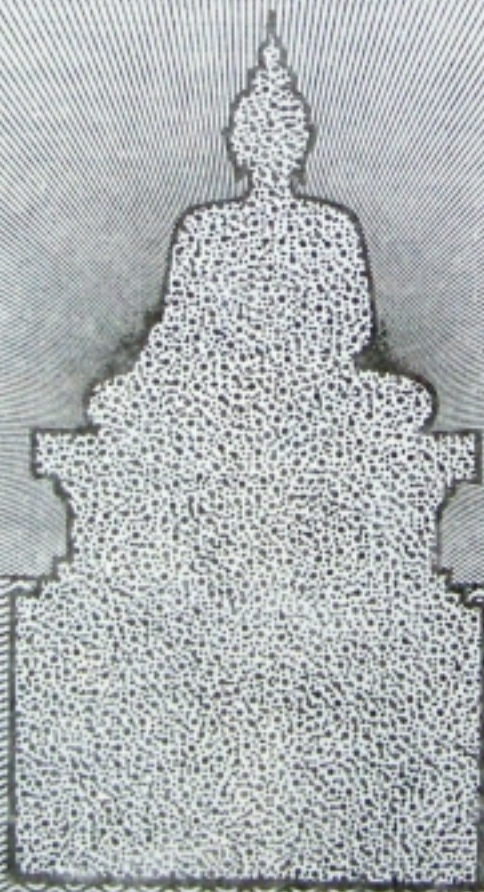


Rainbows



NOTICE BOARD

SUMMER DHAMMA SCHOOL/CAMP 1991: 18th-25th August

The 'Summer Dhamma School' is a yearly opportunity for families to have an extended stay at Amaravati, and a special time of creation, recreation and spiritual companionship. Participants will be limited to about 80, and helpers to 10. This is a very popular event, so please book early to avoid disappointment. Those who were unable to come last year due to the camp being full will be given priority this year - but they must re-book.

All bookings should be sent in by **June 15th** at the latest.

Bookings can only be accepted from those who are able to stay for the whole length of the camp.

For further details, please contact: **TONY BRUNI** 89 Beaulieu Ave., London SE26 6PW.

CAN YOU HELP WITH THE 1991 CAMP?

If you would like to help with teaching or running an ACTIVITY OR WORKSHOP (either Dhamma-oriented or general arts, crafts, etc.), then please contact:

MEDHINA 113, Waytemore Rd,
Bishops Stortford, Herts CM23 3RD.

If you would like to help in the KITCHEN (non-family people only please), either as an assistant cook or as a general helper, then please contact:

SALLY ASH Woodthorpe, Manor Crescent,
Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2AX.

For those interested in helping in either of the above ways, or as part of the lay coordinating team, there will be a meeting at Amaravati: **Sunday, 21st April 1991, 1 pm.**

DHAMMA SCHOOL PROJECT

An open meeting took place at Amaravati on 25th November, to discuss the responses (54 in all) to the Dhamma School Questionnaire. This will be discussed further at another meeting to be held at Amaravati on **Sunday, 21st April 1991, at 3 pm**, at which all are welcome.

A full report on the registration of the Dhamma School Trust as a charity, and a summary of the questionnaire responses will be published in the April Forest Sangha Newsletter.

Anthony Bugh, aged 7, let loose a balloon which landed in my garden, where it burst. Attached to the remainder of the balloon was a piece of paper with his name and his address. I wonder whether any of your readers might be, or have, children of the same age who would like to write to him. His address is:

4, Clarendon Court, Hawley Hill
Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey GU17 9JN
Yours faithfully, A. Steer.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO RAINBOWS

We are always grateful to receive articles, drawings, stories, poems, etc., that are based on Buddhist principles. It is especially cheering to receive contributions from children. If you or your children would like to contribute to *Rainbows*, please do not hesitate to sit down and put pen/pencil/crayon to paper! Send contributions to

Rainbows Editor
Amaravati Buddhist Centre
Great Gaddesden
Hemel Hempstead
Herts HP1 3BZ

It is also helpful to receive suggestions, feedback and ideas that will help *Rainbows* more effectively benefit children and young people.



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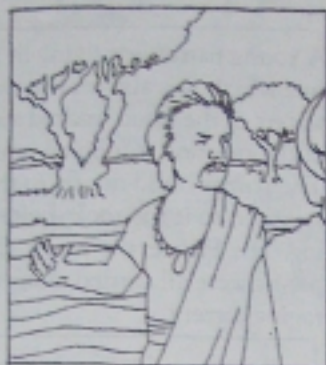
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The Tale of Prince Wicked . . . or . . . The Importance of Keeping One's Word

A Story from the Jatakas, tales of the Buddha's previous lives.

PRINCE DUTTHAKUMARA

and his attendants had just arrived at the river bank where they were to spend a day bathing and seeking pleasure.



'You good-for-nothings! Stop gawping and get on with what you're supposed to be doing. I want you to bathe me - NOW!'

Like a terrible demon, with his eyes bulging out in anger, he spat and waved his arms.

The attendants took him to the middle of the river. As he was bathing, they started talking.



'We hate this prince. He is so evil

Why don't we do away with him? It'll be better for everyone without him.'

So they pushed him into the stormy waters and returned to the bank.



Suddenly, a terrible storm arose and the sky went quite dark. Everyone fell silent thinking that they would have to return to Benares straight away.



But Prince Dutthakumara (whose name means 'wicked') started

shouting and hitting out at his servants. /



When they got back to the palace, people started asking: 'Where's the Prince?'

'It was so dark, we couldn't see him. We thought that he'd already come back' was the reply.

Illustrations by Daryl Bailey



The king ordered a search for his son. The storm made the air dark, and the rain was so dense that no-one could see him as he was carried down-river, although he was wailing in terror. :

Just as the Prince was finally about to sink into the water, he managed to grasp hold of a tree trunk which was also being carried away by the swirling torrents of water. He clambered onto it and floated downstream.



Meanwhile, a rat and a snake who lived in holes in the river bank were in trouble. With the flood, water started rushing into their homes.

When the log carrying Prince Dutthakumara floated past, they managed to climb onto it and save themselves.



A young parrot was living in a silk-cotton tree which was also on the river bank. The waters of the flood washed away the roots of the tree and it toppled into the river. The parrot could not fly in the stormy weather, so it too took shelter on the same log. The Prince, the snake, the rat and the parrot were all carried along together in the raging torrent.



At that time, the Bodhisattva* was living as a hermit in a leaf-hut built on a bend in the river.

While he was walking up and down in meditation late at night, he heard the Prince's anguished cries. 'I can't let someone die like that,' he thought, and he leapt into the water to save the Prince.



*A Bodhisattva is someone who has made a vow to become a Buddha. According to legend, the Bodhisattva in this story was to become the Buddha Gotama in another life.



swam across it and carried the Prince – and then the other animals – to safety.

The hermit was as strong as an elephant and, although the river was racing past, he



Taking them all to his hermitage, he lit a fire to warm them and gave them food. But he warmed and served the animals first, before the Prince, because they were weaker and more likely to die.

This made Prince Wicked very angry, and instead of feeling grateful he thought: 'How I hate this hermit, who serves the animals before ME.'



After a few days, when the storm had subsided and everyone had regained strength, the animals said good-bye to the hermit.

SNAKE AND RAT: 'Reverend One, you have saved our lives and we are very

grateful. We each have a treasure store of gold hidden away. If you ever need it, come to this place and call out and we will give it to you.'



PARROT: 'Reverend One, I don't have any treasure ... but if you ever need red rice, come

to the place where I live and all my relations will provide you with wagon-loads.'

Prince Dutthakumara was full of hatred for the hermit and could only think: 'If you come near me, I'll have you put to death!' But he managed to say: 'Reverend One, if you come to me after I have succeeded to the throne I'll give you the four basic requisites of life.'





After a while had passed, the Bodhisattva thought that he would test the promises made by these creatures. He went first of all to the snake and called him.

The snake appeared immediately and greeted the hermit very politely.

'It's good to see you, Reverend One. The treasure is buried at the root of the tree over there. Please take it all.'

'Well, leave it there for now,' replied the hermit. 'I will fetch it when the need arises.'



The hermit then made his way to the rat, and called him. The rat appeared just as the snake had done, and they had a similar conversation.



Then the hermit visited the parrot.

'Parrot,' he called, and the bird flew down from the top of a tree at once.

'Reverend One, let me tell all my relations and we will fetch rice from the Himalayas at once.'

'Good, parrot,' the hermit replied. 'But wait until there is need, and I will find you again.'

'Now,' thought the Bodhisattva, 'Prince Dutthakumara has succeeded to the throne and is king. Let us put him to the test.'

So he went to the royal pleasure grove where he stayed the night.





The next morning, the hermit entered the city to find alms-food. It happened to be a day when the King was processing around the city mounted on a splendid elephant. It was a solemn procession of many people.

The ungrateful King saw the hermit in the distance.

'Hmmm,' he thought to himself. 'This hermit has come to take advantage of my hospitality.'



Before he lets everyone know of the good turn he did me, I'm going to have his head cut off!

He motioned to his men.

'Your Majesty,' they responded immediately. 'This rascally hermit has come to wheedle what he can out of me. He's nothing but a pest. Seize him and have him flogged at every cross-roads, then march him out of the city and cut off his head. I don't want him to see me.'

'Yes, Your Majesty,' they replied obediently.



So the innocent Bodhisattva was bound, and led to the place of execution. At every cross-roads he was beaten but, although he

was struck time and time again, he did not cry out in pain. Instead he repeated this phrase:

'The men of this town spoke the truth when they said King Wicked is no better than a log of drift-wood.'



Some wise men overheard his saying this, and asked him what he meant.

So the hermit related all that had happened during the flood and afterwards. He finished by saying, 'I must tell the truth. It is because I dragged this man out of the great flood that I have brought this misery upon myself.'

On hearing this story, some of the nobles and Brahmins of the city became very angry.

'How can we rely on a King who does not show gratitude to a good person who saved his life? Let's seize him.'

They rushed after the King, who was still on the back of his elephant, and showered him with stones and javelins.



The unhappy King was killed and his corpse fell to the ground.

Then the people of Benares anointed the Bodhisattva as their King.



The new King was wise and just, ruling by the principles of Truth. One day he wanted to test the snake and the other animals again.

Accompanied by many members of his court, he went to the snake's dwelling and called out to him. The snake came and saluted him.

'Master, this treasure is yours. Please take it.'

This time the King took the gold and entrusted it to his ministers.



He called to the rat, and the rat behaved as the snake had done. Again the gold was given to the ministers.



Then he called to the parrot. The parrot greeted him and said: 'Shall I fetch rice, Master?'

The King replied:

'Fetch it when there is need, but for now come along with me.'

So the King returned to the city with the gold coins and with the snake, the rat and the parrot.

When they reached the royal palace, he placed the treasure in a specially guarded coffer on a raised terrace.

Then he had a golden tube made for the snake to live in and a small cave in a crystal for the rat. The parrot was housed in a beautiful, golden cage.

Each day the snake and the parrot were fed on sweet corn served in golden bowls, and the rat was fed on scented, husked rice.

They all became very good friends and lived together in happiness and harmony for the rest of their lives.

And the people of Benares were happy under the rule of their excellent King who was both wise and generous.



the
end

Ode to a stump

When I think of you,
my heart it starts to pump.

I get so excited
I jump jump jump.

Because I know
you're just sittin' there
a-waitin' for me, especially.

When I'm feeling down
and a little bit blue,
the world is a drag
and I don't know what to do.

One thought of you
and I'm right as rain.
The answer's in the giving
and to take is insane.

Some think you're just
an ordinary stump
for stubbin' a toe or restin' on
the rump.

They might think you're ugly
and take you to the dump,
but I won't let them;
I'll call them a chump –
A chump, a chump, a big ol' chump.

Ye of little faith,
don't you know what you can see?
That's not a lump of wood;
it's a sacrificial tree.

Cut off in its prime
without a word to say,
it gives its life to you and me
and feeds us every day.

Covered with goodies,
pretty as can be,
I don't know where to start
thinkin' everything's for me.

I'm in such a state
of convoluted greed,
I climb upon your altar
and don't pay you no heed.

That was in the past
before I met my friend,
he's teaching me some manners
and now I'm on the mend.

Decorated with pine cones,
anointed with an orange peel,
and blessed with special words of grace,
you offer one and all a meal.

So now when I see you,
noble offering stump,
I make a special effort
not to thump you with a bump.

And though my little heart
is still a pumpin'
with a thump thump thump,
and my mind is a-crazy
with your sump sump sumptuous
banquet tray,

I try to remember
to stop and pray:

'May all beings be well
May all beings be well
May all beings be well,

Even worms,

Today.

Homage to the Noble Offering Stump
Homage to the Noble Offering Stump
Homage to the Noble Offering Stump.'

A Friendship in the Forest

Hello!

My name is Badger Bodhisattva.

('Bodhisattva' is a word that means someone who likes to help others.)

A good friend of mine who is a Buddhist monk gave me that name. It is a good name, but I don't know if I can always live up to its meaning.

In fact my good friend – who is called Kittisaro – has been trying to help me in this matter. Every day he would leave some of his food for me on an old tree stump. He would always make a point of doing this even though he only had one meal a day himself. When I'd come around to collect the food, he would tell me a few interesting things about Buddhism, and how to help my friends in the forest. I'm a bit of a slow learner, but I managed to pick up one or two helpful tips.

Now that my friend has gone away I don't see him so much, so some of my old bad habits have crept back – though I don't do too badly. Badgers are friendly folk and don't like to harm others (though sometimes we eat worms which we can't help doing). Although there are lots of us about, we keep out of the way and only come out at night, so most people don't actually see what we look like. We like to live in holes in the ground, which we dig ourselves, and we put in leaves and twigs to help make them comfy.

Because not many of you have seen a Badger Bodhisattva like myself, I've written a poem so that you can know we're here sharing the countryside with you people. I offered the poem to my best friend Kittisaro to try and let him know how much we badgers like it when people are friendly to us and help us to survive. And also how, when I think about that tree stump all covered with tasty goodies – even though I still feel a bit greedy! – it reminds me to send out kind thoughts to all other creatures.



NINE MEN'S MORRIS

About the game . . .

Nine Men's Morris is over three thousand years old and has been played in different countries all over the world, including Egypt, Sri Lanka and the ancient city of Troy. The game was very popular in Europe in the Middle Ages. In England it used to be played on the village green. The board was marked out with a trowel on the ground, the pieces being small black and white stones or sticks stuck in the ground. Boards were also made of wood or carved out of stone.

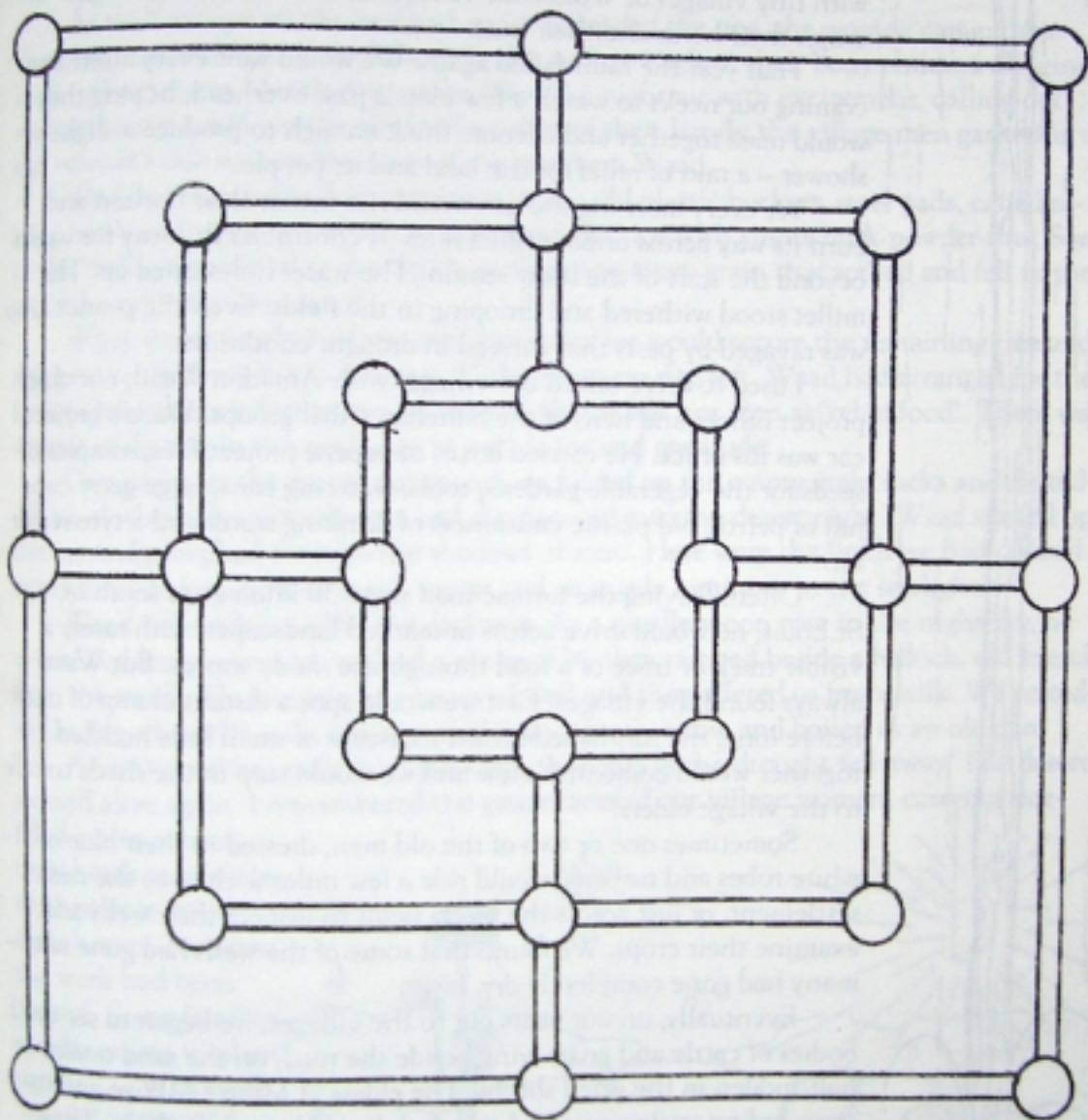
How to make the game:

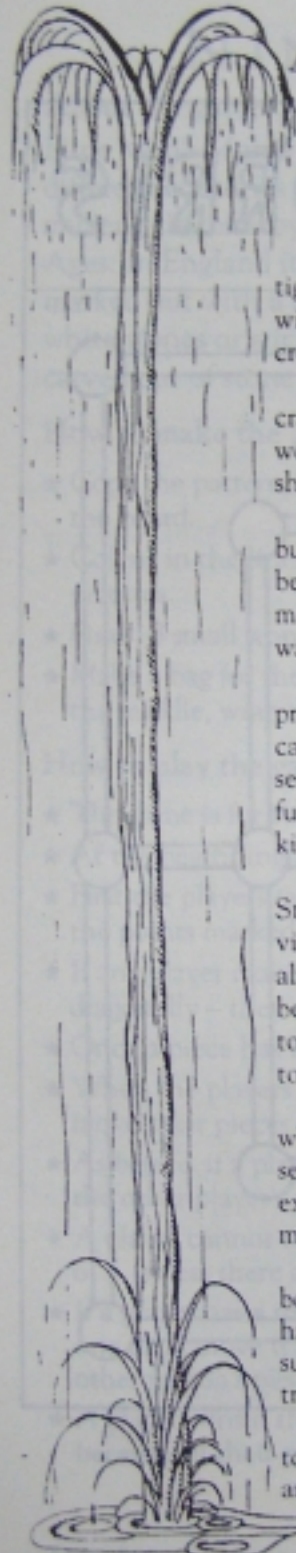
- ★ Copy the pattern (or cut it out) and glue it onto a piece of card to make the board.
- ★ Colour in the lines and circles, decorate the board with your own patterns or pictures.
- ★ Find 18 small stones or buttons: 9 white and 9 black ones.
- ★ Make a bag for the stones by cutting out a square of material. Put the stones in the middle, wrap them up, and tie some string or wool around it.

How to play the game:

- ★ The game is for two players who have 9 pieces each.
- ★ At the beginning of the game there are no pieces on the board.
- ★ First the players take it in turns to put one of their pieces on the board, on any of the points marked by a circle.
- ★ If any player makes a row of 3 of their pieces along one of the lines – not diagonally – they can take one of the other player's pieces off the board.
- ★ Once a piece has been taken off the board, it can't be put back on again.
- ★ When the players have finished putting their pieces on the board, they start to move their pieces along the lines to an empty circle.
- ★ As before, if a player moves a piece and makes a row of 3, they can remove one of the other player's pieces from the board.
- ★ A player cannot take away one of the other player's pieces that is already in a row of 3, unless there are no other pieces left to remove.
- ★ If a player has a row of 3, they can move one of their pieces away from the row in one turn, move it back the next turn to make a row again, and take one of the other person's pieces off.
- ★ A player wins if the other player has only two pieces left, or is unable to move because all their pieces are blocked.

NINE MEN'S MORRIS





ATER FOR LIFE

a true story by Sister Medhanandi

I learned a lot about drought and death in Africa. We were working on a rural development project in the Rao district of north-western Senegal, which is just on the frontier of the Saharan Sahel. It is a land that, not more than twenty years ago, was lush with forest, tigers and other wildlife. What is left now is nearly a wasteland, dotted with tiny villages of Wolof and Toucouleur families, their meagre crops, their herds and their huts.

That year the rains failed again. We would wait every afternoon, craning our necks to watch a few clouds pass overhead, hoping they would mass together and become thick enough to produce a slight shower – a rain of relief for the land and its people.

Yet every morning the sun would rise into a clear horizon and burn its way across unblemished skies. It continued this way for weeks beyond the start of the rainy season. The water holes dried up. The millet stood withered and drooping in the fields. Even the peanut crop was ravaged by pests that thrived in drought conditions.

I used to drive out to the villages with Amadou Waad, our chief project officer and hero of the Sahelian tribal groups. Waad's project car was his office. He carried boxes of papers, project files, samples of seeds for the vegetable gardens, tools, watering cans, large gerry cans full of petrol, old plastic containers of drinking water and a tyre repair kit.

Often, leaving the tarmac road some 30 kilometres south of St. Louis, he would drive across unmarked landscapes, with rarely a visible track or trace of a road through the sandy wastes. But Waad always found the villages. First we would spot a distant clump of trees; before long, the sun-baked brown roof-tops of small huts huddled together would come into view and we would stop in the shade to talk to the village elders.

Sometimes one or two of the old men, dressed in their blue or white robes and turbans, would ride a few miles with us to the next settlement, or just across the sandy fields to inspect their wells and examine their crops. We found that some of the wells had gone salty – many had gone completely dry.

Eventually, on our visits out to the villages, we began to see dead bodies of cattle and goats lying beside the road, on the sand tracks, or half-hidden in the dried shrubs. The elders of MBaye MBaye and its surrounding settlements had met and decided to ask for help. They trusted Waad – he had helped them in other drought years.

This year the situation seemed more desperate. There was nothing to eat. The animals were dying out. Next would come the old people and the children. There was a lot of fear. Hundreds of families were

migrating south to the towns, abandoning their ancestral lands – few would return.

We applied for disaster relief money and it came. Within a few days Waad and I had driven to the grain markets of the capital city to purchase rice. Some of it was from American food aid shipments – not intended for sale, but able to feed our villagers anyway!

We arranged for a truck to carry the rice and followed it along the old highway back to Rao. For nearly a week afterwards, every evening at sunset, we would transfer hundred-kilo bags of rice into the back of the project vehicle and set out for our villages.

In the darkness, silently moving across the desert, we seemed to float into the tribal settlements. The headlights of the car searched out the silhouettes of brown huts against the night sky.

At each village we stopped and, as we unloaded the rice, the women came: their faces bright with hope, their African smiles and eyes aglow, their bony children clinging to their long skirts. Murmuring voices filled the night air with excitement, calling out measurements, smelling the rice in the palms of their hands; the village men gathering at the vehicle's side to hear the story of the rice from Waad.

We filled hundreds of assorted containers: old plastic buckets, steel pails, cane baskets, bowls and cups into which we measured the rice with empty milk-powder tins. Some of the children squatted in the darkness, fingering every grain that spilled and fell to the ground – nothing was wasted.

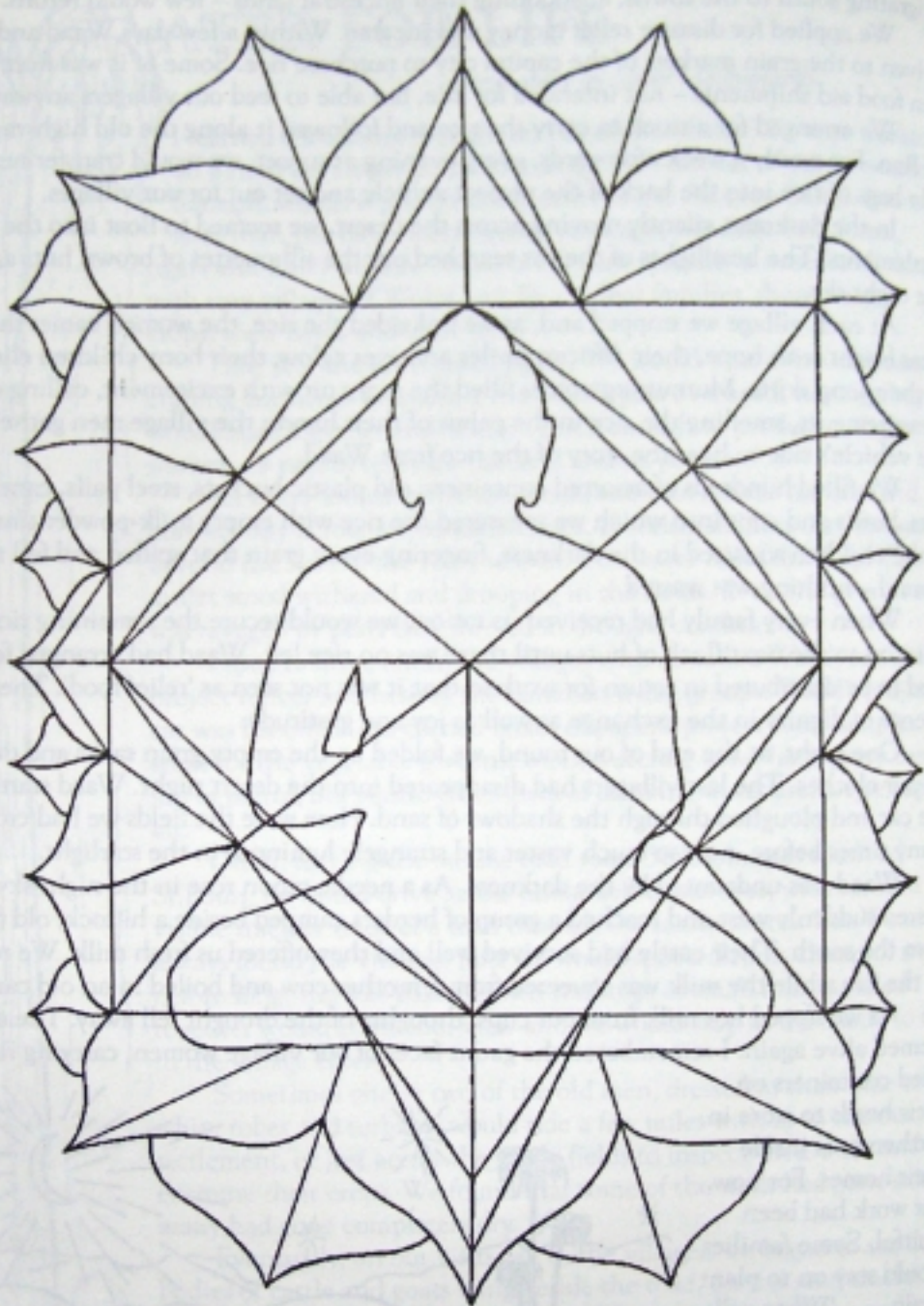
When every family had received its ration, we would secure the remaining rice and drive on to the next flock of huts until there was no rice left. Waad had arranged for the food to be distributed in return for work so that it was not seen as 'relief food'. There was a sense of dignity in the exchange as well as joy and gratitude.

One night, at the end of our round, we folded up the empty grain sacks and dusted off our clothes. The last villagers had disappeared into the desert night. Waad started up the car and ploughed through the shadows of sand. Here were the fields we had crossed many times before, now so much vaster and strangely luminous in the starlight.

Waad was undaunted by the darkness. As a needle moon rose in the night sky, he veered suddenly west and reached a group of herders camped beside a hillock, old friends from the south. Their cattle had survived well and they offered us fresh milk. We rested by the fire while the milk was squeezed from a mother cow and boiled in an old can.

As we sipped hot milk from our cups, thoughts of the drought fell away. The desert seemed alive again. I remembered the gaunt faces of our village women, carrying rice-filled containers on their heads to store in earthen pots inside their homes. For now, our work had been fruitful. Some families would stay on to plant again. . . . 'What will happen to them?' I thought. Rice we could bring them, but not water. ♦





Colouring Page

DIAMOND BUDDHA

The Five Precepts

Jessie Errey, age 10

I wanted a way to peace and purity.

There must be a way I thought.

I watched a man crush an insect, which had not harmed him.
I would not like to be Doomed between Two Thumbs – and why?
I will not take life.

I watched a child, small and frail, with no Strength at all, she
was cared for by others, Never lifting a finger.

Why? All because she was given Too much.

I will not take more than I need.

I watched a man, shouting at a fellow man, hurting him
spiritually by shouting a nasty name at him.
I wondered why, why, should this peaceful man have his feelings
hurt by a Nasty person?

I will not say names that will hurt others.

I watched a drunkard smoking in the street. He was ill and dirty.
He does not know what he is doing to himself.

I will not take intoxicating substances.

I watched a thief take money and Gloat over it.
Although he grinned, he was not really Happy at all.

I will not take what is not given.

After watching these performances, I resolved to obey the five precepts.

Such Terrible things as I saw Are Natural
In this Wonderful and Horrible life.

But I thought, as my tranquil, clear mind
like a lake at night, touched the tips
of Enlightenment.



BEING A MOTHER

by Liz Hill

AS WE WAIT for Helen's labour to start (I am invited to be a birth attendant) it seems a good time for me to reflect on my own two years of motherhood.

I regard Cassandra's birth as an initiation. Sharing with other women their birth dances, their birth stories . . . it is an experience that I can only fully empathise with in the light of my own. I had a home birth; a long-ish labour of 24 hours, gas and air for pain relief, and no complications. In long moments of pain, I wondered how I would feel towards my baby when/if it ever came out; for me there was a lot of suffering in the process. But, as I held her towards me minutes after her birth, lines in the *Karaniya-metta Sutta* became reality as I first felt a mother's love for 'her child, her only child'. I thought I had loved before, but nothing matches this often heart-piercing emotion. The knowledge that, whatever she does, I have *no choice* but to be there for her; that she'd always have my last piece of food if she wanted it. I drew closer to my own mother at this time; it's been one of the few times in my life when we have fully opened to one another, and, past her, to countless numbers of women during the aeons.

. . . I have no name.

I am but two days old.

I happy am.

Joy is my name . . .

(Blake)

I wasn't a person who ever wanted a child, so it has been a great surprise that my daughter has brought me such a lightness to life, a love of the beautiful things of our conditioned world. Instead of 'doing', I have had to let go just a little more into 'being'. First, during hours of sitting on the sofa breast-feeding; now, I go out into the garden with her and take caterpillars off our cabbage leaves for a few minutes – rather than weeding the whole area in an afternoon, totally intent on 'getting things done'. The old way is just too frustrating; blindly persevering to finish a task with a bored-to-angry toddler is not, I have learned, conducive to the cessation of suffering.

My greatest struggle has been to not feel too claustrophobic. Really, I *cannot* spend my whole waking life constantly relating intimately to another being; the way I attempt to retain my sanity is to try to get up early and sit in the mornings. Fortunately, Cassandra usually sleeps late enough to enable me to do this, *and*, I have such wonderfully supportive people in our shared house, Mike and Helen, who themselves sit every day.

Thinking just of oneself, rather than oneself and somebody else, is mind-blowingly different. Preparation to go out now takes half an hour, rather than three minutes; trying to persuade Cassandra that she needs a jumper on now that autumn is here; buckling her

shoes, getting some spare clothes, a snack, the potty. . . . Potentially dangerous objects such as cups of hot liquid always need my peripheral attention. A talk with a friend is often interrupted at the juiciest part by an urgent demand of some sort. . . . Indeed, my idea of freedom has changed dramatically and I lead a pretty boring life now: I go to bed early, seldom go out at night, and travel about once a year, with mountains of luggage and much planning, rather than on impulse.

I am actually writing this in the evening, having fed Cassandra to sleep, in our bed, where she has always slept. Babies look so beautiful when they are asleep(!); I remember the new-born ageless Buddha-face, and now the chubby toddler one. Through her, I find myself much more sensitive to the suffering of our planet, and particularly of the children on it. Today I learned that an acquaintance of mine may have an abortion, for totally understandable reasons that previously I would have accepted unquestioningly. Her boyfriend doesn't feel ready for fatherhood, she has no work, she wants to go on retreats, progress spiritually. . . . I can only say

that Cassandra is my practice. At times I carry within me a deep awareness that Nick and I have given the opportunity for another being to incarnate, and start again the endless cycle of re-birth. What I feel I can 'do' is to provide as 'good' an environment for this already old being as I can. Of course I am continually blowing it: I lose my temper, suddenly I haven't got time to stop and smell the flower on the way to the shop, so I hurry her past it.

Really, some of my lessons are always the same; to do what I am doing wholly, not with half my mind on something else; to accept the teachings, and the Teacher.





Claire Halter, age 7

RAINBOWS is produced 2 or 3 times a year at Amaravati Buddhist Centre. It is printed for free distribution, and is funded by donations. If you enjoy reading Rainbows and would like to contribute towards producing and distributing it, you can send a donation made payable to 'The English Sangha Trust'. Our address is on page 2.

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