



# Love Reincarnate

Book 2

*Mark Bertrand*

## Summary

It's about the experiment and the wedding.

Cyborgs have once again raised the bar on augmenting human capability. Why pile on? When it comes to implanting hardware into humans, they're already a few thousand years ahead of any second. Now there's a new DNA altering serum? The serum removes anger from the human DNA helix. You may want to duck for this one, but they talked 44 people into testing the serum for them. Then the Cyborgs put them on a spaceship and sent them to a planet as an experiment. You know, to see if they would thrive if they can survive.

The planet was purposefully set up with limited technology. Basically, the 44 will be farmers and live similar to conditions in 1930's Earth. Except there's no gasoline. They have fusion power and self-driving carts. Who set up the planet? I'll give you three guesses. And by the way, those 44 people were all scientists. You know, like the leading scientists in physics, botany, pharmaceutical, medical science, mathematics, and such. Yeah!

Push comes to shove, and you have to agree the Cyborgs have a single mission. The first priority. It's an unwavering quest and Cyborgs will stop at nothing to fulfill the objective.

Most of the story is about the wedding. So it's sort of the storyline, with the rest of it told around the lovers.

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## Message from the Author

Whenever I reach the edge for my ability to comprehend something, it causes me an odd feeling. There's an uneasiness that includes feeling a little dizzy and bewildered. When this happens, the urge to stop reading or listening loudly calls out my thinking mind forward. The call is loud, like a siren from an ambulance on a one-way street lined with skyscrapers. For example, this usually happens when I read an ancient sutra or an Alan Watts novel. I would read a single page, and the sirens begin before the page ends. For many years this uneasiness of reaching the edge of my understanding stopped me in my path. I would say to myself, "this makes no sense at all." Or, perhaps I would stop reading, close the book, and think, "I'll come back to this later when I have figured out what the author has written."

Over the years, I've learned to embrace the odd feeling from reaching the edge of my comprehension. But, at last, over many years of practicing and training my mind, I've learned to enjoy the oddity. Today my awakened conscious mind clues in on the uneasiness and encourages my awareness to prepare for a new experience.

I'm not writing this story in hopes of anyone, besides myself, ever reading it. I'm not craving fame nor fortune for the efforts. Indeed it is an effort that is ripe with the potential to cause karma. Karma I don't need and that I don't desire. So instead, I write this story to convey the liberation that has become available to all sentient beings. The liberation that is available for those who read this as well as for those who do not.

After years of finding the edge of my mental capacity, exploring, contemplating, eventually coming through the other side of not knowing so now I do. My mental capacity has vastly increased my depth of knowledge. So there came this time, a time to write about the observation of peace. True peace. The kind of peace every living person desires. The sort of peace that is realized when a being is free from the constant struggle of not knowing what life will bring next. That kind of story is going to be told in such a way that once it's heard, it provides that peace immediately, and that earned peace doesn't deteriorate; it cannot deteriorate at all.

To write that sort of story, I realize I will have to stop living with my mind out here on the far, far edge of awakened capacity.

Now and then, I must stop working on the surface. Sharing my observations of earning true peace is a story that requires me to not just come to a complete stop at the edge. Then once stopped, take several steps back. Metaphorically speaking, I have to find that bag where I've stored all of those moments of clarity. All the aha moments. All those awakenings. Whatever you want to label the results of feeling dazed and confused coming out the other end fully getting it.

I reached with my whole arm way down into that filled and overflowing bag. Then I pulled one deep from the bottom. I looked at it, and now I can tell the Book 2 story from this depth.

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Book 2

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## Introduction

Perhaps sometime in the very distant future on a planet, far, far away, the life of two people from long, long ago on Earth would start anew. How could this happen, you should ask? The story begins from an unlikely place where no one would have ever suspected such a tale so carefully crafted. On Planet 44, as everyone on all human-occupied planets knows, the seed of hope was carefully sowed. Nobody has ever found Planet 44, and some still say it isn't an actual planet. Those same people will tell you it's a conspiracy story or an imaginary place used to teach morality stories. The kind of stories that teach children the necessary lessons for life. Even the name itself [why it is called Planet 44] is a mystery.

It wasn't the 44th planet colonized by humans. It isn't 44 times bigger than Earth nor 44 times more inhabitable. It isn't even the 44th planet from Earth. However, 44 Cyborgs on Planet 44 dedicate 444 years of their life to traveling throughout the universe. They go about helping human colonies through difficult and often dangerous times. But that's not why they call it Planet 44. So, before you can appreciate the people in the stories, stories that share their life's adventures, spend just a minute learning about Planet 44.

After 300 years of development on Earth, the brain implants produced by Neuralink had peaked human performance. In these later years, implants optimized cognition, utilization of human strength, and provided wireless individuals with access to the Starlink satellite system. In addition, external data storage devices disguised in earrings, nose rings, wedding bands, belt buckles, and implants in the hips, thighs, and buttocks give Cyborgs (those with a Neuralink brain implant) unlimited knowledge and problem-solving capabilities.

After being forced to leave Earth to save their lives, the Cyborgs settled on Planet 44 in 2485. There they further enhanced the implants. They implemented on-demand, superhuman strength. They call it ODP, an acronym for On-Demand Power. But it wasn't their physical strength that caused the governments on Earth to declare war and place a bounty on Cyborgs. It was their mental clarity and superior problem-preventing that drove the media to fear them.

The media hype created public hate for Cyborgs. So, over time human hatred turned to human violence toward Cyborgs.

When they settled on Planet 44, they used their superior knowledge to formulate a divine plan for humanity. The premise of the goal is to exhaust the pain, suffering, and struggle we all experience through life. While, at the same time, not destroying the pleasure, benefit, and joy of life experience. Through aggregative manipulation of DNA and mRNA, they designed an injectable serum. When injected into an organic lifeform the engineered DNA, modifies the person's genetics.

A total of three injections are required, with each dose delivered three weeks apart. The Cyborgs recruited 44 carefully chosen individuals from various human-inhabited planets to receive the serum injections and a 444-year spaceflight. A trip that would, in the end, bring the 4th generation of that spaceship crew to an Earth-like planet. Once there, their children's, children's, children would embark on a new-human settlement. DNA and mRNA would cause the gradual evolution of human beings. Finally, those humans would spawn generations free of anger and the 88 afflictions caused by anger.

Preparations were made before the spaceship and its crew launched on their long voyage. First, the Cyborgs shared deep knowledge-insight with the 44 first-generation of new humans (human 2.0 perhaps). They also showed them how to teach deep knowledge-insight to others. Finally, they provided them with materials and techniques they would need to survive on the new planet.

The teachings centered on dharma; Everything known to exist has an exact opposite, even down to the subatomic levels. The only way to remove a thing requires the removal of its opposite. You cannot have dark without light because without the dark; we wouldn't know the light. Without the light; we wouldn't know the dark. If, therefore, dark does not exist, it would just always be light. So then, defining dark would be similar, for example, to a fish trying to discover

water. Water just is or, in the correct terminology, water is dharma. These dharma truths likely provide a challenging stretch for most people. Yet, in our day-to-day experience of the known fundamentals of the universe, we never think to challenge such things. We never think of duality in this enlightened dharma realization where dark and light genuinely ~~are~~ is one thing.

Language is created, defined, and uses words, and communicates our thoughts by identifying day and night as two different things. We have never stopped to realize what it would be like if we didn't exist in duality. But now, with the DNA changes made by the mRNA serum, these new-humans are heading to a planet. Once there, to build a society where people evolve free of anger for the first time. Necessarily they also developed free of anger's duality (pleasure). In their world, pleasure just is.

For now, let's leave this study about Planet 44 and the Cyborgs to join the people on the new planet. We will come back to the Cyborgs in a different book. The story begins 438 years after the starship first landed. The fifth generation of pilgrims is reaching their teen years. Villages and cities, commerce and trade, government, and a royal order are all established. People flourish in abundance by comparison to most human colonies on other planets. But there are still small pockets of anger where a few of them have not completely advanced.

## Chapter 1 The Awakening

Mahá Kumár is the son of the treasurer in the kingdom of Jambudvīpa. On this day, his fourteenth birthday, the son in the royal court meets his promised wife. Her name is Visákhá. In keeping with the arrangement between their great families and established traditions throughout Jambudvīpa, she is two years older. She will live with Mahá's family, and four years from today, they will complete the marriage and move to their residence on his eighteenth birthday.

Mahá and Visákhá didn't get along well in school, and things didn't improve during the first year of living with her new family. Until now, each of them had been an only child. Now they had to learn how to share. For example, when the kitchen servants made sweet rice in the morning, Mahá would usually eat his fill, but now there was not enough rice to have more than a single helping. When the nanny would take them to town, Visákhá would visit the stores, and Mahá would watch the men sparring and practicing archery. Now they had to follow the rules of convention and do everything together while in the public eye. Mahá didn't like the shops, and Visákhá didn't enjoy watching the men sparring.

In the first years of living in the same home, they argued and often competed for their parents' attention and favor. With time though, they gradually learned to accommodate each other's presence. The daily routines and conventions caused them to recognize to rely on each other necessarily. As a result, they had to learn to compromise and share in each other's enjoyment.

Visákhá told Mahá , "we are the fortunate ones, Mahá ." Surprised, he asks, "What do you mean; we are the fortunate ones?" She swiftly pushes him in the chest and causes him to fall backward and to the ground. He hurt his arm, trying to cushion the fall. As he sits on the floor rubbing his sore arm, she scolds him. "Haven't you noticed that most of the children do not have comps to go to the shops? They don't have the privilege to watch the soldiers sparring or learn archery. Most of the children can't attend school either, and they are home educated. We are very privileged, Mahá!"

From that day on, Mahá felt proud to have Visákhá in his life. She didn't only recognize their privilege, but she was humble and charitable too. She treats everyone with great respect, kindness and courtesy. Royal or ordinary, she greets everyone with a smile and kind words. He followed her example for observing those around them and had never realized that most people did not have royal parents before that day. He had, though, always treated and greeted everyone kindly and with great respect.

One day, as they were walking home from school, Visákhá was very sad. When they got home, he asked her what was making her unhappy. She tells him that she cannot learn what the teacher is trying to teach. She fears her mind is inept. "Why would you believe your mind is inept," he asks? "It's like this," she explains to him. His entire being focused on listening to her. He sat on the floor directly in front of her, listening.

Visákhá

"The teacher was teaching how to calculate the crop rotation of various beans. The lesson was about legume seeds and bean pods. There are times when I honestly think I'm going to pass out from boredom. But, then, I look up, and the teacher stands right next to me when she says: 'these plants are on different nutrients through growing cycles, and they're on the same nutrients when they are in bloom.' At this point, usually, my thoughts drift off before the teacher finishes saying -- legume."

Mahá

He smiled and said. "That's how you learn to grow crops and not deplete the planet's land. We harvest nutrient-rich foods, Visákhá. To start, we must learn the difference between beans and legumes, and then we learn about cereal grains and legumes."

Visákhá

Her shoulders slump, and her voice becomes more withdrawn,

"I had the d-chip in my hand and the tablet that my father gave me. I put them on the table and contemplated walking out of the classroom. My hand started to shake, and my feelings became embarrassing. I sensed displeasure, and if we feel displeasure, it's usually a sign of a brain deficiency. That made me panic all the more.

Mahá

He stands up quickly. With a voice of exasperation, says, "So what did the teacher say? Did she scold you? Did everyone hear her rebuke you?"

Visákhá

A tear rolls over her well-defined cheek as she whimpers,

"No. She sat with me and told me to try to make a better effort. The teachers are not able to see my thoughts."

Mahá

His voice becomes sterner as he takes her hand in his and holds it firmly. "No one is going to hate you, Visákhá. You are too lovely and brilliant. Everyone can see that."

Visákhá

Her tears come more steadily as he speaks.

"Don't you see Mahá? Don't you see how my mind is damaged and that I am inept?"

Mahá

He is stunned and unsure of what he has missed. Finally, he asks, "I don't understand why you think your mind is damaged."

Visákhá

"Because it will not focus," she shouts! "Instead of focusing on what beans, legumes, and cereal grains require for proper farming... I know that you and I are not sharecroppers. This is information I will never need to know. We will never be sharecroppers, and so my mind wanders and becomes untamed."

Visákhá pulls her hand away from Mahá, and she runs crying to her bedroom. Mahá is standing quietly, captured by his thoughts. He recalls how his mind, like Visákhá's, wonders and rarely stays focused. He thinks about his struggle earlier in the day when trying to read a page in a book. Reading was easy, but the battle to remain focused on the task without his mind wandering off to one thought phenomenon or another is difficult. He often finds that his mind wanders off, thinking about various things, and does not focus on what he is trying to read.

In many cases, when his thoughts are unrestrained, he cannot do what he needs to do. Primarily, he thought, "when I try to do my school reading. My eyes read several pages, and then suddenly I stopped reading when for some reason, I realized I hadn't absorbed anything from what I was reading. My mind drifts from one thought-story to another. What I read gets lost because of the many random thought-stories.

But what intrigues Mahá most about this problem of unrestrained thinking, he thought, "what is it in my mind that makes me aware that I am being controlled by random thinking? What is in my mind that calls me back to realize that I'm not absorbing the book? What, or who, is in my mind

causing me to feel like this kind of untamed mind is a problem? Do I have thoughts, or do my thoughts have me?"

Mahá stood there thinking about these phenomena in his mind for a very long time.

The following day when Mahá, Visákhá, and their parents were having a breakfast of rice and curry, Mahá asked his parents, "Do you find Visákhá's mind to be valuable?"

Father

In a sharp and severe voice, "Visákhá is our most cherished and valuable daughter. What sort of question is this, Mahá ?"

Mahá

His intention remains unshaken. "And her mind, father. Is her mind also valuable?"

Father

"Yes. Her mind is valuable."

Mahá

"Do you also value my mind?"

His father realizes there was great importance and something is troubling Mahá, so he gave his full attention to his son.

Father

"Yes," he replies with certainty in his voice, "You are also our most cherished and valued son."

Mahá

With that being said, he then pushes his chair away from the table, stands up, and addresses the family and servants. "The school you are providing for us teaches the base knowledge for learning environmental mathematics, reading, writing, and it does many good things. However, in these public schools, there is nothing provided for developing the mind. There is a school available for us. A school where Visákhá and I can learn the same base knowledge and also learn how to develop our minds. I want to go to the school at the monastery and Visákhá too."

Mahá's parents were wise and aware of the many great teachers at the monastery. They had heard that the precious-one, Magallan Rinboku, was teaching the law to students and disciples.

Mother

"I have heard that if a student attends the monastery school, the student could learn many surprising things. For example, the student will learn when sitting just to sit, when eating they would just eat, and when drinking they would just drink."

Father

"Well then, If you desire to learn from the Great Rinboku, then you have my blessing to do so. I will speak with the Abbott at the monastery and make the necessary arrangements."

Mahá

"Visákhá too, father? Her mind is also valuable, as you said."

Father

"Visákhá too."

From this day forward, Mahá and Visákhá went to school at the monastery. They learned the principles of compassion, ethical responsibility, mental tranquility, and the ascent of truth. In addition, they studied the five Jana paths and the seven purifications as recorded in the Nikayas and Pitaka Suttas with great interest. As a result, they attained the fruit of conversion and stream entry within just one year. So then, by the time he was sixteen, Mahá was already mastering the Janas, and he also taught the law at many monastery retreats. And now, in his eighteenth year, in keeping with the people's traditions, it was time for the wedding of Mahá and Visákhá.

## Chapter 2 The Way Home

A few days before the wedding, his father asks Mahá to join him on a walk. The walk isn't uncommon for them. Mahá and his father make this journey together once each week and have done this for three years. They walk along the main road, which leads from the palace entrance to the far western edge of the city. About seven kilometers away. The majority of Planet 444 inhabitants live in the town at the top of a sizable flat-top mountain. The main road follows along the ridge of the mountain top.

The day is warm with the usual thick covering of billowing clouds in the bright, powdery yellow sky. The upper ridge of the mountain is a sheer 120 meters high stone cliff. The cliff causes the warm air to lift as it climbs up and over the top. Therefore the wind along the ridge road is always brisk. Mahá and his father make sure their hats are on tight as they start at a brisk pace.

From the palace to the end of the city, there is a slight but steady uphill slope. The entire journey provides travelers with a view of the valley below. The near panoramic view can make people feel like they can see the whole world spread out from below. In the other direction, a person can see the cityscape. The shops, taverns, and apartments in the city center are visible in the distance. The sun-bleached and cream-colored canvas roofs are a contrast to the surrounding tall trees with abundant green leaves. The three and four-story adobe apartment buildings outline the commerce road, with many side streets branching out to either side. Many new apartments are under construction to accommodate a slow but steadily growing population that currently numbers just over twenty-thousand.

Closer to the road, the land has fertile farms with grains, beans, and vegetables. The further a person travels away from the palace, the larger the farms become. As a result, the farmhouses get fewer and farther apart from one another. The road itself is well-groomed on packed clay soil. It is not very wide but sufficient for the limited number of travelers who visit the palace. Most travelers and driverless carts coming to the city use the commerce road—that road

branches off the main road about 1 kilometer past the city gates. There is just enough of a path for a well-structured cart with sturdy wheels on the main road. However, they provide enough extra room for one person to pass on one side or the other.

As they walk through the city's outskirts along the main road, Mahá's father asks. "Tell me, what have you learned from studying at the monastery?" Mahá waited a few moments before answering. Then, after he cleared his mind and focused on his father's question, he responds in this way.

Mahá

"Conflict and violence have plagued human civilization from the beginning, leaving the stories of our past covered with blood. People have always dreamed of and desire peace, harmony, and loving communities and nations in their hearts. However, the means of satisfying this dream has never been found or tried. Between nations and our communities, wars succeed one after another, with only a very brief pause between them. In between wars, hostile powers busily forge new alliances and make stealthy grabs for territory.

Our social systems are ruined and torn apart by class struggles, in which the wealthy class seeks more privileges and resources while the working class seeks to have more rights and more security. The conflicts between masters and slaves, between feudal lords and sharecroppers, between the aristocrats and the ordinary people, between capitalists and labor seem that throughout all of history, only the faces change. Yet, at the same time, the underlying dynamics of the power struggle remain the same.

Our communities are also constantly under threat caused by the struggle to survive and have the bare necessities to live. Rival bids for political power, differences of opinion, and always competing interests within their populations bring violence, giving birth to decades and generations of enmity. When the new war, division, or dispute peaks, and people's hopes rise

for a reconciliation to follow, we grasp for a chance that peace and unity will triumph. But, yet again, we are left disappointed.

Father, listen. Once in Jambudvipa, a Sutta, a scripture, and excellent teaching provided the answer to cease this plague. So here I am today, I have just one wish; that someone will discover the sutta and find where it is hidden. When the invading armies from the first Aryan war arrived at the sacred monastery, the holy suttas were quickly hidden away. Hiding the sutta was necessary so that the enemy wouldn't destroy them. The sutta I seek is among those hidden by the sage many thousands of years ago. Two hundred years later. The enemy is gone, but there is no one left who knows where the suttas are."

Father

Mahá's father is perceptibly impressed with his son's knowledge and insight. He then asks, "Are you ready to complete your transition into manhood? Are you ready to take Visákhá to the formal wedding ceremony and complete your vows?"

Mahá

With a generous smile washed across his whole face, "It is time, father. I have reached the age of manhood, and I am ready."

And with that said, they reached the end of the main road. From here, the road turns sharply to the left. Then it winds its way down a steep grade with many hairpin curves. Eventually, it reaches the bottom of the mountain one thousand five hundred meters below. Mahá and his father take several steps forward and they are well off of the main road.

Mahá's favorite farmhouse in the entire kingdom is just three hundred meters away. He had fallen in love with the house and its seven sharecropper's huts on the first trip many years ago. The farm isn't huge. Perhaps it's ten hectares in total which produce four kinds of beans and three types of grain every season. The sharecroppers use one hectare for each and rotate the crops between them. That's about as much knowledge as either Mahá or his father has on farming methods.

The main farmhouse itself has been vacant for several years. However, in the most recent months, there have been many changes to the house. First, Mahá and his father noticed workers had rebuilt the roof from the frame up. Then a few weeks later, they saw the main window in the family room modified. Finally, just a few weeks ago, they also changed the front door, making it wider and taller.

Mahá and his father stood just a few meters off the main road. They stood together in silence as they observed the restoration process each week. They often enjoyed discussing and critiquing the quality of the work that was taking place. But, today, the house stood quiet. All of the remodeling work was complete. As he stood in silence, Mahá felt oddly proud of the finished house, looking at the home. And, at the same time, he couldn't help but wonder who would be moving into the farmhouse. His father promised last week he would ask the King to find out who the new owner was.

The view from here, where the house stands, overlooks the orchards far below where a small group of farmers and their families live. These farmers maintain the groves of fruit and nut trees. The temperature and fertility of the lower valley are excellent for those fruit trees and large nut trees. Mahá is lost in his thoughts as he stares down onto the road that leads to the orchard. It's not the thought of his wedding that has him preoccupied, and he's not thinking about his favorite house either. Right now, his thoughts are contemplating the question his teacher had asked him several weeks ago. The answer still eludes Mahá.

He's troubled by the question and not having realized the answer for so long. He's always been proud of his ability to discover a solution to these so-called koans. The longest it ever took him before now was just five days. A koan is a question designed to raise doubt and cause deep thought for a student. Further, it guides the student to gain insight into their mind and fully awaken to existence itself. In this koan, his teacher asked him. "What were you, Mahá, when your great, great, great grandparents were boarding the spaceship?" Mahá thought, "what was I! I wasn't even in existence at the time they left Planet 44."

His thoughts about the question abruptly stopped as his eyes caught something odd on the road below. He hadn't been paying much attention these last few months to anything below the mountain top. He and his father's attention and curiosity have been captivated by the work done to his favorite house. He had neglected to watch for changes in the orchards below. Today, however, "Wait for a tikan." "Is there a new path leading off of Orchards Road?"

After looking for several tikans to entirely focus his eyes, he knew for sure that it was a well-worn path. It would seem many people, perhaps a dozen, have been traveling this new path. As he scans along Orchards Road, he sees another path leading off the road. Indeed, he confirms, two new tracks are leading off of Orchards Road. "People are branching out to new areas of our planet." He wonders if they are simply exploring some new areas or maybe even settling. "Our population is expanding." He says his thoughts out loud.

His thinking mind began reminiscing about his ancestors. He wonders what it must have been like as they prepared to leave their homes and travel into space. They knew they would never live long enough to see the new planet. They had to truly trust what the Cyborgs told them. "Everything required to exist and sustain life is there for you on the planet. There is nothing to worry about." Mahá thinks, "The Cyborgs had been coming here to this planet for centuries. They prepared this experiment and carefully planned to send my ancestors here. Cyborgs started growing these groves of fruit and nut trees. They built the roads and the villages. Finally, they prepared the sewers, water, and power grids long before sending my great grandparents to live here."

All of our predecessors boarded that ship with thoughts of hope. Hope for their future generations to have a better life. They must have clung to the thought-ideas of their children and future generations with great ambition." Mahá paused his thought stream. He noticed the tell-tale sensation that he usually gets just before his mind has a moment of clarity. Clarity generally provides deep insight into something he previously didn't know. Magallan Rinboku calls them, ah-ha moments.

Mahá drifts back into his thinking mind to observe the ah-ha moment. "Our ancestors held onto their hopes for the future. They had conviction in the thought that one day their future generations would have a better life than their own. Hope is just a word to describe a thought. Everything that comes into existence begins as a thought!" Mahá realizes the power of thought phenomena now with deeper understanding. "I was a thought!" he exclaims aloud before continuing his thought-concentration journey. "As my ancestors boarded that spaceship, I was a thought in their minds. With each new generation born on the spacecraft, the thought-phenomena became more substantial, and eventually, the thought-phenomena became visible and took shape.

Each day of the journey, they studied the lessons the Cyborgs had prepared. They discussed in long, deep conversations the way things were going to be after they landed. Thoughts of the future, including me, gradually took shape. Eventually, after 162,000 days of traveling through space, they settled on this planet. And then one day when my father and mother married. My mother was pregnant. I changed from being a thought-existence into an organic reality. Everything we see, hear, smell, taste, and feel began as a thought. What was I when my great grandparents boarded the spaceship destined to travel four-hundred and forty-four years to come here? Then, I was a thought."

Mahá stops structured thinking, turns to ask his father, "have you learned who the new owner of the land is, father?" To his surprise, his father isn't standing beside him. A quick look around, and Mahá sees his father standing on the front porch of the farmhouse. He's waving for Mahá to

come to join him. His father turns and passes through the front door. Mahá runs to the house to join his father. As he reaches the house in a full run, Mahá leaps up onto the front porch. No small feat as four steps lead up a meter and a half to the top of the porch. The excitement of going into his favorite house boosted his energy.

Father

"This is my wedding gift for you and Visákhá. It is your house and farm."

Mahá is visibly emotionally overwhelmed, and immediately speechless.

"It's not much of a home." He continued. "I knew you and Visákhá wouldn't be happy with more than a modest home and small farm."

Mahá

"It is perfect, father." as he struggles to control his emotions. "This is perfect, and I will do my best to raise a valuable family for our community."

His father playfully pushes Mahá and pretends to box with him as he replies, "I know you will, Mahá. I would expect nothing less from you and your wife."

## Chapter 3 Friends Are Everything

It was exactly four weeks and one day before the wedding day when the Queen's messenger summoned Visákhá and her mother to meet with the Queen at the palace. The invitation read, "This wedding of Visákhá and Mahá will be a royal affair because Visákhá and Mahá's father is the Treasure and Regent for the kingdom. Therefore, the wedding will take place at the palace, and the Queen's handmaids will make all necessary preparations." After reading the invitation, Visákhá and her mother quickly readied themselves and started down the road for the meeting.

They take Main Road to reach the palace. It's a convenient route since their home is at the intersection of the main road and Commerce Road, which leads away from the main road and into the city center.

Mother

Trying to make small talk as she can sense Visákhá is nervous about the meeting. "I'm so happy the Queen is taking a strong role and leading the ceremony. Usually, she has her daughter take the lead in organizing and holding palace festivals and ceremonies. Perhaps, do you imagine, it's because she knows your family, and they are very close?" She asks, hoping to get a better feel for Visákhá's mood from her response.

Visákhá

Her pace quickens as her mother is speaking. She's seemly more anxious to get to the meeting. "I just hope she hasn't started any of the preparations before we talk. What if they plan the wrong kind of ceremony, Mother? What if they forget that Mahá and I want the monastic philosophy in the ceremony? There's just no reason at all that the palace should even start preparations and plan anything without my input. Come on, mom, let's hurry."

Mother

Trying but quickly failing to keep up with her daughter, "They won't do anything without first talking to you, Visákhá. I promise."

Visákhá

She stops walking to wait for her mother. When her mom catches up to her, Visákhá says: "If the sky opened and rained down lotus flowers and the smoke of sandalwood incense filled the palace gardens and the arena, all the while thunderous voices sang the songs of the ancient's from Blue Origin, will that make a ceremony we can all remember?" Visákhá laughs, and then she turns and starts to run towards the palace." Come on, mom. Let's plan the best ceremony our planet has ever experienced. Never before has Jambudvipa experienced a day like this."

Mother

Unable to keep up with Visákhá, she surrenders to a fast walk. Then, hollering after her daughter, "What are you talking about: lotus flowers falling from the sky?"

Visákhá

Turning back towards her mother, she quickly replies, "I've seen him do it, Mother. Your son -- my husband, has many mysterious and amazing talents!"

The palace is, of course, located on a vast parcel of beautifully manicured trees, shrubs, and flowers. Most people call it the palace in the garden park because it is like visiting a botanical garden. The slightly more than twenty-five acres of the palace is gated and walled much like a 17th-century castle. The King is particularly fond of botany, and he's also a perfectionist. In this case, he demands to have every flower, every vase, every tree, and flower pot exquisitely

displayed. No flower can wilt, no leaf can discolor. The role of the Flower Minister is a demanding position.

The King has replaced the Garden Minister's position once each year for the past seven years because, in the King's words, "No attention to detail." The last three Flower Ministers were each replaced for inadequate flower arrangements in the common-room of the palace. Every position of the palace is a high-stress job because the King is obsessed with perfection. However, you have to admit, the palace and the garden are stunning, and the government is effective and brilliant.

The walking paths in the palace garden are cobblestoned and often criss-cross as they traverse the palace garden. In some locations, the cobblestone paths lead visitors into a labyrinth of incredibly tall hedges, while most of the other pathways lead to a gazebo or a well-shaded bench. An amphitheater for performances or ceremonies such as a wedding is located at the furthest end of the garden. Commerce Road runs along the backside of the garden, and it's just under two kilometers from here to the city center.

Visákhá and her mother arrive at the palace and are then immediately escorted to the Queen's courtroom. The meeting began with Visákhá, and she shared all of her dreams and desires for the perfect ceremony. Her mother suggested the wedding follow a traditional Buddhist tradition. Everyone quickly and enthusiastically agreed. When the Queen's daughter tells everyone that the Queen's handmaidens will accomplish everything, it was then, at that very moment, when Visákhá, with all boldness, said, "No. No, I don't want that."

Visákhá

"Please, I'm sorry to be so abrupt, but I have to insist only our closest friends can be allowed to accomplish all of the wedding traditions. I want my wedding to follow the holy traditions that have been handed down for generations and have been customary for 436 years. I know some

people are saying they are outdated and old-fashioned, but for my husband and me, we insist on following them."

The Queen's daughter rose to her feet and turns her body to face Visákhá directly and says, "I only suggest that we use the Queen's handmaidens to make the palace gardens ready for the ceremony and for the three-day festivities that follow the wedding day. Your friends will, of course, perform all of the traditions as are customary with your monastery and family." Then, one of the Queen's handmaidens asked; why are friends so valuable to Buddhist traditions anyway? I've forever been curious as to why your religion stresses the significance of friendship. If it is not too off-topic or too complicated, can I ask why it's so all-important?"

Visákhá

Rising to her feet looks toward the Queen for approval to handle the question. With the nod of support from the Queen, she recites the poem:

A friend gives what is hard to give,

and does what is hard to do.

A friend forgives you for your harsh words

and endures what is hard to endure.

A friend tells you their secrets,

yet they preserve your secrets.

They do not forsake you in difficulties,

nor do they roughly despise you.

The person here in whom

These qualities are found in a friend.

One desiring a friend

should resort to such a person.

(AN 7:36)

Looking directly at the handmaiden, she says, "And for the monastery, the friend possesses seven qualities.

1. She is pleasing and agreeable;
2. She is respected;
3. She is esteemed;
4. She is a speaker;
5. She patiently endures being spoken to;
6. She gives deep talks;
7. She does not enjoin one to do what is wrong."

Visákhá begins walking around the group of women gathered there in the Queen's courtroom. She spoke eloquently and approached each person one by one as she explained the importance of friends. As she comes to each of them, she presses her hands together in front of her chest with the fingertips just below her heart, and bows to show she sees the holy person in each of them. She then meets their eyes with her own and displays a smile before moving on to the next. Her movement is rhythmic and matches the eloquence of her speaking.

Visákhá

"There is an ancient instruction given by the Blessed One some seven thousand years ago. Only recently have those instructions been rediscovered, just a few weeks ago. They were included in a time capsule onboard the spaceship that brought our ancestral families here. The time capsule arrived from Planet 44, where the holy Cyborgs exist. We now know that Anguttara Nikaya (AN) first recorded the Blessed One's instructions on the planet, Blue Origin, also called

Earth, where human beings first evolved. The instruction is chibusa, and I will share it with you now."

"What is a good friendship? Here, in whatever village or town a clansman lives, she associates with householders or their children, whether young and of mature virtue, or old and of mature virtue, who are accomplished in faith, virtuous behavior, generosity, and wisdom; she converses with them and engages in discussions with them. Insofar as they are accomplished in faith, she emulates them concerning their faith; Insofar as they are accomplished in virtuous behavior, she emulates them concerning their virtuous behavior; Insofar as they are accomplished in generosity, she emulates them concerning their generosity; Insofar as they are accomplished in wisdom, she emulates them concerning their wisdom. This is called good friendship."

"The second ancient instruction contained in the same time-capsule is a story that tells about a conversation that took place between the Blessed One and a young man named Sigalaka: This one is boin too, and I want to share it with all of you."

"Young man, there are these four kinds of kind-hearted friends: the friend who is helpful; the friend who shares one's happiness and suffering; the friend who points out what is good; and the friend who is sympathetic.

"In four cases a helpful friend can be understood. He protects you when you are heedless; he looks after your property when you are sick; he is a refuge when you are frightened; and when some need arises, he gives you twice the wealth required.

"In four cases a friend who shares one's happiness and suffering can be understood. She reveals her secrets to you; she guards your secrets; she does not abandon you when you are in trouble; and would even sacrifice her own life for your sake.

"In four cases a friend who points out what is good can be understood. She restrains you from evil; he enjoins you in the good; she informs you of what you have not heard; and he points out to you the path to heaven.

"In four cases a sympathetic friend can be understood. He does not rejoice in your misfortune; she rejoices in your good fortune; he stops those who speak disparagingly of you, she commends those who speak praise of you."

"The teachings were given to us directly from the Cyborgs, and the teachings we continue to discover and that come directly from the Blessed One have a common focus on friendship and personal relationships. The social structure depends on these kinds of relations between the members of society. Outside of the family, friendship is the most basic relationship. The Buddha emphasized our personal development being pivotal to surrounding ourselves with high-quality friendships. A harmonious and ethically strong community is profoundly reliant on the practice of good friendship. Finding the spiritual life is a good friend and having both spiritual friends and friends in society are key to liberation from anger, fear, and delusion. In a society where friendships are structured as the Blessed One defines, no one is led into fear, anger, and delusion. Rather, one's friends guide us to liberation from fear, anger, and delusion."

Then the Queen's handmaidens showed appreciation with copious applause for Visákhá. After that, Visákhá's mother was filled with feelings of joy and pride from watching and listening to her daughter. Finally, another of the Queen's handmaids said, "We will make sure all of your friends have everything they need to complete the traditions of the wedding ceremony." With that said, the Queen dismissed everyone from the meeting.

In the days leading up to the ceremony, people of the city are busily preparing for the three-day festivities. The closest friends of Mahá and Visákhá perform all of the traditions for the

ceremony. Picking the day is the first traditional task. On Planet 444, there are two suns as the planet is on a revolutionary path that takes it between the binary stars. The days and nights vary in length of time between dark and light. The season is always tropical throughout the year.

Daylight hours differ through a four-year pattern where one of the stars is much brighter than the other and seven weeks every four years when only the dimmer star shines during the day. In this period, the tropical temperature drops by 15%. On the first day following this cool season, the wedding ceremony is considered optimal and auspiciously brings generosity and kindness to the couple. As fortune would have predicted, Mahá's eighteenth birthday falls on just such a season. Thus, they set the wedding for the first day of the cool season.

The friends gather at the home that Visákhá and Mahá's father gave them and are ready to decorate the couple's house. The palace handmaids provide all the furniture and decorations. Each person, in turn, chooses a location and a piece of furniture or decoration to place there. Usually, the bedroom furniture is taken to the living room, and the kitchen furnishings are taken to the bedroom. The home altar and reading rooms are set up in the kitchen and dining room. In the end, the entire house is decorated with everything a young couple just starting would ever want and need, but none of the items are where they should usually be found.

Purposely, the house is set up so that not even one room is entirely whole nor proper. That is, the living room may have a bed and dresser, but you might also find the stove and a hammock there too. Likewise, the pantry could be scattered where you'll find a little of it in each room. These shenanigans are all done in keeping with the traditions. Likewise, it provides the couple with the opportunity to work together, setting up and discovering each room and finding all of the gifts from the city's population. Friends will also make sure the pantry and kitchen are well supplied. Tradition holds that all labels are removed from the food containers making it impossible to know what food is within. This tradition provides the couple with the element of surprise and reinforces the value of maintaining the joy of surprise for all the days of their lives.

These are the couple's friends. Kelv is a leading people's advocate and also chairs the chamber of commerce. He has known Mahá since the first grade. Years later, when Mahá left the school to attend classes at the monastery, Kelv followed him. Airodia and his wife Ututotua have been friends of Visákhá since she came to her new family a little over four years ago. Airodia is a leading physicist for the community, and his wife, Ututotua, is a medical doctor studying to be a surgeon. Three of their friends are keepers of the people's path and work with various members of the King's court to communicate with and represent the villages and city councils. These three friends are Merliana, Shavarah, and Kyphi. Then there are Drrea and Danip, who are genuinely in love and hope to marry in four years when Drrea is twenty. They are both studying to become research scientists in farmland management.

Later in the day, the couple's friends are joined by the couple's mother and father to prepare the bed. The people's tradition requires that a pregnant woman lay on the bed. The pregnant woman chants a blessing for the couple to bless them to be good parents. Then, an infant is laid on the bed to bless the couple with fertility. Many people believe the sex of the infant will determine the sex of the couple's firstborn. For today, a male child was unanimously chosen. The couple's prosperity is, by tradition, fixed when everyone present throws comps and rice onto the bed. Finally, they all help make the bed with sheets and blankets, leaving the money and rice in place on the mattress. With everything complete and the house cleaned and ready, friends and family leave and the home. Of course, they make sure all the doors and windows are entirely left open—even the front door.

In their roles for the wedding ceremony, Kelv and Ututotua are the best man, and the bride's maid of honor. Also, Vallena was chosen as the second maid of honor, but a necessary science expedition will probably cause her to miss the celebration.

Finally, the day arrives. Today, the day of the ceremony, they will perform essential roles. First, Kelv will shave and help Mahá dress. Then they will walk together to the palace garden. To get the day started, the men gather together at the city bathhouse.

As Kelv begins to wash Mahá's hair, face, and beard before shaving, trimming, and helping him get dressed for the ceremony the conversation is upbeat.

Kelv

"I'm not going to need to do much for your hair and beard, my friend. They are almost perfect already. Let's say it is chibusa! How long have you been letting the hair grow?"

Mahá

"That's nice of you to say. My last haircut was a month back, and I've been growing this beard since it started. I mean, I've never shaved in my life."

Kelv

"Solid man. Boin. A man with a full beard, in my opinion, looks righteous and unpretentious. I think men should look natural and pure. However, our society seems to prefer the beard of a man to be perfectly croft and barely noticeable. To me, it's like a costume or a gimmick when we try to force human acceptance to a regiment of grooming rules. Unwritten and superficial rules at that. It shrouds our awareness and the potential of our consciousness to recognize what is real, and what is not." He pauses for a moment before continuing. Mahá listens as he sits on the grooming chair, getting his head and face washed. "Can I ask you a question, Mahá? Do you think the Cyborgs did the right thing?"

Mahá

"The right thing?" Do you mean, did they do the right thing in sending us here? Or that they genetically modified our DNA? I'm thinking that what you're asking me is both. Right?

Kelv

"Cibusa, right. I'm asking you, do you think the Cyborgs did the right thing? Are they devas? Are they holy ones? So they declared to everyone how they had created some wonderful gifts. Then they injected it into our ancestors and sent them through the galaxy to a never before inhabited planet with nothing more than plant seeds, recorded training lectures, and a half of a ton of hope-it-all-works-out!" He imitates a restrained lunatic laugh. "Don't get me wrong, brother. I know their intentions are epic. The intention is the base requirement of all karma. So if the intention is good, the karma is generally good. Not always. Well, what do you think, my friend, was it right?"

Mahá

As Kelv trims and styles his hair, Mahá takes a few minutes to consider Kelv's question before responding. "The answer is contained in the foundation of Buddhism. On the surface, it is easy to say that removing anger from people's emotions is wonderful. Free of anger, we can end murder, war, intentional violence. The mind is no longer in a constant battle with anger, lust, and delusion. Free from anger, we are battling lust and delusion only. Not that the duality and human condition of suffering are made simple. Lust and delusion are formidable causal catalysts."

Kelv

"Fascinating arguments; Considering the human condition is made better by the Cyborgs. I'm more inclined to suggest karma is more inflicted and worsened by the Cyborg serum." The two of them hadn't noticed Airodia enter the room, followed by Drrea and Danip. The four close friends of Mahá will help dress and prepare the groom for the ceremony.

Airodia

"Excuse me for the sidebar, but this is whacked-out, man. Thinking the Cyborgs made karma worse! It's a direction of thinking I would never have considered in a billion Earth years."

Mahá

"Hey guys!" surprised to see them all there. "Wait, what are you saying, Airodia? Do you disagree with Kelv?" He quietly laughs. "You two haven't agreed on anything since, ever. So go ahead, Airoda, tell us why the Cyborgs did us better by the serum."

Airodia

He nods and performs the positions of traditional greetings to the rest of the guys before continuing: "Our daily practice is all directed at improving the mind. That is, controlling our thoughts through the perfection of specific exercises -- both physical and mental exercises. Fear and dread are the consequences of evil and are useful tools for practice as applicable as enthusiasm and encouragement.

The Cyborgs didn't hide from the unpalatable consequence and fragile human condition. The impermanence and the horrible realities of death and the possibility, or should we agree maybe -- the probability -- of postmortem suffering in infernal torment. Because these stakes are so high, the Cyborgs mercilessly rip away the curtains to not only reveal and remove our tendencies to pretend and hide these awful truths. The lower realms of existence in the animal, hungry ghost, and hells are center stage to the Cyborgs."

"They alter their bodies with silicone, metals, and serums in efforts to improve their human experience and maximize their mental capacity. To the unprepared and those people living outside of the Buddhist society, it all can seem morbid. Probably even sadistic. With so much at stake, there is no reason to hold back on training the mind. It's all well and good that we can stand here debating and defining -- moral good and evil -- exclusively as cause and effect.

We may agree evil is negative, nonvirtuous and perhaps we could use the word sinful. However, we would all probably agree not because evil acts are a transgression against some divine principle crafted by the creator of the universe. Instead, we know these are evil because they produce suffering in this or future existence. But, on the flip, a virtuous act brings about happiness and leads to spiritual development."

Drrea

"If all of that was absolute, and I think it is, then there is one truth about suffering --an undeniable truth. Suffering is the consequence of one's action. Suffering is not retribution or punishment doled out by some external power. Keep in mind also that all of this is impermanent. The hell realms, heavens, animal, and human realms of existence are all temporary."

Mahá stands from the chair, his hair perfectly in braided tradition, beard whole and natural, not manicured. He bows to the men and stands ready for them to dress him for the ceremony.

Mahá

"Then, naturally, there is no manifest destiny, no grand plan for the universe. The ideology of karma suggests our experience in states of being are determined by our acts. We are the authors of our future, and as frightening as it may be, we are free to do anything." We are not judged into hell by our acts; we do not suffer as a result of the actions of others. Are we on track, Kelv? Have we set the stage for answering your question: did the Cyborgs do the right thing by altering our DNA to remove anger?"

Kelv

Leaning against the wall with an expression of boredom on his face and displayed in his posture, he replies with a yawn: "Relatively speaking, of course. These grassroots concepts of right and wrong are crucial, and as we practice in our daily life, they are also coupled with

ethics. Those are fundamentals. If we try to grasp and cling to moral values, or self-righteous spiritual judgment, we get trapped by superficiality and ego-clinging. The results are nothing but wrong attitudes and sort of like looking at a reflection as it is reflected again and again onto itself. Seriously though, why don't we all take a giant step together and get right into this thing?

The Cyborgs crossed the line, man! It's more straightforward than simply defining the human condition of suffering, mindless thought, loving-kindness, present moment awareness, and blah blah- this and hip-hip-hooray that. What's at stake here? Having been born in this human realm is all-pervasive and instantly universally precious as well as incredibly fragile. Right? This organic life is the only existence where the opportunity is available for spiritual development. For most human settlements, history tells us that the overwhelming majority of people squander their lives in trivial pursuits. Where, instead of trivial pursuits, they should instead be in a state of panic. The responsibility of having been born is perilous.

The Cyborgs took anger away from us by genetically altering our physical existence at a molecular level. We don't know what anger is. We read about it. They gave us videos to watch so we could see anger in other people's actions. But we can't even relate to what it feels like to experience, control, or exploit anger. We were told by the Cyborgs that we are happy because we have no anger. But we can't relate to that sensation either because, without anger, the duality doesn't exist. To us, in this genetically robbed condition, happiness is just a word. But this has severe consequences. This human condition includes anger, and just because we can't experience it or even think an angry thought doesn't mean that anger doesn't exist."

Suddenly, Danhip claps his hands and then whistles an attention-gaining, sharp whistle. Having gained everyone's attention, he bows and presents Mahá. Everyone turns to look. Mahá appears to glow with a brilliant translucent aura as he stands there dressed in his ceremonial robe, belt, boots, and jewelry perfectly in place. Mahá stands in the center of the bathhouse, looking majestic. He takes a few steps forward toward the mirrored wall so he can see his reflection. All of his friends stand behind him, and with everyone reflected in the mirror, they all take a few moments to consider their company in the present moment.

Mahá

"You all have done your best work in making me ready. The city won't know what hit them when they see all of this coming into the palace garden." They all laugh and muse over the groom. "I'm anxious to hear what Danhip is pondering over this discussion." Mahá turns to Danhip: "You've kept quiet this whole time. It's unlike you to not add a quip here and a witty comment there, and you haven't disguised sarcasm within a sneeze or coughed out a jab." Everyone laughs in agreement that Danhip is well known for playful anecdotes while someone is speaking. "Come on then, tell us your side of this as we walk to the garden."

Danhip

"The first time I heard "the Cyborgs might not have done the right thing," I was in shock. I almost ran out of the room in tears. Holy ones, blessed Cyborgs have provided each of us with far more than any of you have yet realized." As Kelv starts to interrupt, Danhip cuts him off quickly: "Hold on, Kelv. You'll have the last word as it is always your prerogative, you last-word-freak." They all laugh hysterically and one by one, and to a man, they each agree that Kelv indeed must have the last word in every discussion. Danhip continued: "But right now, boy, I'm holding the mic, so listen and learn something." He stops walking and turns to face Kelv.

A moment passes between them as they stand looking at one another. Everyone stands looking at the two men. Everyone is wondering why there seems to be something necessarily transpiring at this moment, yet oddly missing. Mahá is thinking, "It seems like there should be an emotional outburst here. Would this be where the act of anger would normally happen?" Kelv is a slender man and probably 20 centimeters taller than Danhip. Danhip is of average height but very muscular, and like Mahá, he has a fully grown head of hair and beard. The two men give each other a brief nod of their heads. Then, Danhip turns and continues to walk towards the palace. They all join in behind Danhip and continue toward the palace garden.

Danhip

"Every day, we wake up early and chant the heart sutra or the lotus sutra. We dress, eat, and then sit in meditation for an hour. As we come into town to the gym and the bathhouse, we greet everyone, wish them a good life, and wish them freedom from suffering. Through each day, we seek ways to be of benefit to other people. We use every waking minute to find enlightenment and improve the well-being of all beings. For this effort, we gain merit. What is merit? Merit is just a word, but it is the action of continuously living each moment to help everyone find liberation. So we call all of the efforts -- merit. But it's the value of merit that is most important.

According to tradition, it decays, rots, withers away, and turns to dust when the body dies. Nothing of the person remains, but the merit earned continues onward. It's like the carpenter who constructs a tavern. The carpenter builds a beautiful place with windows, doors, bars, tables, stools, and every part of the tavern glistens and is perfect. However, when a hundred years have passed, the tavern no longer beams and no longer shines with perfection. The doors squeak and stick in the door jams; windows are misaligned and no longer completely seal out the wind; The bar is worn and scared; The tables, too, show deep scratches and heavy wear from all the years of use.

All in all, not for nothing, the intention of the carpenter is still evident. The tavern continues to serve its usefulness and function. The carpenter is long dead and gone, but the fruit of his actions carries on. That is a very simplistic metaphor of merit.

"The great saint, Shantideva, wrote about merit and he said;

'All the joy the world contains

Has come from wishing happiness for others.

All the misery the world contains

Has come through wanting pleasure for oneself.'

He taught the way of concentration and the elimination of unstructured mental wandering. Even this, reading the sutras, reading from the great sages, buddhas, saints, or whatever we want to call them, gains merit. Discussing dharma and teachings are all actions of great wealth and opportunity. Chibus merit. One can spend their entire life building a wealth of merit. You could earn great wealth and opportunity every minute for 90 years and in just one brief instance of angry thought, and poof! All that merit is erased. It's gone like ice melted in the fire. The good has evaporated and cannot be reclaimed. It can only be re-earned. That is the immense power of anger! This thing they call anger destroys everything of virtue. For that reason, and that reason only the Cyborgs spent every effort to find an anger cure."

Kelv

"We may not be able to experience anger, we can't even understand it at all, but the universe is undeniably one and balanced. The universe hasn't put an end to anger at all, my brothers. So like, get ready, men, I'm going to drop the mic after I say this bit. You can't feel anger, but you can feel this; Anger isn't gone, and eventually, we all, and I mean everyone on this planet, are going to witness it. The only thing the Cyborgs have accomplished on our behalf is something comparable to placing a lid on top of a massively large pot of boiling water. Eventually, all that energy from the boiling water will be stronger than our ability to hold the lid down. When that moment comes, we are all going to be scalded! You can put that in the books!"

The group arrived at the garden, and most of the population seems to be there already. The mood is palatable with excitement and joy. Musicians are scattered here and there throughout the garden, as well as singers and dancers. The palace garden is glorious, with every sort of flower in full bloom. Exquisitely prepared foods are being served and eaten beneath thick tarps that have been strung between trees, casting soothing shade over ample tables and chairs below on the cool and perfectly groomed grass. Clusters of people gather in small groups, some dancing, some singing, and most everyone talking and laughing as the day of celebration is in the act of being shared.

## Chapter Four **High On Desire**

While the men were in the bathhouse helping Mahá prepare for the ceremony, Ututotua and Visákhá were also at the bathhouse using different bath chambers. The two women are relaxing in the soaking pool when they heard a familiar voice call out. "What are you two beauties doing being lazy in the soaking tub? They look at each other, surprise in their eyes, and before you could blink, they both turn in the direction the voice came from, and together they shout out her name, Vallena?"

They see Vallena standing at the door. Vallena is, without any doubt in anyone's mind, Visákhá's best friend. Vallena quickly signals hello and just as promptly drops her clothing right there in the doorway, all the way down to the last stitch. She rapidly and daintily tiptoed her naked slender female form bashfully across the well-lit but somewhat misty bathing room.

Visákhá watched every move as her friend approached. She always admired Vallena. Mostly she admires the depth of her intelligence, her caring and gregarious personality, and her very sleek figure. She wasn't busty, she only needed one arm and one hand to conceal her now naked breasts, and she wasn't at all curvy. She has no hips and just a barely recognizable tiny round butt. Still, Visákhá often thought, "If I was going to be in a lesbian relationship Vallena is the type of woman I would go for." Vallena was not a lesbian. In fact, most people would tell you she is boy crazy.

All through school, she would tell Visákhá how she thought some guy was totally hot, and a few days later, would change her mind, and it would be someone else she was daydreaming over. And it was always one guy after another. She often went back and forth between which one she would like to be married to and which one she would die to be with sexually. With that memory running through her mind, Visákhá caught herself choking back tears as she knew not one of those guys would truly ever find Vallena beautiful. She has a skin condition called vitiligo which makes her face appear to be severely blotched and infected. Most people become

uncomfortable when they look at her, especially young boys. Visákhá hadn't discerned, or even considered, that the skin condition covers Vallena's entire body.

Vallena was promised, according to tradition, to marry the firstborn son of Family 17, but he fell to his death just after turning nine years old. Since then, Vallena has dedicated her life to becoming a science and math expert for the benefit of the people on Planet 444.

Vallena vaults into the soaking pool to join Ututotua and Visákhá. In doing so, she cannonballs, making the pool's water splash up and over the unsuspecting women. The three of them hug, laugh, splash, and all the while, each of them talks concurrently. No one was listening, and not one of the three cared. They are in celebratory moods, and Ututotua and Visákhá are thrilled that their friend made it to the wedding.

Visákhá

"We knew you would make it! I love you, Vallena! I absolutely and always will love you."

Vallena

"The last three days while I was struggling to get here have been a nightmare of events, but I was determined to get back to our city on the Mountain. My best friend's wedding day! Are you kidding me? The planet couldn't keep me away. But it tried." She chuckled and shook her head as it tilted to one side: she was mindfully repressing memories of her struggle over the last three days. "Before I tell you what I discovered at the far end of our little landmass on this giant planet of water, I have to ask you a very, very, extraordinarily vital question." Her eyes stared into Visákhá's eyes. "You have to tell us too. You have to."

Ututotua

"Oh, you know she's going to ask something deeply personal! She exclaimed. "Just look at her sheepish grin and the mischievous glint in her eyes." she continued talking through a cautious laugh. "Go on then. Ask your question, Vallena.

Vallena

"No. Not yet. I want her to promise she'll tell us. Then I will ask her." her sheepish grin and curious eyes still fixed and unchanging.

Visákhá

"I don't know. "An uneasiness was audible in her voice. "Knowing you, you're probably going to ask me something bizarre or worse." After a deafening pause, (Vallena thinks, "The first one to speak loses.") Visákhá stands up in the pool, placing her hands on her hips, and with the water, well below her shoulders, she takes on a pertinacious pose. "Okay, ask your question, and I promise to tell you the truth. I'm too curious to know what you're going to ask to say no."

Vallena

"Wait. I brought something that will take the tension off." She walks up the steps out of the soaking bath, makes her way across the room. When she got to where she had left her clothes, she stopped. Picking up her backpack, she reached inside to pull out a fat doobie. She reached into her bag once more to get something else to share. She hesitates to wonder if this is the right time to tell them about this fresh herb. Then, dropping her backpack to the ground, she turns and quickly hurries back to the pool.

Ututotua

"I know what she's got there! Yummy stuff." she laughs.

Visákhá

"I know too, but should we get high right now? It's only a few jikans before the ceremony."

Vallena

"Stop your worries. I've got this new strain of gonja. The parent plant is a silver-haze, and these buds are the boin! Girls... this gonja provides a sweet elevated mind, and it is effortless to manage. You are going to boss-out and be happy like never before." She hands the smoke to Ututotua.

Ututotua

Following a few long draws, she exhales a thick fog of smoke. "These new strains you created, Vallena, are providing our society with remarkable medical cures. I've been so overwhelmed with helping patients with their life inhibiting ailments. The medical team has eradicated three debilitating, disease-caused ailments in just the last two months with pharmaceuticals developed from your herbs. You are a true scientist and hero."

Vallena takes a curtsy, submerging herself completely underwater, causing all three to burst with laughter.

Visákhá

"That's amazing. I have heard a few people in the markets talking about the new medications and serums. Then, after that, I had a few drinks with Danip, and he told me about the fibers." She lets out a billow of grey smoke from her lungs. She pulls on the doobie once more before handing it to Vallena.

"The fibers from the plants are being used to make clothing that can last 20 years or more. Plus, the fabric filters the ultraviolet sun's rays and makes everyone better protected. These modifications to the plants, or whatever you have created, are the boon and chibusa! I believe in you, Vallena, and if I had hectares of land, I would dedicate them all to growing your marijuana and herbs."

"You know what? I think Danip and Vallena would be a good match. He is pretty smart, and he's nice looking too."

Vallena

"Okay, ladies, your praise is appreciated, and I'm feeling a little embarrassed. If you hadn't helped me understand the chemical makeup of those physical ailments, Uttutotua, I wouldn't have been able to grow the correct plants. And you know as well as I, Visákhá, your understanding of physics and lightwave particles. Without your help, I wouldn't have learned how to get the fibrous chemistry of the plants, either. So the three of us working together are making this planet a better home for everyone."

As for Danhip, there's no way that hookup would ever take hold. He is so head-over-heels in love with Drrea nothing will alter that heart. Plus, you already know my one true love-desire is Kelv. So you can bet on it; I would drink his bathwater just to get a hint at the taste of his goodies. But let's face it. He's chosen a personal dedication to celibacy and the Mahayana path of a bodhisattva. Which reminds me of my role today, even more critical than this brain-haze we just ingested." she briefly paused to laugh. "My role in this wedding day preparation. I have the best job of all!"

As Vallena talks about it, the women have climbed up the steps and out of the soaking pool. They take turns using and helping each other use the lumea. Lumea is a laser hair removal device that removes the follicle of the hair, so after using it, there's no stubble and no regrowth

either. After removing all unwanted hairs from their bodies, they begin to style Visákhá's long head of hair and apply traditional henna tattoos.

Vallena

"According to tradition, there are seven methods for a couple to experience mutual gratification sexually that do not cause impregnation. So like, I have to explain and illustrate these seven ways for a man and a woman to get busy. But, before..."

Ututotua

"Excuse me, but seven? Are you kidding m? Seven?" She interrupted Vallena mid-sentence. "When Airodia and I got married, I was shown only five ways to make love or to get busy, as you call it. I'm super excited to learn the other two. Not to get too distracted, but the heads of medical science are blaming our slowing population growth on these sexual methods." Visákhá and Vallena look puzzled at the logic that couples engaged in sex are causing a slowing population growth.

"Let me just put it this way. These love-making methods are so sexually powerful and fulfilling that most couples are not doing traditional penetration. I can tell you after four years of marriage, Airodia and I have never done it that way. We do have sex, a lot, and we throw a dart to see which method we are going to use each time."

The women are feeling somewhat baked now from having smoked Vallena's weed, and perhaps the heavy buzz is responsible for them becoming uninhibited. They each fall to the floor laughing in near hysteria following Ututotua's confession of not having vaginal sex in four years. The statement just seemed hysterically funny.

As they regain composure, Vallena continues.

Vallena

"Before I show you these techniques, Visákhá, you owe me an answer to my question."

Visákhá

"Oh, for the love of Phari, I hoped you forgot you made me promise." she laughs nervously.

Vallena

"It's not that bad, really. It's just that I want to know every detail. I mean, you and Mahá have been living together for four years now. Ever since he was fourteen, we all know that boys have been beginning to experience lust and sexual desire. Organic chemicals are flooding their nervous system with pheromones by the time they're sixteen, and the need for sexual experience is all but impossible to resist. So there we have it, ladies; by the time he's eighteen, our brothers, the men, have so many lust-filled pheromones coursing through their bodies they can hardly think of anything else but their penis and balls. Poor dears!

So with that lead-in, my question to you is: Have you done it! Did you go all the way? How was it? Is he huge? Does it feel amazing? Is it all the universe and back again? You have to tell me everything because I will never know for myself." As her enthusiasm grows, her excitement is palpable as she asks each question in rapid succession.

Visákhá

"Is that all you wanted to ask me?" She replies with a tone of confidence and a slight smirk. Then she starts to laugh and chuckles, and then she makes eye contact with each of them.

Finally, she takes on a serious tone as she replies. "No, we haven't gone all the way. But I can tell you we've done almost everything you can imagine. We've kissed a hundred thousand times for more than a hundred million minutes. Our hands and our eyes have explored each other from heads to toes.

We've spent many nights working ourselves into pools of passionately driven sweat. But we take time to tell each other how the pheromones are causing us to feel. We've used our lustful desires to help us better understand our organic minds. The chemicals produced by our bodies triggered by our vision, touch, and sight cause a mental high that is better than this weed we smoked today. Mahá told me how his sexual desires and thoughts race as fast as his heartbeats. And I've seen the hardened swell in his penis that proves his words are valid. We've brought each other to climax with our hands and mouths. But we want our first traditional sex to be magical. Truly magical, and we want our first child as a result of our first sexual penetration."

Ututotua

Okay. I'm anxious to learn seven of the best sexual methods for couples now. So let's hit that silver-haze once more if that's okay with you, Vallena.

Vallena loads the pipe once more, and the three of them take in more of nature's natural healing smoke. Ututotua and Vallena take turns demonstrating and explaining the sexual techniques. Visákhá learns that a man and a woman can thoroughly enjoy mutually gratifying sex without inducing pregnancy. The three women are totally baked, and their comfortable laughter is just one of the many displays of shared trust and depth of friendship. They've finished styling Visákhá's hair in the traditional style, and they've covered her body with traditional henna tattoos. It's time for the three to get dressed and then go to the palace park for the ceremony.

Vallena

"You are so beautiful, Visákhá. Just look at you. There has never been a more beautiful bride. But, before we dress, I have to ask both of you to do me a favor." First, she takes a hand in her's from Ututotua, and in her other hand, she holds Visákhá's. Then she continues." On the day when you decide to conceive, you need to come and see me. Listen to me; I'm very serious. There are traditions to follow that ensure auspicious children. Besides that, I have a potion that you must take before you make love to your husband."

Visákhá

"Did you just say potion?"

Vallena

"I did, and I mean it." She looks at them sternly and resolutely. "Don't forget!" She lets loose of their hands and takes two steps backward. "My very best friends, Visákhá, and Ututotua, I have a huge surprise for you. Let me quickly explain. I found a way to inject nanobots into plants by synthesizing the plant's uptake and accumulation mechanism. Long story, but the best part of the results is that I can alter the plant fibers' color. Therefore, when we make fabric from plant fibers, we have colored fabric. As you know, the Cyborgs placed us all on this dumb planet. Meaning we have no means of advanced technology such as to make dyes and paints, etc. So, ladies, I had our wedding attire made from these colored fibers."

Vallena walks to the doorway where she first entered. She looks at the small package in her hand and quietly decides not to share it with them today. Her backpack lays on the ground, slightly opened, and she drops the container into her bag. Then, with a dramatic movement mimicking a stage performer's actions, she reaches through the door and takes hold of the three gowns she left hanging there when she arrived. With dramatic flair, she swoops the gowns off the rack and dances slowly toward Visákhá and Ututotua.

The gowns are bright pink, gold, and green with abundant white lace. On a planet that has only ever known fabrics in shades of white and beige, these gowns seem otherworldly. As Vallena hands each of the women their dresses, they are stunned and speechless. Then, with what could have only been a few seconds spent admiring the gowns, they each gleefully and quickly donned on the garments. Then they stood in front of the mirrored wall and gazed at their reflection for several minutes.

## Chapter Five **The Wedding**

At the farthest end of the palace garden, the mountain top provides a natural amphitheater. The ground opens up to a deep alluvial fan where the backdrop is solid stone, and the front is a not-too steep slope. The slope has been excavated to produce seating for as many as fifteen thousand, and you can comfortably add another five thousand people along the top of the gap. The backdrop stoneface is a delight to the eyes with swirling patterns that are a testament to a time when the mountain had been molten. The stage at the bottom of the alluvial gap was excavated to a semi-circular shape and stands a meter high. The theater is genuinely breathtaking.

As the three women, Ututotua, Vallena, and Visákhá arrive, the theater is already full, and the ridge is overcrowded with people. The center of the sitting area provides 444 steps that gradually, with short risers, lead from the top down to the circular stage at the bottom. The women start down the steps with Visákhá in front. Her bridesmaid and maid of honor are close behind on either side.

People were initially shocked when they saw women in colorful gowns. Then, quite slowly, as they realize who the women are and that they aren't from another planet, cheers and sounds of celebration take over. Mahá and his entourage are standing in their places, already in position just off the right of center stage. At the back of the stage and to the right of the men, there are eight rows of venerable monks, four deep in each row, chanting while seated in lotus position on white, pearlesque-colored meditation pillows. Placed on top of a large, round quartz crystal, nearly a meter thick and three meters in diameter, is the Abbott, Magallan Rinboku. The chanting vibrates upward and outward from the arena. The people, now standing in their seats, celebrate the start of the ceremony.

The King and Queen, with the royal court members, including Mahá and Visákhá's mother and father, are on the other side of the stage. The royals are all adorned with full-length, thick

white robes. The robe collars are folded starting from the tip of the chin and contouring the body down to the outer edge of the shoulders. The cuff of each sleeve folded back up the arm, from the first knuckle of the hand a quarter of the way up to the elbows. These cuffs and collars, thick as the robes themselves, are black. Finally, a fifteen-centimeter wide belt around the center, also in black, with ornate tassel ends completes the garments. The monks, in the same style of a robe, but the colors are opposite, with the robes being black while the collar, cuffs, and belt are white.

The contrasting gowns of royalty and monastery are symbolic of the yin and yang, the duality of the universe. Where royalty is concerned with life affairs and monastics are concerned with the affairs post mortem. The circular stage, a symbol of the universe, is the matrix where the yin and yang exist not as two things but as one.

Large Tibetan horns are positioned at the back of the stage in the center. The horns played once every four steps as the women descended towards the stage. A pair of conga drums struck in rhythm with each step. People stomp, dance, cheer, and clap, and the entire arena pulses and vibrate with the energy of Jambudvipa. The whole planet reverberates, and the energy waves stretch outward to the far ends of the Galaxy. Finally, as the women reach the stage and take up their positions to the left of the center next to the men, everyone and everything goes quiet and stops.

At this exact moment, the Oracle, lying prone at center stage this whole time, stands and walks to where Mahá is standing with his bride. Then, circling them in a sun-wise direction three times, he abruptly walks into them. As the Oracle purposely bumps into the couple, he separates them at arm's length. The Oracle's left hand on Mahá's left shoulder he pushes Mahá while at the same time his right hand on Visákhá's right shoulder he pushes Visákhá. With the couple now separated at arm's length, the Oracle keeps them on his right as he continues to circumambulate the two of them.

At the end of the third rotation around them, the Oracle stops directly in front of Mahá. The Oracle briefly looks into Mahá's eyes. Then, as suddenly as a lump of hot coal burns your fingertips when plucked out of the fire, the Oracle grabs Mahá's head in both of his hands. Mahá, startled by the movement, resists and struggles to free himself from the grasp. The Oracle's grip is firm, and as Mahá struggles, he quickly realizes he cannot break free from the unimaginable strength of the Oracle. Mahá surrenders, relaxes his posture, and calms his mind.

The Oracle forces their foreheads together, and they stand right there, head to head several tikans. Everyone present notices a slight twitch from the Oracle's body. It was only a very slight twitch, but just as you would think maybe you hadn't seen it, there was another. Now it is obvious -- there is movement -- as the Oracle begins to stamp his feet, and his body begins to shake and vibrate wildly. When finally, the Oracle released his hold on Mahá, swung his hands straight out to the side with a burst of energy that sent Mahá falling backward and onto the ground. Mahá jumped up on his feet and quickly moved back to the p the Oracle had placed him. The Oracle stands with his arms outstretched and his face turned up as he speaks aloud the fortune, the prediction for Mahá's future.

Oracle

"There is a path with two directions. In one direction, Mahá works daily in the King's court. Before the end of four years, he will rule the kingdom. On the other direction, Mahá works daily in the King's guard. Before the end of four years, he will rule the Galaxy and all humans."

The Oracle lowers his head and drops his arms to his sides as he steps towards Visákhá. As before with Mahá, he grasps her head with his hands in a movement as quick as lightning. Visákhá is startled by a flood of sensations. The closeness of his body to hers. Coupled with the rapid movement of his arms and his hands, the unimaginable strength of his grasp. She can sense the Oracle's mind joining with her own. Like before, they stand motionless.

Suddenly the Oracle begins to shake, vibrate, and his feet are stomping up and down vigorously. Then, just as suddenly as he pulled her head to his, he quickly released. Sending her falling backward and to the ground. His arms were outstretched, and his head tilted back. While she quickly makes her way back to her feet, he speaks loudly as if everyone in the entire Jambudvīpa realm were listening.

Oracle

"This one too shows a path with one of two directions. In one direction, Visákhá sits on the throne next to the King. She brings a son into the world, but she won't see his eighth year. In the other direction, Visákhá delivers to her husband, as he sits in the saddle, the sword and shield as he leads the King's guard on many long journeys. In this direction, she brings three children into the world, but none of them will reach their tenth year."

The Oracle collapses to the ground, then he slowly crawls, and drags himself off the stage and out of sight. Everyone inside the palace walls remains silent and struggles to digest the depth of meaning from the Oracle's premonitions. Visákhá is numb from her spine to her toes as the thought of her never seeing her children reach maturity and never enjoying grandchildren races over and over again in her mind.

Mahá is still two meters away from her, and wrestling thoughts of himself being King of the realm, and possibly the King of the Galaxy. While just 10 meters away, the King, his judges, and the entire royal court are pondering the very same questions. The tension is thick, and the weight of it can be felt everywhere.

The booming laugh and sudden clap of his hands rang out. He suddenly appeared seemingly out of nowhere, the precious-one, Magallan Rinboku. He is standing in front of Mahá and Visákhá. Facing the entire wedding party, and laughs loudly and then thunderously claps his hands once more. "Hey, what I want to know is, who invited that guy. He's motioning with his

thumb over his shoulder towards the place where the Oracle crawled off stage. He was heavy, and made me dizzy with all his raz-a-ma-taz fast moves."

The Abbott stood for a moment as he made eye contact with Mahá. At this time, Mahá's mind fills with joy and with loving intention. Mahá looks back into the precious one's eyes, and his mood immediately elevates. Mahá's fear subsides, and his focus returns.

Mahá reaches out his left hand toward Visákhá and says, "Join me, wife." Visákhá looks up and sees the monk, the precious one Magallan Rinboku. She hadn't noticed his appearance, nor had she heard him. She looks to her right and sees Mahá holding his hand out to her. Mahá repeats, "Join me, wife." Her hand quickly rises and joins him, and they each take a step toward each other. She is retaking the place where they had been before the Oracle had separated them. They turn to face the assembly of people who are still feeling stunned by the words of the Oracle. Mahá then spoke to her and the entire community in attendance.

Mahá

"This wedding day is not the pinnacle of our marriage, and it is not the only legitimate, real, and recognized celebration." As he speaks, he lets go of her hand and slowly walks towards the people. "Today is simply the visible form to illustrate commitment, but it does not authenticate our marriage. This celebration is for every one of our guests invited here to rejoice for a few hours. Today, we will dance and eat a good meal in honor of Visákhá and me being married. But it's not our day. Visákhá and I have celebrated our marriage every day for the last four years and will continue to celebrate our wedding until the end of our lives.

Whatever life brings, in every minute, we have taken on the challenges as husband and wife." He stops walking and stands near the edge where the ceremony platform ends. Then he continued. "We will take on whatever challenges life brings us, always as husband and wife.

With all that has been said today, everyone, please listen to me now! Knowing the future is not controlling the future."

He laughs a little. Then with style reminiscent of a man from the 1980's Newyork City Bronx he walks over to Visákhá. He takes her hands into his and says. "In the words of the song "Smooth." Performed by the greatest musical talent ever in Earth's history."

He sang the lyrics;

*"And it's just like the ocean under the moon*

*Oh, it's the same as the emotion that I get from you*

*You got the kind of lovin' that can be so smooth, yeah*

*Give me your heart, make it real, or else forget about it."*

[Smooth, by Santana](#)

Visákhá can't help but laugh at his old-school style, and his attempt to sing the ancient latin classic. She removes her right hand from his grasp and then slowly runs the tips of her fingers down his face. "You are the blues master, my love. Yes, you have my heart, and it's for real. So don't you ever forget about it." She pinches his cheek playfully then turns toward the assembly. Her bright smile and the joy she has in her heart radiates for all to see. She speaks powerfully and lively. "You must admit the words from the Oracle were shocking. After listening to him, I fell into the dark, weighed down with the blues. My husband is right though. Knowing the future is not controlling the future.' She pauses only for a moment. The entire assembly waited in silence for her to continue.

Visákhá

"It's been said that everything in the entire universe that happens before you are born is preparation for your birth. Likewise, everything that happens in the universe after you die results

from what you did when you were alive. Therefore, in the brief few years that we have in this organic form, we can make a difference throughout the universe. So let's all choose to live a life of compassion, understanding, and accommodation. And most of all, let's fill our days with love."

## Conclusion

You don't have to be an expert in philosophy or even have a Ph. D. in science or math to figure out, from this story, there are many interesting questions that have gone answered. If you follow my meaning here. Such as the number four, for example. What is so important about this one in particular number? It shows up everywhere in this novella. There are Planets 44 and 444. It took 400 plus years in the spaceship and it was originally inhabited by 44 of the best human scientists. And that's just a few examples of many, many more. What about the Buddha, the Bodhisattvas, or God, Allah, Brahma, YHWH, etcetera? If people are born and die on other planets, are they lost to these deities? Or is the whereabouts of all there is in the universe within their control and knowing?

You get the drift by now if you didn't already follow it in the first place. The whole thing is from this perspective of a story leaving an impressionable and impactful desire for more understanding is rather dharma like. Right? Cat out of the bag, the people on Planets 44 and 444 are governed by and concerned with Buddhist dharma. That was obvious, and everyone is familiar with the Buddhist Four Noble Truths. Therefore the number four plays a significant role in Buddhism. The Eightfold Path, Thirty-two Devas, and so on and so forth.

The characters are over-the-top smart and downright intellectual. It likely stems from their ancestry. The top forty-four scientists in all of human existence. Each generation from there, if not before, were raised in the hard sciences and took up careers in the same. The inhabitants of Planet 444 are all offspring from scientific parents. Logic prevails and sentiment is not usually a strong personality trait for scientists.

How about Vallena? First of all, if it wasn't for absolute-lowdown-dirty-rotten-bad luck, she would have no luck at all. She is a genius and a combination neuroscientist plus botanist. Kelv seems dedicated to monastic life and there's something more to him than the book wants to reveal. The Cyborgs issue for did they do the right thing or have violated human rights with this genetic altering serum, warrants some thought. But if it only takes an instant of anger to erase a

lifetime of merit, who could argue human rights violation? Lastly, this Oracle's predictions of two probable paths for both Visákhá and Mahá coming at the end of the last chapter can only mean one thing. There's at least one more novella to be written.

# Glossary of Terms

**Blessed One:** In Buddhism's Pali and Sanskrit scriptures, the term is used to denote Gautama Buddha, referring to him as Bhagavā or Bhagavān (translated with the phrase "Lord" or "The Blessed One"). The term Bhagavān is also found in other Theravada, Mahayana, and Tantra Buddhist texts.

**Bodhisattva:** In Buddhism, a bodhisattva is any person who is on the path towards Buddhahood. In the Early Buddhist schools as well as modern Theravada Buddhism, a bodhisattva refers to anyone who has made a resolution to become a Buddha and has also received a confirmation or prediction from a living Buddha that this will be so.

**Boin:** Slang used by the younger generations to mean, awesome.

**Chibusa:** Slang used by the younger generations to mean, totally awesome.

**Comps:** A type of currency used to obtain privilege access, (currency for royals).

**D-Chip:** A device used for communicating with an internal hard drive usually implanted in the buttocks.

**Gonja:** Marijuana.

**Janas:** Derived from the Latin meaning the divine gate. In Buddhism, it relates to the five stages of meditation that lead to awakening.

**Jikan:** A measure of time. a.k.a. an hour.

**Mahayana:** "Great Vehicle" is a term for a broad group of [Buddhist traditions, texts, philosophies](#), and practices. Mahāyāna Buddhism developed in [India](#) (c. 1st century BCE onwards) and is considered one of the two main existing branches of [Buddhism](#) (the other being [Theravāda](#)).

**Merit:** Merit is a force that results from good deeds done; it is capable of attracting good circumstances in a person's life, as well as improving the person's mind and inner well-being.

**Privilege:** A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.

**Revs:** A measure of time. a.k.a. a year.

**Rinboku:** The word is used in the context of Tibetan Buddhism as a way of showing respect when addressing those recognized as reincarnated, older, respected, notable, learned, and/or accomplished Lamas or teachers of the Dharma. It is also used as an honorific for abbots of monasteries.

**Silver Haze:** Marijuana plant of a Sativa strain that has flowers covered in thick THC buds.

**Stream-Entry:** The first moment when a person understands the wisdom of the dharma is called stream-entry.

**Thinking Mind:** 00

**Thinking Mind:** Our brain's advanced outer layer, or cortex, enables us to remember past events and predict the future consequences of our actions before we make decisions. ... We can think about thinking, and use language to exchange these thoughts with others.

**Tikan:** A measure of time. a.k.a. a second

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