

## VAIRA

- 25.1 When Sudhana set out on the path to Kūṭāgāra, he observed and contemplated how the path could be upward or downward, even or uneven,<sup>1096</sup> dusty or free of dust, safe or hazardous,<sup>1097</sup> difficult or unobstructed, and crooked or straight. He thought, “This journey to a kalyāṇamitra will be a cause for the practice of the bodhisattva path, will be a cause of the practice of the path of the perfections, and will be a cause of the path of benefiting all beings,<sup>1098</sup> which will be a cause for turning all beings away from the precipice of attachment<sup>1099</sup> and aversion, [F.49.a] of elation and depression;<sup>1100</sup> will be a cause for turning all beings away from a perception<sup>1101</sup> of inequality; will be a cause for removing the dust of the kleśas from all beings; will be a cause for clearing away the tree trunks, thorns, pebbles, and gravel of the various bad views of all beings; and, through their entering the unobscured realm of the Dharma, will be a cause for bringing them without hindrance to the palace of omniscience.
- 25.2 “Why is that? Because the kalyāṇamitras are the source of all good Dharmas, and the attainment of omniscience is dependent on the kalyāṇamitras.”
- 25.3 With his mind focused on those thoughts, and undergoing a difficult journey, he eventually arrived at the city of Kūṭāgāra. He looked and searched for the mariner Vaira and saw him at the shore of the ocean in front of the gate of the great city. He was encircled by a hundred thousand merchants and many hundreds of thousands of people who all wished to listen to his various tales. As he told them tales of the sea, he was teaching the beings about the ocean of qualities of the buddhas.
- 25.4 When Sudhana saw the mariner Vaira, he approached him. Having approached him, Sudhana bowed his head to the mariner Vaira’s feet, circumambulated the mariner Vaira many hundreds of thousands of times, and sat down before the mariner Vaira. With his hands placed together in

homage, he said, “Ārya, 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. Ārya, I have heard that you give instruction and teachings to bodhisattvas! [F.49.b] I pray that you explain to me how bodhisattvas should train in bodhisattva conduct and how they should practice it!”

25.5      Vaira said, “Noble one, it is excellent, excellent, that you have developed the aspiration for the highest, complete enlightenment, that you have asked about the cause of<sup>1102</sup> great wisdom, the cause of the continuity of the various sufferings of saṃsāra, the cause of journeying to the island of omniscience, the cause of the indivisible Mahāyāna, the cause of the practice of the path that is free from the fear of falling down to the level of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, the cause of the path of knowledge that comprehends engaging in the gateways of various<sup>1103</sup> samādhis of peace, the cause of the pure<sup>1104</sup> and unimpeded path of the wheels of the chariot of the aspiration to the practice of all-pervasive bodhisattva conduct, the cause of the pure path of the way that is the nature of the display of all the majestic waves of bodhisattva conduct, the cause of the pure ultimate path of all the aspects and gateways of the Dharma, and the cause that gives rise to the pure path for entering the ocean of omniscience.

25.6      “Noble one, I dwell at the city of Kūṭāgāra on the seashore, purifying the bodhisattva conduct called *the banner of great compassion*.

25.7      “Noble one, when I see destitute beings in Jambudvīpa, I undergo hardships for their sake, which means I will fulfill all their wishes. I will collect worldly goods for them. I will satisfy them with the enjoyment of the Dharma. I will teach them the instructions for the path of the accumulation of merit. I will cause them to increase their accumulation of wisdom. [F.50.a] I will increase the power of their roots of merit. I will cause them to develop the aspiration for enlightenment. I will purify their aspiration for enlightenment. I will cause them to have the enduring strength of great compassion. I will cause the suffering of saṃsāra to cease. I will cause them to have an enduring strength for tireless conduct in saṃsāra. I will provide these to the gathering of an ocean of beings. I will bring them into the gateways of the practice of an ocean of qualities. I will cause them to obtain the light of the wisdom of the ocean of the Dharma. I will cause them to see<sup>1105</sup> the entire ocean of buddhas. I will cause them to enter the ocean of omniscience.

25.8      “Noble one,<sup>1106</sup> it is with such an aspiration and intention that I dwell in the city of Kūṭāgāra on the seashore.

- 25.9 “Noble one, dedicated in that way to the benefit and happiness of beings, I know all the islands of jewels in the great ocean. I know all the jewel mines, all the classes of jewels, and all the sources<sup>1107</sup> of jewels.
- 25.10 “I know all the residences of the nāgas, all that disconcerts the nāgas, all the residences of the yakṣas, all that disconcerts the yakṣas, all the residences of the rākṣasas, all that allays fear of the rākṣasas, all the residences of the bhūtas, all that allays fear of the bhūtas, and all that eliminates the obstacles created by the bhūtas.  
“I know all whirlpools,<sup>1108</sup> the avoidance<sup>1109</sup> of whirlpools, and the avoidance of great waves.
- 25.11 “I know the orbits of the sun, moon, planets, and constellations and the seconds, minutes, and hours<sup>1110</sup> of<sup>1111</sup> the days and nights.  
“I know the particular times to depart and arrive, safety and danger, whether a ship’s rigging is reliable, what ships to reject, what ships to sail, [F.50.b] how to catch the winds, the coming of the wind, how to turn a ship, how to turn a ship around,<sup>1112</sup> how to anchor a ship, and how to launch a ship.
- 25.12 “Noble one, with that kind of knowledge I am constantly dedicated to necessary benefits<sup>1113</sup> for beings: I bring a group of merchants, just as they wish, to the island of jewels safely,<sup>1114</sup> peacefully,<sup>1115</sup> without fear, and in a reliable ship, and I talk to them about the Dharma in a way that delights them and brings them joy. When they have collected all the jewels and have attained good fortune, I bring them back again to Jambudvīpa.
- 25.13 “Noble one, no ship of mine has ever been in distress.<sup>1116</sup> Any being who sees me and any being who hears me teach the Dharma becomes free from all<sup>1117</sup> fear of sinking<sup>1118</sup> in the ocean of saṃsāra, and they turn toward<sup>1119</sup> the wisdom of entering the ocean of omniscience. They become dedicated to drying up the ocean of craving, attain the light of the knowledge of the ocean of the three times, and make the aspiration to eliminate the ocean of the suffering of all beings. They become dedicated to purifying away the pollution in the ocean of the minds of all beings. They become dedicated to purifying the ocean of all realms. They never turn back from spreading throughout the ocean of all directions. They comprehend the ocean of the different capabilities of all beings. They follow the ocean of the conducts of all beings. They manifest appearances that accord with the ocean of the wishes of all beings.
- 25.14 “Noble one, I have attained the bodhisattva liberation called *remembering to abide with the fruitful*<sup>1120</sup> *hearing and seeing of the banner of great compassion*,<sup>1121</sup> [F.51.a] but how could I know the conduct or describe the qualities of the bodhisattvas who act within all the oceans of saṃsāra, who are unstained by any of the oceans of saṃsāra, who are free from the fear of the makaras of

attachment<sup>1122</sup> in all the oceans of false views, who move among the nature and basis<sup>1123</sup> of all phenomena, who possess an ocean<sup>1124</sup> of the methods of gathering all the oceans of beings, who dwell within the ocean of omniscience, who churn the ocean of the attachments of all beings, who perform their conduct<sup>1125</sup> without differentiation<sup>1126</sup> in the oceans of all times, who have the clairvoyant knowledge of the nature<sup>1127</sup> of ripening the ocean of all beings, and who never miss the time<sup>1128</sup> for guiding the ocean of beings?

25.15       “Depart, noble one. In this southern region, in the town called Nandihāra, dwells a head merchant by the name of Jayottama. Go to him and ask him, ‘How should a bodhisattva train in bodhisattva conduct? How should a bodhisattva practice it?’ ”

25.16       Then Sudhana, the head merchant’s son, was overjoyed, pleased, happy, and content. He bowed his head to the feet of the mariner Vaira, circumambulated the mariner Vaira many hundreds of thousands of times, keeping him to his right, and, looking back again and again, departed from the mariner Vaira. [B4]