26.167 "For so long he has abandoned evil ways and adopted the virtue of goodness. He has avoided bad actions and their maturation, and praised good actions and their maturation. He has made offerings of white cloth and food mixed with milk, and he has painted the memorials of the thus-gone ones with whitewash mixed with milk, [F.209.a] while offering them various white flowers and garlands of sumanā, vārṣikī, and dhānuṣkari flowers. Therefore he is the One with Pure White Teeth.

26.168 "For so long he has given up laughing at and mocking others. Instead he has made everyone happy, guarded his words, and spoken in a way that has made others happy. Never looking for shortcomings and mistakes in others, he has been striving to make everyone get along. He has never wavered in his firm resolve to teach the same Dharma to everyone. Therefore he is the One with Teeth without Gap.

26.169 "For so long he has never harmed nor hurt anyone. Instead he has nursed those stricken by disease and given medicine to the sick. He has never tired of giving all kinds of elixirs to those who needed them. Therefore he is called the Possessor of the Universal Elixir of Elixirs. [432]

26.170 "For so long he has never lied or spoken harsh words. Nor has he been rude or dishonest, or sought to humiliate others. Nor has he been unpleasant, or attacked others' weak points. Instead he has practiced love and compassion and applied himself to making others feel happy and fulfilled. With sympathetic joy, he has spoken words that cause happiness—loving, pleasant, and soft words that have touched others, satisfied them, and refreshed their senses. In this way he has applied himself to proper talk and therefore he is the One with the Voice of Brahmā.

26.171 "For so long he has regarded sentient beings, with his unhindered vision, as his mothers, fathers, and children. Looking at beggars as if they were his only children, he has been filled with love and compassion and has never disappointed them. With his senses still, he has looked at the memorials of the thus-gone ones with unblinking eyes. He has made a firm resolve to inspire other beings to meet the Thus-Gone One, and therefore he is the One with Deep Blue Eyes. [F.209.b]

26.172 "For so long he has given up unintelligent and lowly attitudes and instead has applied himself perfectly to the lofty and vast. He has inspired beings with the feeling of delight for the Dharma. He has never frowned at others but always showed a smiling face. He has sought the presence of all spiritual teachers and, being so predisposed, he has transformed himself into a collection of everything auspicious. Therefore he is said to have eyelashes like a cow.

26.173 "For so long he has given up all faults of speech. Instead he has expounded elaborately on the virtues of the listeners, the solitary buddhas, and all who teach the Dharma. He has copied the sūtras of the thus-gone ones, read them, recited them, and explained them to others. Regarding the teachings contained in them, he has been able to differentiate between the words and the meaning, and has been skilled in making others understand the same. Therefore he is the One with a Well-Developed Tongue.

26.174 "For so long he has venerated parents, monks, priests, spiritual teachers, and worthy ones by putting his head to their feet. He has praised those who have gone forth and greeted them respectfully, shaved their hair, and anointed their heads with scented oils. To all the beggars he has offered colored powders, chaplets and garlands, and head ornaments. Therefore he is called the One with the Crown Extension, the Top of Whose Crown Cannot be Seen.

26.175 "For so long he has encouraged others to make liberal offerings of all sorts and admonished them to follow the teachings of all spiritual friends. Entrusted by those who teach the Dharma, he has gone in all directions without feeling weary in order to serve the buddhas, the bodhisattvas, the solitary buddhas, the noble listeners, Dharma teachers, parents, teachers, and all worthy ones. He has offered them lamps with scented oils of many kinds, and lights and lamps made

with oil, ghee, or grass that dispel darkness. [F.210.a] He has beautified the statues of the thus-gone ones with the most exquisite, pleasing things, and adorned them with heaps of milky-white jewels. Because he has made others develop the mind of awakening, [433] his accumulation of virtue has been exceptional. Therefore he is known as the One with the Beautiful, Glowing Tuft of Hair between the Eyebrows That Curls Clockwise and Has an Exquisite Color.

26.176 "Because he is endowed with the great strength of Nārāyaṇa, he is called the Great Nārāyaṇa. Because he is endowed with power to tame many millions of demons, he is called the Destroyer of All Adversaries.

26.177 "Because he is endowed with the ten powers of the thus-gone ones, he is called the One with the Ten Powers of a Thus-Gone One.[15]

26.178 "He is skilled in knowing what is proper and improper. He gives up the low and minor vehicle and possesses the power of accomplishing the qualities of the Great Vehicle. He employs its inexhaustible power. Therefore he is the One Who Is Skilled in Knowing What Is Proper and Improper.[16]

26.179 "He has the power that comes from knowing the cause and result of all actions in the past, present, and the future. Therefore he is the One with the Power That Comes from Knowing the Cause and Effect of All Actions in the Past, Present, and the Future.

26.180 "He has the power to know the capacities of all sentient beings and their levels of diligence. Therefore he is the One with the Power to Know the Capacities of All Sentient Beings and Their Levels of Diligence.

26.181 "He has the power to know how one enters various types of worlds. Therefore he is the One with the Power to Know How One Enters Various Types of Worlds.

26.182 "He has the power to know what liberates various inclinations, many inclinations, and all inclinations. [F.210.b] Therefore he is the One with the Power to Know What Liberates Various Inclinations, Many Inclinations, and All Inclinations.

26.183 "He has the power to know the path that leads everywhere. Therefore he is the One with the Power to Know the Path That Leads Everywhere.

26.184 "He has the power to know all contemplations, liberations, concentrations, and absorptions, as well as the way of purifying and stopping the disturbing emotions. Therefore he is the One with the Power to Know All Contemplations, Liberations, Concentrations, and Absorptions, as well as the Way of Purifying and Stopping the Disturbing Emotions.

26.185 "He has the power to know all previous situations without attachment. Therefore he is the One with the Power to Know All Previous Situations without Attachment.

26.186 "He has the power of knowledge stemming from his divine eye that sees clearly all forms without exception. Therefore he is the One with the Power of Knowledge Stemming from His Divine Eye That Sees Clearly All Forms without Exception.

26.187 "He has the power to know how all habitual tendencies are formed and how all defiled states without exception are exhausted. Therefore he is the One with the Power to Know How All Habitual Tendencies Are Formed and How All Defiled States without Exception Are Exhausted.

26.188 "He has attained the confidence that results from his declaration of realizing all dharmas without exception, [F.211.a] a confidence that outshines the entire world, including the realm of gods. [434] Therefore he is the One Who Has Attained the Confidence That Results from His Declaration of Realizing All Dharmas without Exception, a Confidence That Outshines the Entire World, including the Realm of Gods.[17]

26.189 "He declares, 'All disturbing emotions are obstacles for passing beyond suffering,' and thus discovers a confidence that the entire world, including the gods, cannot destroy. Therefore he is the One Who Declares 'All disturbing emotions are obstacles for passing beyond suffering,' and Thus Discovers a Confidence That the Entire World, including the Gods, Cannot Destroy.

26.190 "With his claim, 'Passing beyond suffering is attained when the path of renunciation is accomplished,' he has attained a fearlessness that the entire world, including its gods, cannot overturn. Therefore he is the One Who Claims 'Passing beyond suffering is attained when the path of renunciation is accomplished,' and Thereby Has Attained a Fearlessness That the Entire World, Including Its Gods, Cannot Overturn.

26.191 "He has attained a fearlessness that the entire world, including the gods, cannot reverse, which is expressed through a statement concerning knowledge of the way to abandon all defilements. Therefore he is called the One Who Has Attained a Fearlessness That the Entire World, Including the Gods, Cannot Reverse, which Is Expressed in a Statement Concerning Knowledge of the Way to Abandon All Defilements.

26.192 "Because he is a Dharma teacher who never stammers or falters, therefore he is the One Who Teaches the Dharma without Stammering or Faltering.[18]

26.193 "He keeps in his heart the essence of the Dharma, which is beyond being spoken or heard. Therefore he is the One Who Keeps in His Heart the Essence of the Dharma, which Is beyond Being Spoken or Heard.

26.194 "He is beyond cessation and therefore he is the One beyond Cessation.

26.195 "He is able to bless the countless sounds of sentient beings and transform them into the Dharma language of the Buddha. Therefore he is called the One Who Is Able to Bless the Countless Sounds of Sentient Beings and Transform Them into the Dharma Language of the Buddha.

26.196 "He is the one who does not forget, therefore he is the One Who Does Not Forget.

26.197 "He does not perceive differences, and therefore he is the One Who Does Not Perceive Differences.

26.198 "He has one-pointed concentration in all his thoughts as well as in all his absorptions, and therefore he is the One Who Has One-Pointed Concentration in All His Thoughts as well as in All His Absorptions.

26.199 "He has developed an equanimity that does not differentiate, and therefore he is the One Who Has Developed an Equanimity That Does Not Differentiate.

26.200 "He never loses his absorption in the formation of faith, and therefore he is the One Who Does Not Lose His Absorption in the Formation of Faith. [F.211.b]

26.201 "With uninterrupted absorption in the formation of diligence, he never loses his diligence. Therefore he is the One Who Does Not Lose His Diligence, Having One-Pointed Absorption in the Formation of Diligence.

26.202 "He never loses his mindfulness, and therefore he is the One Who Never Loses His Mindfulness.

26.203 "He never loses his wisdom, and therefore he is the One Who Never Loses His Wisdom. [435]

26.204 "He never loses his liberation, and therefore he is the One Who Never Loses His Liberation.

26.205 "He never loses his vision of liberated wisdom, and therefore he is the One Who Does Not Lose His Vision of Liberated Wisdom.

26.206 "He lets wisdom inform all his physical, verbal, and mental actions, and he possesses the wisdom that is guided by wisdom. Therefore he is the One Who Lets Wisdom Inform All His Physical, Verbal, and Mental Actions, and Who Possesses the Wisdom That Is Guided by Wisdom.

26.207 "He is endowed with the unimpeded wisdom vision that sees the past, the future, and the present without attachment. Therefore he is the One Who Is Endowed with the Unimpeded Wisdom Vision That Sees the Past, the Future, and the Present without Attachment.

26.208 "He has attained stainless freedom, and therefore he is the One Who Has Attained Stainless Freedom.

26.209 "He is continuously skilled in inspiring the activities of sentient beings, and therefore he is the One Who Is Continuously Skilled in Inspiring the Activities of Sentient Beings.

26.210 "He is skilled in teaching the Dharma to others according to their capabilities, and therefore he is the One Who Is Skilled in Teaching the Dharma to Others according to Their Capabilities.

26.211 "He has perfected the sacred environment of all aspects of melodious speech, and therefore he is the One Who Has Perfected the Sacred Environment of All Aspects of Melodious Speech.

26.212 "He is skilled in articulating all sounds and echoes, and therefore he is the One with a Voice like a God, a Nāga, a Yakṣa, a Gandharva, a Demigod, a Garuḍa, a Kinnara, and a Mahoraga.[19]

26.213 "He is the one whose voice resounds like the voice of Brahmā. He is the one with the voice of a cuckoo bird. He is the one with a voice like a great drum. He is the one with the voice like the resounding of the earth. [F.212.a] He is the one with the rumbling voice of a thundercloud of the nāga king Sāgara.

26.214 "He is the one with a voice like the roar of a lion or a bull. He is the one with a voice that satisfies, because it is in accord with the languages of all sentient beings. He is the one with a voice that delights the circle of his audience without impediment or obstruction. He is the one with a single voice that is understood in all languages.

26.215 "He is the one who is honored by the lord of the Brahma realm. He is the one who is respected by the lord of the gods. He is the one to whom the lord of the nāgas bows. He is the one upon whose face the lord of the yakṣas gazes. He is the one who the lord of the gandharvas praises in song. He is the one who is gazed upon by the lord of the demons, who beholds him with bright and unblinking eyes. He is the one to whom the lord of the demigods bows. He is the one who is unharmed by the gaze of the lord of the garuḍas. He is the one who is praised by the lord of the kinnaras. He is the one who the lord of the mahoragas longs to see. He is the one who is venerated by the lord of the humans. [436]

26.216 "He is the one who is supported by large gatherings of worthy ones. He is the one who instructs the bodhisattvas, who inspires them, and delights them. He is the one who teaches the Dharma free from worldliness. He is a venerable teacher of the Dharma who never mistakes any words or syllables. He teaches the Dharma in a timely manner.

26.217 "Maitreya, this turning of the wheel of Dharma is merely a brief teaching that praises just a few of the qualities of the Thus-Gone One. Maitreya, to list them in an elaborate manner, the Thus-Gone One would need an eon or more. And still that would not be enough to list them all."

26.218 At that time the Blessed One spoke these verses:
"The wheel of Dharma has been turned,
Which is profound, hard to behold, and subtle.
It is not understood by the extremists,
Nor by the demons.

26.219 "The wheel of Dharma has been turned,
Which is without an all-ground and beyond concepts, [F.212.b]
Unborn and without origination,
Unique and empty of inherent nature.

26.220 "The Buddha has turned the wheel
That teaches the Dharma of equality,
Without anything to accept and reject,
Causeless and without characteristics.

26.221 "The Protector of the World
Has turned the wheel that is like
An illusion, a mirage,
A dream, an echo, or a moon reflected in water.

26.222 "It leads beyond conditioned phenomena;
It is not nihilistic and neither is it permanent,
But cuts through all views—
So is the wheel of Dharma described.

26.223 "It is an infinitely vast teaching,
Ever equal to space,
Luminous and nonconceptual—
So is the wheel of Dharma described.

26.224 "It is free from existence and nonexistence,
Beyond self and no self,
A teaching that is naturally unborn—
That is what we call the wheel of Dharma. [437]

26.225 "In the truth of suchness,
It is the final end, yet it is without an end,
This nondual teaching of the Dharma—
That is what we call the wheel of Dharma.

26.226 "The eye is essentially empty,
So are the ear and the nose.
The tongue, the body, and also the mind
Are empty and inert.

26.227 "Such a wheel is the wheel of Dharma
That has now been turned.
He awakens unawakened beings;
That's why he is called the Awakened One.

26.228 "By myself have I realized this nature—
The nature defined as Dharma—
Without instructions from others,
And so I am the self-arisen possessor of the wisdom eye.

26.229 "The one who masters all Dharmas
Is called a *lord of Dharma*.
The one who knows the genuine Dharma from the incorrect,
That is what we call a *guide*.

26.230 "As many beings as there are to be trained,
That many limitless beings I train.
I have perfected my training,
And so I am called the Perfect Guide.

26.231 "All beings that have strayed from the path,
I show the supreme path.
I guide them to the other shore,
And therefore I am the Guide.

26.232 "Since I know the way to magnetize,
I gather beings at my side.
Since I save beings from the wasteland of cyclic existence,
I am their leader. [F.213.a]

26.233 "I master all phenomena,
And so I am the Victorious One, the master of Dharma.
Since I turn the wheel of Dharma,
I am known as a king of Dharma.

26.234 "I am the generous giver of the Dharma, the Teacher,
The unexcelled Lord of the Dharma.
My offering was well performed and the goal accomplished;
My aim is fulfilled and goodness accomplished.

26.235 "I am the one who consoles and gives comfort,
The hero who has conquered disturbing emotions.
I am victorious in all battles,
A liberated one who liberates beings. [438]

26.236 "I am the light of the world.
I spread the light of knowledge wisdom;
I conquer the darkness of ignorance.
I hold the torch; I am the bright light.

26.237 "With great wisdom I am the skillful doctor,
A great healer of the wounds of disturbing emotions.
For all those afflicted with disturbing emotions,
I am the remover of pain.

26.238 "All the signs are complete,
And all the marks of goodness adorn me.
Yet, with this body, excellent in every way,
I adapt to the ways of the worldly ones.

26.239 "I am powerful with the ten powers,
Confident with the four confidences,
And possessor of the eighteen unique qualities—
The great sage who turns the wheel of Dharma of the Supreme Vehicle.

26.240 "This brief explanation
Will set in motion the wheel of Dharma.
This praise of the qualities of the Thus-Gone One
Has listed just but a few.

26.241 "For the limitless wisdom of the Buddha
Is as vast as the sky.
Even if one were to speak for an eon,
That would not suffice to describe the Buddha's qualities."

26.242 *This concludes the twenty-sixth chapter, on turning the wheel of Dharma.*

27.

Chapter 27

EPILOGUE

27.1 The gods, who had requested this Dharma teaching from the Thus-Gone One, were now gathered for the turning of the wheel of Dharma. In total there were more than 18,000 divine beings from the Pure Realms, led by such beings as Maheśvara, Nanda, Sunanda, Candana, Mahita, Śānta, Praśānta, and Vinīteśvara. At that point the Thus-Gone One addressed the divine beings, headed by Maheśvara, who had come from the pure realms, in the following way: [F.213.b]

27.2 "Friends, this sūtra known as *The Play in Full* is a very extensive account of the Bodhisattva's playful activity. It constitutes an introduction to the play that is the domain of the Buddha. The Thus-Gone One has taught it to introduce himself. [439] So now you should absorb it, preserve it, and cause it to be retold. In this way, this Dharma-method of mine will spread.

27.3 "When the followers of the Bodhisattva Vehicle hear this teaching, they will develop an extremely steadfast diligence. Those beings that develop a strong inclination to attain unsurpassable and perfect awakening will develop a strength that brings down a rain of the great teaching. The demons will be destroyed. All those who proclaim different doctrines will not make their appearance. Your request to teach this Dharma will become a root of virtue—very valuable, yielding great benefits, and earning great praise.

27.4 "Friends, whoever joins his palms in respect to this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* will attain eight supreme attributes. What are these eight? These are to attain a supreme body, supreme strength, supreme retinue, supreme

presence of mind, supreme renunciation, supreme purity of thoughts, supreme level of meditative concentration, and supreme manifestation of insight. These are the eight supreme attributes that one will attain.

27.5 "Friends, whoever sets up a throne for the Dharma teacher who wishes to expound this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* will attain eight desirable positions as soon as he sets up the throne. What are these eight? They are the position of a merchant, a householder, a universal monarch, a world protector, Śakra, Vaśavartin, Brahmā, a nonreturning bodhisattva who has reached the supreme essence of awakening, [F.214.a] sits on a lion throne, and vanquishes the attacks of demons, and a buddha who has reached perfect and unsurpassable awakening and sits on the throne of turning the wheel of Dharma. These are the eight desirable positions that one will attain. [440]

27.6 "Friends, whoever applauds a Dharma teacher expounding this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* will attain eight purities of speech. What are these eight? With the pure action of speech that accords with the truth, others will do as one says. With the pure action of speech that overwhelms one's audience, one's words will be accepted. With the pure action of not being ignored, one's words will be heeded. By peacefully gathering beings, one will speak pleasantly and softly. By satisfying bodies and minds, one's voice will be like the voice of the cuckoo bird. By uniting beings, one will have one's say. By outshining all voices, one will have a voice like Brahmā. By not being dominated by any propagators of other doctrines, one will have a voice like the roar of a lion. By satisfying the sense faculties of all sentient beings, one will have the voice of a Buddha. These are the eight purities of speech that one will attain.

27.7 "Friends, whoever puts this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* into writing, and carries, venerates, respects, honors, and pays homage to it while praising this Dharma teaching into the four directions without any feeling of miserliness, saying, 'Come here! Write this teaching down! Hold it! Pass it on! Reflect on it! Memorize it well!' they shall attain eight great treasures. What are these eight great treasures? They are: the treasure of unfailing recall because of not forgetting, the treasure of intelligence by careful analysis, the treasure of realization by assimilating enthusiastically the meaning of all the sūtras, the treasure of memorization by remembering everything that one hears, the treasure of confidence by satisfying all sentient beings with good counsel, [F.214.b] the treasure of Dharma by preserving the true Dharma, the treasure of the mind of awakening by maintaining the lineage of the Three Jewels, and the treasure of accomplishment by developing receptiveness to the truth of nonorigination. These are the eight great treasures that one will attain. [441]

27.8 "Friends, whoever teaches this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* and explains it will perfect eight accumulations. What are these eight? They are: generosity by being free of miserliness, discipline by perfecting all virtuous intentions, learning by accomplishing unattached knowledge, calm abiding through actualizing all meditative states and equilibriums, insight through perfecting knowledge by means of the threefold knowledge, merit by refining the excellent marks and the adornments of the buddha realms, wisdom by satisfying the inclinations of all sentient beings, and great compassion because of never tiring of ripening all sentient beings. These are the eight accumulations that one will perfect.

27.9 "Friends, whoever has this outlook and, thinking that other sentient beings should receive this instruction, teaches this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* elaborately, will attain eight great forms of merit through this virtuous cause. What are these eight? [F.215.a] The first of these eight great types of merit results in becoming a universal monarch. The second great merit results in becoming a supreme ruler in the Heaven of the Four Great Kings. The third great merit results in becoming Śakra, lord of the gods. The fourth great merit results in becoming the god Suyāma. The fifth great merit results in becoming Santuṣita. The sixth great merit results in becoming Sunirmāṇarati. The seventh great merit results in becoming Vaśavartin, the king of gods. The eighth great merit results in becoming Brahmā from the Mahā-Brahmā Heaven. Finally one becomes a thus-gone one, a worthy one, a perfectly awakened one, free from all unvirtuous dharmas and endowed with all the virtuous ones. These are the eight great merits that one will attain. [442]

27.10 "Friends, whoever listens attentively to this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* as it is being explained will gain eight pure mind states. What are these eight? They are: love in order to conquer all anger, compassion in order to abandon all ill will, sympathetic joy in order to clear away all depression, equanimity in order to abandon desire and anger, the four concentrations in order to master the entire desire realm, the four equilibriums of the formless realm in order to master the mind, the five types of higher knowledge in order to travel to other buddha realms, and the ability to conquer all traces of habitual tendencies in order to attain the meditative concentration of the heroic gait. [F.215.b] These are the eight pure mind states that one will attain.

27.11 "Friends, wherever this Dharma teaching of *The Play in Full* is found, whether in a village, a city, a market, an inhabited place, a district, a courtyard, or a temple, the eight fears will not manifest except from the ripening of past actions. What are these eight? They are: the fears of the troubles caused by (1) rulers, (2) thieves, (3) malicious beings, (4) starvation in a wilderness, (5) fights, quarrels and disputes, (6) gods, (7) nāgas, (8) yakṣas, and all types of misfortune. Other than the ripening of previous actions, my friends, these eight fears will no longer occur.

27.12 "Friends, in short, even if the lifespan of the Thus-Gone One were to last for an eon, and even if he were to praise this Dharma teaching uninterruptedly day and night, he would not be able to end his praise of this Dharma teaching, and his inspired speech would still continue. [443]

27.13 "Friends, the discipline, absorption, knowledge, liberation, and wisdom vision of liberation of the Thus-Gone One is immeasurable and boundless. For this reason, my friends, if anyone develops the wish that others receive this vast teaching, and subsequently memorizes this Dharma teaching, carries it, propagates it, writes it down, [F.216.a] or commissions it to be written, comprehends it, and teaches it elaborately to his congregation, then their merit shall also be boundless."

27.14 Then the Thus-Gone One announced to venerable Mahākāśyapa, venerable Ānanda, and the bodhisattva great being Maitreya:
"Friends, the unsurpassable and perfect awakening that I have accomplished through limitless billions of eons, I now place in your hands. I entrust you with a supreme entrustment. Now you should keep this teaching with you and teach it elaborately to others."

27.15 When he had said this, the Blessed One uttered the following verses in order to pass on his Dharma teaching more fully:
"If the beings whom I see with my buddha-eye
Were all worthy ones equal to Śāriputra,
And if someone would make, for millions of eons,
Offerings to them, equal in number to sand grains in the Ganges,

27.16 "The merit of this would be surpassed
If one would joyfully make offerings of garlands and the like
To a single solitary buddha,
Even for just a single day and night.

27.17 "If all sentient beings were solitary buddhas,
And someone were to offer with great attention
Flowers, perfumes, and ointments
Continually over several eons,

27.18 "That merit would be greatly surpassed
If someone were to offer a single thus-gone one
A single prostration accompanied by a devoted attitude
And say, 'Homage to the Worthy One!'

27.19 "If all sentient beings were buddhas,
And someone were to worship as just explained,
With divine flowers and the most precious flowers of this world,
For many eons, with many kinds of offerings, [444]

27.20 "That merit would be greatly surpassed
If someone, at the time when the sacred Dharma is degenerating, [F.216.b]
Gives up concern for his body and life
And recites this sūtra for a single day and night.

27.21 "Whoever wishes to venerate the guides,
And likewise the solitary buddhas and the listeners,
Should give steady rise to the mind of awakening
And always keep this sūtra firmly in mind.

27.22 "This is the king of all good advice
Given by all thus-gone ones.
Wherever this jewel of a sūtra is found,
In that house the Thus-Gone One always resides.

27.23 "Whoever gives this sūtra to others or recites just a single word,
For millions of eons he shall never stray
Either from its words or its meaning,
And thus attain limitless eloquence and virtue.

27.24 "Whoever hears this teaching and puts it into practice
Shall not only be an unsurpassable guide of humans,
But a being without equal,
Inexhaustible like the ocean."

27.25 When the Blessed One, the Exalted Lord, had spoken, the gods from the pure realms headed by Maheśvara; all the bodhisattvas, the great beings, headed by Maitreya; the great listeners headed by Mahākāśyapa; and the entire world with its gods, humans, demigods, and gandharvas rejoiced at the Blessed One's teaching.

27.26 *This concludes the twenty-seventh chapter, the epilogue.*

27.27 *This completes the Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra,* "*The Play in Full*."

c.

Colophon

• Colophon to the Sanskrit Edition •

c.1 The Thus-Gone One explained the causes
Of those dharmas that have a cause
And also their cessation.
This is the teaching of the Great Ascetic.
May there be good goodness! May there be goodness in every way!

• Colophon to the Tibetan Translation •

c.2 This was taught and translated by the Indian preceptors Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Munivarman, and the translator-editor Bandé Yeshé Dé, who proofed and finalized the translation.

n.

Notes

n.1 See Miller (forthcoming).

n.2 We are grateful to Jonathan Silk (Silk 2022, p. 273, n. 15) for pointing out a number of errors and omissions in an earlier version of this paragraph.

n.3 Hokazono 1994, 2019a, 2019b.

n.4 At the time of translation the edition of Hokazono (Hokazono 1994, 2019a, 2019b) mentioned above was unavailable to us. Since it appears to be a considerable improvement on Lefman's, we expect to benefit from a close reading of it in a planned future update of this translation.

n.5 The Sanskrit here has Kauṇḍinya, who (with his title Ajñāta-) has already been mentioned. However, Negi cites this and one another instance to suggest the possibility that the Tibetan *gsus po che* is sometimes used to refer to Kauṇḍinya.

n.6 *The four rivers* is a technical term for the streams (*ogha*) that are identical to the four "outflows" (*āśrava*), namely, sensual desires, desire for cyclic existence, wrong views, and ignorance.

n.7 The translation is based on the Sanskrit.

n.8 The translation of the verses in the following section is primarily based on the Sanskrit.

n.9 This is the first time the text shifts to the first person.

n.10 The translation is based on the Tibetan *tsa sha* (Skt. *cāṣa*); the Sanskrit has *apsaras*.

n.11 The following six verses are missing in the Sanskrit text.

n.12 The first three lines of this verse are missing in the Sanskrit text.

n.13 According to Lefmann's edition of the Sanskrit and the Tibetan *chos 'dod*. Vaidya's Sanskrit has Dharmakāya as the second name here.

n.14 This is the first of the "thirty-two marks of a great being," the rest of which are listed in the paragraphs that follow.

n.15 In the passsage that follows, the translation follows the structure of the Sanskrit rather than the Tibetan.

n.16 With this paragraph begins a list of the "ten powers (*bala*) of a thus-gone one."

n.17 With this paragraph begins a list of the "four confidences (*vaiśāradya*) of a thus-gone one."

n.18 The qualities listed from this paragraph until 26.205 correspond, with some variations, to enumerations in other texts of the "eighteen unique qualities of a buddha" (*āvenikabuddhadharma*).

n.19 From the following paragraph onward, the translation follows the Tibetan structure again.

b.

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