

VASUMITRĀ

28.1 Sudhana, the head merchant's son, with his mind illuminated by that great light of wisdom, focusing upon the light of omniscience, regarding the light of the power of the true nature, strengthening the way of retention that is the treasure of what was known from the voices of all beings, increasing the way of retention that possesses the Dharma wheels of all the tathāgatas, supporting¹²⁰⁴ the power of the great compassion that is a refuge for all beings, realizing the strength of the omniscience that comes from the gateway of the light of the way of all Dharmas, following the pure aspiration that pervades the domain of the vast realm of phenomena, shining with the light of wisdom that illuminates all the directions of phenomena, accomplishing the power of the higher knowledge that pervades the array of world realms in the ten directions of all phenomena, and fulfilling the aspirations of accomplishing undertaking all the practices, memories, and actions¹²⁰⁵ of the bodhisattvas, eventually arrived at the city of Ratnavyūha in the land of Durga and searched for the courtesan Vasumitrā.

28.2 The people there who did not know the qualities of the courtesan Vasumitrā [F.62.b] and lacked the knowledge of the scope of wisdom thought, "What does such a man—who has pacified and controlled senses, who is mindful, who is unconfused, whose mind is not agitated, who keeps his gaze the length of a yoke before him, whose mind is not overcome by sensations, who is not fixated on external features, whose eyes are averted¹²⁰⁶ from dwelling on any physical form, whose mind is free of preoccupations, who is wise,¹²⁰⁷ who is like an ocean, whose mind is unshakable and without weakness—want with the courtesan Vasumitrā? Someone like this does not delight in sensual pleasures, and so his mind cannot possibly go astray. Someone like this does not engage in impure¹²⁰⁸ thoughts. It is not possible that someone like this would be a slave to desire. Someone like this does not fall under the power of a woman. It is not

possible that someone like this is engaged in the field of conduct of the mārās. Someone like this does not dwell in the field of conduct of the mārās. It is not possible that someone like this is sinking into the mud of desire. Someone like this is not bound by the noose of the mārās. He is not someone who would do what should not be done.”

28.3 Those who did know the special qualities of the courtesan Vasumitrā and directly perceived wisdom’s range of conduct said to him, “It is excellent, excellent, noble one, that you intend to ask questions of the courtesan Vasumitrā; you have perfectly obtained a good outcome. You are certainly aspiring to buddhahood. You are certainly wishing to become a refuge¹²⁰⁹ for all beings. You are certainly wishing to remove from all beings the pain of desire. You are certainly wishing to dispel conceptions of beauty and purity. [F.63.a]

28.4 “Noble one, the courtesan Vasumitrā is in her home, which is on the north side of the city’s junction of three streets.”

28.5 Sudhana, the head merchant’s son, on hearing those words, was filled with joy, delighted, elated, pleased, and happy. He went to the home of the courtesan Vasumitrā. He saw that her house was huge and vast and surrounded by ten successive precious walls. It was encircled by ten successive rows of precious palm trees. It was encircled by ten successive moats filled with water and covered with divine, precious red lotuses, blue lotuses, night lotuses, and white lotuses; they were filled with water that possessed the eight good qualities; they had bottoms that were covered with gold dust; they were filled with aromatic water mixed with beautiful scents; and they were adorned by numerous precious fences.¹²¹⁰

28.6 He saw well-arranged buildings, palaces, kūṭāgāras made from every jewel with high¹²¹¹ pinnacles, toraṇas, round windows, lattices, crescents, pavilions, shining banners, and so on, brilliant with various jewels. Her house was beautified by walls¹²¹² of countless various jewels. Its floor was formed of jewels inlaid with beryls. Its environs were perfumed by every aromatic divine incense. It was perfumed by the aroma of supreme black agarwood incense. Its environs were anointed with unguents. Rooftop railings made of various jewels adorned the walls. It was covered above by nets of Jambu River gold inlaid with various jewels. A hundred thousand networks of hundreds of golden bells were ringing as they were moved by the breeze, emitting a pleasant, beautiful sound. It was adorned by precious flowers scattered and dispersed¹²¹³ from clouds of flowers made from every jewel. [F.63.b] The gateways were adorned by erected multicolored¹²¹⁴ banners made of all precious materials. The light from the brilliant shining of

various precious jewels shone outward without limit. There was an endless treasure of a perfect multitude¹²¹⁵ of hundreds of thousands of precious trees of coral, diamonds, crystal, and so on,¹²¹⁶ and it was beautified by ten parks.

28.7 Sudhana saw there the courtesan Vasumitrā, who was beautiful, attractive, and delightful to see. She was endowed with a magnificent, perfect color. She had golden skin and deep black¹²¹⁷ hair. Her limbs and smaller features were all perfectly formed. She had a beautiful color, form, and shape that were superior to those of all humans and devas of the desire realm. The aspects of her voice were superior to those of Brahmā. She was skilled in the languages of all beings. She had a beautiful voice that had the array of all sounds.¹²¹⁸ She possessed the skill of the liberation called *the array of the wheel of words*. She had become skilled in all arts and treatises. She had trained to become wise in illusions through Dharma wisdom. She had attained all the methods and ways of the bodhisattvas. She had a beautiful body adorned by various kinds of precious jewelry. Her body was adorned by a brightly shining network of all jewels. Her body shone brightly, being adorned by an array of jewelry made of countless divine precious jewels. She wore tied upon her head a king of wish-fulfilling, supreme, precious jewels. She wore at her throat a string of beryl jewels with its middle adorned by diamonds, a multicolored beautiful lion, and precious jewels. [F.64.a]

28.8 She had a beautiful assembly of followers that could not be divided, that had a single aspiration and a similar share of the practice of the roots of merit.

28.9 She possessed an inexhaustible treasury of the treasure of the great accumulations of merit and wisdom.

28.10 Sudhana saw that all those buildings, the entire array of precious dwellings and palaces, were illuminated and made bright by the light that came from her body, which caused delight, physical pleasure and bliss, and joy and happiness in the mind.

28.11 Sudhana, the head merchant's son, bowed his head to the feet of the courtesan Vasumitrā, stood before her with hands placed together in homage, and said, "Āryā, I have developed the aspiration for the highest, complete enlightenment, but I do not know how bodhisattvas should train in bodhisattva conduct and in what way they should practice it. Āryā, I have heard that you give instruction and teachings to bodhisattvas! I pray that you explain to me how bodhisattvas should train in bodhisattva conduct and how they should practice it!"

28.12 Vasumitrā said, "Noble one, I have attained the bodhisattva liberation called *the complete attainment of freedom from desire*.

28.13 “Noble one, in this way I appear to the devas in accordance with their wishes in the form, color, shape, and size of an apsaras with a brighter and purer color. In the same way, I appear in accordance with their wishes in a female form, color, shape, and size with a brighter and purer color to the nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, and nonhumans. [F.64.b]

28.14 “When beings whose minds are encircled by desire come before me, I teach all of them the Dharma so that they will become free from desire. When they hear the Dharma, they attain freedom from desire. They attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *the realm¹²¹⁹ of nonattachment*. Some become free from desire the instant they see me, and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *joyfulness*. Some become free from desire when they hold my hand, and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *going to and residing in all the buddha realms*. Some become free from desire when they are alone in my company, and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *the light of detachment*. Some become free from desire just by gazing upon me, and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *the display of the form of peace*. Some become free from desire just by yawning, and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *the disarraying of adversaries*. Some become free from desire just by closing their eyes, and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *the light of the buddha domains*. Some become free from desire just by embracing me, [F.65.a] and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *the essence of gathering and not abandoning all beings*. Some become free from desire just by kissing me, and they attain the bodhisattva samādhi called *touching the treasure of the merit of all beings*. In that way, I establish all the beings who come to me in the bodhisattva liberation called *the complete attainment of freedom from desire and the manifestation of the attachment-free level of omniscience*.”

28.15 Sudhana asked, “Āryā, what roots of merit did you develop? What kinds of activities did you accumulate so that you have attained this kind of perfection?”

Vasumitrā replied, “Noble one, I remember that in a past time, there had appeared in the world a tathāgata, an arhat, a samyaksaṃbuddha, one with wisdom and conduct,¹²²⁰ a sugata, one who knows the world’s beings, an unsurpassable guide who tames beings, a teacher of devas and humans, a buddha, a bhagavat named Atyuccagāmin.

28.16 “The Tathāgata Atyuccagāmin, because of his love for beings, went to the capital city named Sumukhā. When he placed his foot upon the threshold of its gateway, the entire city shook and became huge, vast, and made of many jewels. In the sky above, there was the light of a display of many jewels; it

was filled with various precious flowers, emitted the sound of various divine musical instruments, and was pervaded by vast, measureless clouds of deva bodies. [F.65.b]

28.17 “Noble one, at that time, I was the wife of a head merchant, and my name was Sumati. Inspired by the miracles of the Buddha,¹²²¹ my spouse and I ran and came to the Tathāgata in a street in the middle of the city. Developing a fast faith, I offered to him one precious bell.¹²²²

28.18 “At that time, Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta was an attendant of the Bhagavat, the Tathāgata Atyuccagāmin. Through him I developed the aspiration to the highest, complete enlightenment.

28.19 “Noble one, I know only this bodhisattva liberation called *the complete attainment of freedom from desire*. How could I know the conduct or describe the qualities of those bodhisattvas¹²²³ who dwell in infinite method and wisdom, who have a vast, immense treasure of merit, and who are invincible in their scope of wisdom?

28.20 “Depart, noble one. In this southern region there is a city called Śubhapāraṃgama. There dwells a householder by the name of Veṣṭhila who makes offerings to a sandalwood chair that is a tathāgata shrine. Go to him and ask him, ‘How should a bodhisattva train in bodhisattva conduct? How should a bodhisattva practice it?’ ”

28.21 Then Sudhana, the head merchant’s son, bowed his head to the feet of the courtesan Vasumitrā, circumambulated the courtesan Vasumitrā many hundreds of thousands of times, keeping her to his right, and, looking back again and again, departed from the courtesan Vasumitrā.