

THE THRESHOLD

*A story of a nun of the 21st century
Who passed over the Threshold of the
Prison of migratory existence.*



Denagama Siriwardana



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OFFERING

I worship the noble Buddha who freed me and other sorrowful beings from transmigratory existence by Preaching the Prestige doctrine. I understood sorrowfulness and I annihilated lust. Comprehending the noble eight-fold path. I felt the bliss of Nibbana . Being ignorant of the reality of life and trotting the desert of transmigratory existence as a forlorn being.

To a person, once I became a son and a mother. In another occasion I was a father, if not a brother to him.

I was a grandmother and was on a journey full of sorrow.

I saw the Lord Buddha through the doctrine.

This is my last body. No journey on the transmigratory existence here after. I will never be born again.

With an endless effort during this life, those disciples and monks who attempted to obtain Nibbana by following the doctrine is the vision of worshipping the Lord Buddha .

The Queen Maha Maya gave birth to the Lord Buddha , for the benefit of many. It is with good faith I utter. As a result of that those world beings who are afflicted with various diseases, misery and death have been able to eliminate their sorrowfulness and attain the bliss of Nibbana .

Enjoying the bliss of Nibbana , having sung the song of your prime achievement being the founder of the sect of nuns, you the most respectful 'Maha Prajapathi Gothami', the Arahant nun. Let me offer you this story written about a daughter of your sect.

FOREWORD

This is a fascinating narrative of a noble nun who abandoned everything and ordained after showing exceptional personality traits by taming the mind from childhood.

The path she trod with the prestigious advice given by the teacher Monk to succeed the transmigratory existence is also described here. This is written for the benefit of a large number of devotees who obtained the light of Dhamma and are expecting to attain Nibbana .

I am grateful to those who supplied necessary information for me to write this book. I appreciate the patronage given by Palitha Senanayake a media personal and Sirisena Thudawage a photographer.

Chandrasiri Jayasoma the proprietor of 'Quality Printers' and his staff have taken pains to print the book elegantly. I deserve my thanks to them. I wish all of them to comprehend the four Noble Truths without delay.

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CHAPTER 1

The wind blew rush in shaking the trees and its roughness felt even inside the house. The calendar hung on the wall has fallen. The cold wind blew forcefully.

The creepers that entangled with trees were dancing in the breeze and it was a great pleasure for her to view the dance.

“Don't get sprayed in the dew, you will catch cold.” She hesitates because of her mother's warning.

Mother is sleeping. She may sleep till evening as It is raining with cold wind. Getting down from the bed , she went to the veranda.



She noticed a shower and dancing leaves of the trees through the trellis. She dragged a small bench and sat near the trellis window.

The drizzle turned to a torrential rain. The rain drops coming down from the dark clouds fell on the yard forming water bubbles. The compound is full of water, the bubbles are rising and breaking. The bulk of water flows down to the paddy field. Her eyes entangled in the rain.

The sound and the tune of the rain are the same. Her eyes began to close gradually. But the rain is in her mind and in the ears.

Her eyes were closed until mother awoke.

“My daughter ! ,” mother called me from her room.

I didn't hear her. It is due to the enchantment of the sound of rain. Mother put her hand on the cheek of the daughter.

will be ill,” said the mother.

“I won't be ill. I am very happy,” said the daughter without getting up from her bench.

“It is very cold . Let us go in.”

The daughter took her mother's hand and went into the room. She got into the bed and immediately closed her eyes. She can't sleep as she is thinking about the rain and its musical sound. The same experience she enjoyed at the trellis is coming to her mind again. She is immersed in serenity.

The calmness and happiness of her mind was shown in her face. Mother saw her. She was there for a long time with that happiness in mind.

”What has happened to my daughter?.” She was scared. This is not a temporary occurring.

In that night she sat down on a jack trunk kept beside the compound. The sun was setting. The sky was a shining red over the paddy fields. Sometimes the red rays of the sun was seen as flames among clouds. Her eyes were touched by the bright golden rays.

The cold wind blew restrainedly. The sky is full of birds and they are flying towards their nests. It is like a painting. She was delighted.

Although the sun has set, its rays were still in the sky.

She closed her eyes. A golden light was kindling in her mind. Her body became cool. She was in a moment of supreme happiness and it was seen all over her face.

Mother came there and she saw her daughter's happy face. She couldn't see her mother because she was sleeping.

Mother was scared and frightened. "What's wrong with my daughter? Is she in possession of spirits? . " She awakened her daughter and went inside the house.

"Don't go out when the sun sets." She heard the advice but went to bed again . The golden light was shining in her mind. Her delight increased . Mother looked at her and sighed.

It was a full moon Poya day. The darkness was coagulating primarily under the Coffee bushes. The sunlight had fallen to the compound through the Arecanut and 'Pinna' trees.

Through the Coffee bushes she walked up to the garden. The preaching of Dhamma on the radio was to start within a few minutes. Then her father and mother would be there definitely.

She sat on a rock under a Jak tree in view of the full moon very clearly. A cool breeze blew. The good smell of the Coffee merged with the mixing of the fragrance of other flowers. The sky was blue and the stars were seen as small jasmine flowers. She recollected a meadow with Jasmine flowers. The stars lost their cleverness seen in the past . Now the moon is the king of the sky.

Her body was sopping wet with moon rays. While she was looking at the moon the cloud covered the moon and the darkness spread to every

nook and corner. The moon appeared shining again and the dark clouds disappeared. The luster of the moon escaping from the dark cloud had increased suddenly. Her eyes were touched by the moon. That smooth and white rays coming from the moon enchanted her. She was in a pool of white moon rays and was swimming in that smooth rays of the white moon. The placid mind of her parents after listening to the preaching of Dhamma on the radio suddenly became restless.

“Where is the daughter? She is not to be seen,” mother said.

She is in the river of moon rays. She didn't hear her mother's calling. Father and mother went on searching their daughter everywhere with a lantern in hand. They saw her sitting on a rock under the jak tree with her eyes closed. Parents saw the daughter whose face was bright and happy as the full moon.

Mother was calling her, and seems to be angry. Father touched her shoulder and asked her, “Aren't you afraid to be in the dark?”

When her father touched and called her she woke up from her imaginary world and faced the real world.

Mother took her hand and asked her to go home. Mother spoke to the father about her daughter being possessed by a spirit.

She thought that her parents cannot understand the happiness of her mind.

“I saw my daughter got up early and go to the trellis and was looking at the sky several times. Before the sunrise the sky was very beautiful. When a gently breeze blew she looked at it and stayed there as if in a trance. She woke up only when I touched her,” mother told father that night.

"Was she sleeping while sitting or was she merely staying with closed eyes?," asked father.

"I am not sure. But I feel she was in sleep," mother retorted.

"To whom shall we tell this?, We can't understand what is happening to a child of four. She doesn't tell us anything about it," mother lamented.

"One day I noticed that this child went to the window at mid night when the wall clock struck twelve. She pulled out a chair and sat. The moon was shining brightly. The child was watching the compound. The clock struck 1 a.m. but the child was sitting on the chair as a statue. I went there. I saw her eyes were closed. The moon rays were shining on her face. She was there till 3 a.m. The moon has set but she didn't come out of the chair. I called her. After a few minutes she woke up and smiled."

"What's wrong with you?."

I asked her. She smiled and told that she was very happy. Her face was overflowing with happiness. "When she went on to sleep it was 4 a.m.. She got up in the morning and was quite fit. I felt sleepy and slept in the afternoon, but my daughter didn't sleep. She didn't feel sleepy. This cannot be an illness, but there is something different. This girl has an amazing behavior. Shall we consult an astrologer again to investigate her horoscope?," mother suggested.

"Don't be afraid. This child is not in the possession of spirits. She is quite healthy. This horoscope is very powerful," the astrologer emphasized.

The psychotherapist examined her and found that she was quite healthy both physically and mentally. Mother was desperate. Father sighed when he saw his daughter playing with the neighboring children.

This child after some years became a 'Bhikkuni' in Sri Lanka. She was renowned locally as well as internationally by providing tranquility to thousands of people in the world.



CHAPTER 2

She is Ramani.

Mrs. Dharmawathi Alwis is her mother.

Her father is Mr. Simon Francis.

A large house built on Godawelawatta close to Kotikawatta, Wellampitiya is situated on a hillock. Remote paddy fields can be seen from the home garden. Father Simon Francis came through the lane covered with coffee, arecanut, jak, coconut and many other trees and came to the compound. He entered the veranda after climbing a number of steps. He heard Dharmawathi's voice.

Today is 'Duruthu' Poya day. I must go to see 'Kelani Perahera', a procession held annually in the temple of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka.

Dharmawathi's mother protested and said, "Don't go. You are going to give birth to the child today or tomorrow. How can you get crushed among those devotees? We can go there next year with our new comer."

Father Francis said if she wants to go to see 'Kelani Perahera', she must be allowed to go. This time her ambitions must be fulfilled. Now be ready to go. I will bring the bus. No one rejected that proposal.

He is an owner of some private buses. They got the bus within an hour. Dharmawathi, her step mother, husband and the uncle went to Kelaniya. She was breathing with some difficulty.

"Are you sick?," asked the husband.

"No, I am not ill at all. I have a longing to eat in a new pot some pickle sitting between the Pagoda and the Shrine room," she said. Her husband bought a new pot with pickles and she ate some of it

and smiled. "Very nice. That's enough. Thank you ," she said to her husband smiling.

"I ate pickles and watched the procession too ," she said happily.

When she got up from the temple compound she felt a knee pain and a pain in her stomach. She knew that she was on the verge of confinement. She told it to her mother. Mother wanted to have the confinement in her own residence. Dharmawathi's uncle told them that she should be admitted to the Maternity Hospital at Borella soon.

Even before admitting to the ward she gave birth to a baby girl on the trolley itself. It was 'Duruthu Poya' day the 14th January 1957.

On that day the hospital was decorated like a wedding house because the Queen Elizabeth II of England has visited the Maternity Hospital on that day.

She examined the babies born on that day.

The Queen was very happy when she saw Dharmawathi's daughter who is very healthy and pleasant looking.

The Queen gave Dharmawathi's child a gift.

She congratulated the father of the child and gave a special gift for the child's mother.

The Queen was so enchanted by the child's attractive face, gold colored body, bald head, a lock of hair on the forehead. It was apparent when she went out of the gate and again came back to see the child. The gift box comprised of milk bottles used in England, infant milk food, soap, perfumes and baby clothes.

Father met an astrologer after recording the time of birth. The astrologer

predicted that the child is very fortunate. She has an unusual planetary power. In the night on the day the child was born somebody was whispering to her ear in the dream.

She must be called by the name Ramani. It was the message given to her in the dream. There after she was named as Ramani.

Ramani's father is a chief supervisor of the Petroleum Corporation. He received a good salary. Ramani's family had 25 small houses on her land. There were 25 families living there. Father's salary and the money they received as rent from those 25 rented houses enabled them to live a comfortable life. She grew in good health.

The renters loved the baby. They were pleasant and jocular people even though they were poor. Ramani's mother collected rent. She gave money on interest. She was rich. After collecting rent she came home in anger.

"Why mother?," asked Ramani.

"House number 12 renters paid only half," mother said.

"I like the aunt who is in the 12th house", Ramani emphasized. But Dharmawathi's face did not show any kindness. It is because in collecting rent, kindness is an obstacle. But that kindness prevailed among those renters. The renters were very kind to Ramani. Ramani was a smart child even at the age of 3. She was friendly with her relatives as well as her neighboring rent dwellers. Ramani showed her displeasure when her mother blames those renters who didn't pay their rent in time.

"Don't scold them. Aunt in the 17th house is crying," said Ramani. Mother is very angry. "Shut up your mouth. They have fooled you," mother cautioned her.

"Yesterday you gave a coconut to the 12th house. Am I correct?," asked

mother. "Yes mother. Yesterday the aunt in that house said that she was unable to prepare a 'Sambol' for their lunch due to lack of coconuts. We have plenty of coconuts, so, I gave her one." Ramani told her mother. Kanthi in the 12th house told this to the mother and she brought the coconut back and gave it to the mother but she didn't accept it. She told her not to do such things here after. Ramani remained silent. Sugar, rice and many other edible items are very scarce in the kitchens of those rented houses. They take only jak and breadfruit for their lunch as they are short of rice. There were no dining rooms. Males take their meals at the threshold or sitting on the mortar. Females usually take their meals by sitting on the coconut scraper. What about our house? Our dining table is full of meals. It is sufficient even for five visitors. In rented houses sometimes they starve. The school children drink only acrid tea without sugar. mother explained.

"Then shall we give something to those school children?", Ramani thought but didn't utter a word. Mother is sure to blame her and would get angry if she told her about it.

Mother has a plot of land where she had grown 'Kohila' a kind of leafy vegetable. Its botanical name is "*Lacia Aculeata*". She cuts tender leaves of Kohila once a week. A boy is coming to the house for plucking and binding tender leaves. During her mother's absence Ramani distributes a few Kohila bundles to the renters. The boy who plucks Kohila leaves was given free meals and some Kohila bundles too. He eats rice in trepidation and leaves the house hiding the bundles and wishing Ramani the blessings of the Triple Gem. (a Buddhist way of respectful greetings to Buddha, Dhamma and Sanga).

One day, Ramani woke up in the morning and closed her eyes without getting down from the bed. She saw her uncle Somaweera living in Anuradhapura as if in a dream. He didn't come home for a long time. Mother talks about him with much respect. He had passed the fifth standard scholarship examination and studied in a prestigious school in

the country. Now, he is an officer of the Tourist Board in Anuradhapura. She saw her uncle visiting them with many gifts. She opened her eyes. Mother was still in bed. Ramani called her .

“Mother! Uncle Somaweera is visiting us today.” Mother turned to the other side of the wall. She covered her face with her shawl saying that still the rooster hasn't crowed and she wants to sleep a bit more.

”Mother! Somaweera uncle is coming today ,” Ramani said again.

“Don't tell lies, go and sleep without disturbing me ,” said mother.

Ramani went to the trellis window. It is the dawn. A rooster crows; then all the roosters in rented houses began to crows in unison. A golden ray of the sun appeared. Her eyes were closed at its sight. Her face glowed with happiness. She was in a happy mood until her mother brought her bed tea.

“Father! Uncle Somaweera is coming today.” she told her father who was about to go to his office. He smiled.

“Our lass is dreaming. Uncle is very busy now. He is building a new house. How can he come? ,” saying thus he took the office bag and went away. When it is in the noon, Ramani saw someone coming towards her house through a path along the paddy fields. An office bag in one hand and a large bag in the other hand. She was very happy.

“Uncle is coming”, saying so she ran descending the steps to greet her uncle.

“Our daughter predicted your coming here today. It is surprising ,” said the mother greeting him.

CHAPTER 3

Ramani lived with her grandmother, grandfather, mother's younger sister and her parents. Cordiality between mother and grandmother was not so good. But, grandmother loved her granddaughter very much.

One day grandmother was eating purple colored yams with salt, chilies and coconut in a large yellow plate. Ramani approached her.

"Do you like to eat a piece of yam my dear? , " asked grandmother. She has never eaten yams of purple color.

"Please give me some yams , " saying so she sat in front her grandmother. Well kneaded yams were very tasty and she ate a lot.

"My daughter, you mustn't tell your mother about eating yams , " grandmother told her after finishing the yams.

"No I won't tell my mother. You gave me a very tasty food." she said. She showed the full belly to her grandmother. After about two hours, Ramani told her mother about her stomachache. She looked at her widening the eyes.

"Your stomach is bloated. What did you eat? , " asked mother.

"Mother! You gave me a lot of food in the morning , " Ramani said. Stomachache is aggravating.

"Why don't we go to the doctor? , " she asked crying.

Father also heard it. "She is not well. Let's take her to the hospital. " father suggested. Father, mother and Ramani went to the hospital. Doctor asked her to tell everything about what she ate that day. I ate rice in the morning. She didn't tell about yams. Doctor gave her some medicine and in the

evening her stomachache was cured. When Ramani was alone in the house, her grandmother came near her and kissed her forehead.

“My dear daughter! You have saved me. I am surprised that you didn't mentioned anything about yams. If you told your mother about it, I won't be able to live here with you. It is surprising for a girl of four years to keep your secrets unrevealed.”

Grandmother's eyes were wet with tears. Not only mother but the doctor also asked me about my diet. But I refrained from revealing anything about yams. I like those purple yams. I ate them with much pleasure. But I won't eat them hereafter. Grandmother kissed her several times. Ramani swept her grandmother's fearful eyes and asked her to be as usual without leaving room for suspicion. Grandmother embraced her lovely granddaughter again and went to her room wishing her good luck with the help of the Triple Gem.

When Ramani was eleven months old, her mother gave birth to another daughter. She is Ajantha. At the age of four Ramani played with her sister in the garden and in paddy fields. The children living in the rented houses became their best friends.

Mother asked her daughters to refrain from playing with those poor children. But they ignored her request.

“How good are they?”, asked Ramani from her sister Ajantha.

“Yes my sister, they allow us to win when we run on the bet. Why do they give us the win without any competition? ,” asked Ramani.

Sitting on the steps leading to the compound, Ramani once looked at the paddy field. The *Nymphaea* lotus, Lily and Lotus flowers had blossomed and was dancing in the breeze. The trees as well as the creepers joined in the dance. She sensed a sweet fragrance and thought it

to be odour of the Lily flowers.

She closed her eyes when the comforting wind gave her a soothing effect. After a while when she opened her eyes she saw 'Nilame' uncle of Ratnapura who lives in a rented house and the grandfather who had covered his head with a white cloth. They were descending the steps.

Grandfather was not well even yesterday.

"Uncle 'Nilame', grandfather is not coming again."

Grandfather heard it. "I am coming my dear. I will be alright in the hospital.", grandfather reiterated.

They got a message in the evening. "Grandfather expired."

'Nilame' uncle told the mother that the patient had told him to inform his granddaughter about his non-returning from hospital. Mother cried and wept. She asked Ramani how she knew about her grandfather's death early. Ramani swept her tears but kept silent.

One day Ramani received a box of tiny glass balls from one of her relatives. Ajantha asked for it. But Ramani rejected her request. Ajantha began to cry. Father told Ramani to give half of it to Ajantha.

"She will get it stuck in her throat", said Ramani. Father in a rough voice asked he to give half of it to Ajantha. She gave some of them to her sister. She played with the balls and suddenly she put one in her mouth and it stuck in her throat. Ramani screamed and told others about Ajantha's plight. Father, mother and another woman from a rented house came running. They tried to get the ball out of the throat by beating at the back in vain.

They were trying to take her to the hospital. They lifted her and

descended the steps. The dog caught a leg of Ajantha and she cried 'chook dog'. The glass ball came out of her mouth. Everybody praised the dog.

"We must thank our elder daughter too. It is she who said that if Ajantha was given the balls she would swallow one of them. But I refused to listen to her," said the father.

Ramani used to bite her nails. It is a bad habit, said the mother. Ramani was aware of it. But she was unable to give it up. But later she could stop it by positive thinking. She was able to control her mind wonderfully. Mother even talked to a neighbor about Ramani's mental power.

CHAPTER 4

Accompanied by her mother and sister, Ramani goes to the temple and always prefer to stay at the Bodhi tree terrace and listen to the fascinating sound of the leaves of Bodhi tree. Mother recites stanzas loudly. Ramani spread her white handkerchief on the sanded floor of the Bodhi tree terrace and sits there. When she listens to that pleasant sound and looks at the shining mode of the leaves for a while, her eyes begin to close slowly. Her mind becomes calm. She remains in that calmness until her mother returns to the Bodhi tree terrace from the Buddhist Monastery. Mother looks at her from a distance and sees Ramani's happy face. But, mother is in dire grief. This is neither a mental nor a physical ailment some people say. No one can understand this. I think she needs treatment for her illness.

So now you go to the shrine room with your sister and worship the Buddha, mother told Ramani in a very soft manner. She obeyed her mother's kind request. While going to the temple with the sister she was looking at the tall Buddha statue. The compassionate face, long ears, smiling lips attract her and she close her eyes and again arrives at that peaceful mood. Ramani's younger sister putting her hand on the back of her sister and told her ,

“You don't know many stanzas, but mother knows a lot. Let us go to the shrine room.”

Ramani likes the silent Buddhist shrine along with the Bodhi tree terrace with fascinating sound of the leaves of the Bodhi tree. She felt a longing to be there every day.

“You need not to go to the temple , because we have own shrine room in the house.”, father said in a rough voice. Father as well as mother didn't allow her daughter to go to the temple alone. On a certain full moon Poya day she is allow to Kelaniya temple with her mother and sister. Getting

into a barge in the river sailing along the river making shouts of joy is a pleasant tour for Ramani. She is attracted to the large Buddha Statue placed in the shrine room. She remembers a story related by her mother one day sitting beside the shrine room.

“Lord Buddha had spent a few hours in Meditative State of mind at the Viharaya in Kelaniya. This is a place purified by the touch of Buddha's feet. He proceed from here to the mountain of Samanala. He set the print of the holy foot on a stone at the top of the mountain.”

Mental image of the huge Buddha Statue placed in the shrine makes her to close her eyes. She sees the living Buddha in a Meditative State of mind at the 'Kelani Viharaya'. This mental image of the Buddha Statue brings placid and charming beauty to her face. The happiness is over flowing.

Mother pats on her back. She opens her eyes. She sees the pilgrims at the Bodhi tree terrace. Mother asks her daughters to go home. Ramani remembers the 'Kelani Viharaya' even after arriving home.

“Tomorrow is the Poya day. Shall we go to the temple at Kelaniya?”, Ramani asks her mother.

“Not necessary, you can worship the Buddha at the home shrine”, mother says indignantly.

Ramani goes to the window trellis on the Poya day night. She sees the garden shining in the moon light. The Buddha's image of the Kelani Viharaya comes to her mind. She looks at it and worships it. The pleasant happiness fills her mind. The happiness lasted till her mother called her.

Once being a priest, Podi Appuhamy disrobed and became a layman. He is an uncle of Ramani's mother. Podi Appuhamy is a cleaver astrologer and also competent in Buddhism. Ramani likes him very

much. He is a kind hearted pleasant adult who loves Ramani as a child of his own. It is he who taught her the first letter at an auspicious time. She was adorned with a golden necklace on that day by him. He examined her horoscope and told her mother that she was at the 'threshold' but he refrained from giving the necessary details. It was problematic for mother and she thought that her daughter would elope. Her beautiful face and the gold colored skin will surely attract young men. She thought it can be the meaning of the word 'threshold'.

Ramani entered Jahena School in Wellampitiya. (Now it is the Vidyawardana Vidyalaya).

Mother goes to school with her two daughters and feed them with two tonic bottles full of milk at the school and awaits till they finish drinking milk.

"Elder daughter should be protected as an eye", thought mother who is always watchful of her.

"she is on the 'threshold'", It is echoing in her mind.

Ramani is one of the best students in the class. She can memorize poems and stanzas quickly. But some lady teachers ill-treated her for no reason. Sometimes she was fed up with the school. Ramani's mother gave birth to a son. His name is Vijitha Lal. She was very happy at home because of her sister and brother.

"I am the elder sister of my younger sister and younger brother", she thought. She decided to take the responsibility of them. When the mother is absent she feeds her brother. Mother is angry when the debtors evade paying the interest. In such occasions the younger brother is always in the bosom of his elder sister. Love and loving kindness have escaped from my mother's heart during that time.

One day Ramani went to the village temple with her mother, sister and brother. Ramani was isolated at the Bodhi tree terrace. She sat there and closed her eyes. After a little while the image of the Lord Buddha was visible in her mind. It is different from the image of the statue of Lord Buddha placed in the shrine room of the temple. The eyes of the Buddha in the image visualized are turned to the ground. When the Lord Buddha begins strolling slowly along the path she could see a monk treading by the rear. That monk is not as tall as the Lord Buddha but he too is a pleasant looking. The smiling faces of them are full of kindness. She ran to the strolling Lord Buddha and worshipped him by falling on the ground. Stopping the walk the Buddha asked "How are you daughter?".

She said. "I like to be ordained."

The Buddha smiled but remained silent.

"Will you ordain me?", she asked again.

At once she felt someone patting on her back. She awoke from her reverie. Her mother was there. Ramani's eyes were wet with tears but her face was very pleasant looking. Mother noticed it. But her mother was not happy. Ramani saw a monk coming towards the Bodhi tree terrace. By being freed from her mother she ran towards the monk.

"Reverend priest ! , who is that handsome monk walking behind the Buddha?" she asked.

"It is reverend monk Ananda. He was very pleasant to see. Before ordination he was a prince. Why do you ask like this?"

She ran to her mother saying that she saw the reverend priest Ananda. In a loud voice she said again.

“Oh! Reverend priest, I saw that reverend monk Ananda walking somewhere along with the Buddha.”

Mother showed a shy smile on her face. While they were returning home mother advised Ramani not to tell outsiders anything about her dreams. Then Ajantha told her mother, “My sister closes her eyes for a long time and told, very beautiful, very beautiful.”

“I asked her what it is, then she smiled and doesn't talk anything. So, I too close my eyes, I see nothing except the black color around me.”

Her mother felt very sad. “What will be her fate? She is becoming mad”, mother thought.

CHAPTER 5

One day Ramani was sitting on a chair during the interval in the school. Wasantha, one of her friends came near her and said loudly,

“I want this chair.”

Ramani replied calmly. “Wasantha you can take one of those chairs they are all alike.”

Wasantha wanted to get Ramani up from that chair and take it. “I want this chair, not any other” she emphasized.

“No I won't give it, can't you see I am making a paper flower.”, Ramani said.

“I want it.”

“No I can't give it.”

Wasantha cursed her, “You will die in a lorry accident.”, she said.

Ramani was sad because she felt that Wasantha was in anger. Saying “Oh! Wasantha”, she started to make the paper flower. Ramani was going home after school when Wasantha attacked Ramani with a papaw fruit on the way. Ramani was hurt but she could tolerate. In the evening she received a bad message.

“Wasantha died in an accident.”

Ramani was crying in that night.

Ajantha asked her sister, “Why do you cry? Wasantha cursed you and said you would die of a lorry accident. But she died in a bus accident. The

curse turned back on her.”

“Ajantha ,don't be happy about her death. She died of anger. If somebody dies in anger, he or she will be born in hell after death. Samanera monk told us on the last poya day. Wasantha is in the hell now. I am sorry for her. Even when she cursed me I didn't become angry.”Ramani told her sister.

Wasantha's sisters hated Ramani and when they met her they began to grin and frown.

“Our sister died because of Ramani”, Wasantha's sister said. Some pupils of the upper classes had blamed Ramani. When her mother came to know about it, she decided to get the leaving certificate and admit Ramani to the grade six class in the Terrance de Silva College, Kolonnawa.

“However I'll be a doctor and treat patients”, Ramani said on the day she obtained the highest marks for the English language at the first term test held in the school. But her mother was in fear and sorrow.

“She is well built and beautiful.”, mother told father one day. Ramani heard it.

“You seem to be afraid because of the astrologer's prediction that she is on the 'threshold', isn't it?” asked father.

“That is what I am thinking always. Even though she is a grade six child, she is bigger than a grade ten child. When she walks on the road everyone turns and looks at her.”

“Don't be afraid so much. Everything will happen with time. The other thing is that her horoscope is very powerful”, he said.

It was a school holiday. And there was heavy rain. Ramani peeped through the trellis window at the rain. She saw a drenched cyclist with a box of green leaves on the back. What a tremendous effort he takes to live, and let live his wife and children. She was in grief and also with a compassionate mind. When the cyclist has passed her she ran to the trellis window at the back. She can see the cyclist further more. She sat near the trellis window and still she can see him among heavy raindrops. Ramani's father noticed her behavior in the house that day. He looked at the cyclist going far away.

"What are you looking at?, are you watching people going on the road? .This is not a good habit. I never thought my daughter to be a child of such nature. Go to your mother", stressed her father.

Father spoke in loudly. Mother also heard it.

"I have told you not to be at the window." Mother said. Ajantha also joined her.

"I have noticed several times about my sister's strange behavior. She is hypnotized by the rain, moonlight, sun rise, sun set and the shaking trees in the wind. It is false to say that she is looking at the people walking in the streets."

"Ajantha spoke for me. It is strange to see her speaking good of me, because usually she speaks against me." Ramani develops loving kindness for her sister.

"On a rainy day I was in the veranda with my sister. Water was falling on to the compound like thin sticks. Compound was full of water. When the rain drops fell on water, the bubbles were springing up. They were beautiful, but in a moment the bubbles began to break. Ramani was watching this natural phenomenon. Eyes were closed. The face was pleasant looking. After a while she opened her eyes. She took my hand

and got up with a smile. I asked her "What is wrong with you?".

"Bubbles appear and disappear. Nothing is permanent. We are living in a transient world. Everything is changing. We all die.", she goes on telling constantly.

"I have seen the rain but I never thought like that. She is a strange girl. When in a trance she looks very beautiful."

Ajantha's talk was heard by her parents too. They were sighing at the same time in the same tone.

"This is a disease even the doctors cannot diagnose.", mother told father in a low voice.

Ramani loved grandfather Podi Appuhamy very much. He likes Ramani's behavior pattern. He appreciated her kindness towards those rented dwellers. "some are practicing loving kindness in a wrong way. They show enmity for their neighbors while Meditating loving kindness. It should be a common effort. You are correct. You show loving kindness to everyone.", said Podi Appuhamy.

"You have heard about Ananda Thero from the priest in the temple. I got the news. You have seen both the Buddha and Ananda Thero. You must have been born in Dambadiwa at that time. You recollected those thoughts even after two thousand five hundred years passed."

One day, Podi Appuhamy told Ramani, he comes to Ramani's well for bathing. Ramani uproots Kohila (*Lacia Aculeata*) from her garden and prepares a cup of Kohila gruel. She keeps it on the table. Then she goes to the well and calls Podi Appuhamy for a bath. She pours about one hundred buckets of water on his head and then takes him home. Later she offers him a cup of Kohila gruel.

“May you comprehend the Nibbana earlier than all of us. I am sure you will attain Nibbana in this life itself. You bathe me and gives me Kohila gruel every day. You know how the Buddha attended the sick priest Puthigatatissa . Now you do the same thing for me. I am suffering from piles. This Kohila gruel is ideal for this ailment. May you be healthy and wise”. After drinking Kohila gruel he wished her merit. Every holiday she makes it a habit to bathe him. The word Nibbana uttered by her grandfather creates an electric shock in her mind. She closed her eyes and recalled that word to become calm and quiet. Her mother was unhappy about Ramani bathing the grandfather.

“There are so many people here to bathe him. Why do you take that responsibility?,” asks mother.

“I like it very much. I will bathe you too when you become old ,” said Ramani. Mother looked away smiling.

Ramani's relations and neighbors treated her as a very fortunate and a dear one. Those who go to courts for a case, asked her to come forward with a pot full of water. In the evening they met her parents and informed about their winning the case and thanked them.

“They are mad. How can they win their cases because of my approach?”, she tells her mother when they go back. Mother is silent.

An astrologer examined Ramani's house and informed them about their malefic nature of the house. Father and mother were shocked.

“Go immediately and settle down in another place”, he advised. They built another house in the same land and lived there. This astrologer examined Ramani's horoscope and said “you are having a malefic period until you are fourteen years old”, he told her. He advised her parents to light a lamp in front of Suniyam Devathawa (the deity of black magic) every day. Father went to the temple dedicated to the deity Suniyam with

Ramani. Father prayed to the deity Suniyam asking him to get her daughter protected from malefic state.

The deity was silent.

Ramani looked away smiling. They lighted a lamp in front of deity Suniyam every day. Father said he heard a sound of pulling an iron chain around the house on a day they couldn't light a lamp in front of deity Suniyam.

"Deity Suniyam has nothing to do, that's why he is pulling chains around houses." Ramani said to her sister and she laughed aloud.

Elder sister of Ramani's mother summoned a midwife to the house. One day Ramani's mother was groaning by hugging her stomach and screaming painfully hanging on the door.

"What is wrong with you mother?", asked Ramani.

Everyone was silent. Father, sister and brother were at the compound looking ahead.

"Don't shout daughter, mother will get you a sister or brother today", father said hushing her. The door of the mother's room was closed. Mother's screaming was heard outside the room. Mother's elder sister was searching for a pair of scissors. She boiled water. She moved about as an insane woman. Father was restless and fainted. Ramani sprinkled some water on his face. After recovering he inquired from her whether she got a brother or sister. But the loud screaming of the mother was heard again.

"Oh! My mother is suffering a lot. Will she die?", thought Ramani. Her eyes were full of tears. Seeing her tears Ajantha began to cry. After a short while they heard a baby crying. Mother's elder sister came out of the

room with a plastic bag full of blood.

“What's that?”, asked Ramani. No response from her mother's sister. She took the bag of blood to the backyard of the house and buried it there.

“we took a sister from your mother's stomach.”, mother's elder sister told Ramani gently touching her head.

Mother had a big tummy. My sister was inside it. When she came out, mother should have been in pain. Even my sister must have been in pain. Ramani imagined.

CHAPTER 6

After entering Terrance de Silva College , at Kolonnawa, Ramani's school life changed. She was able to win the heart of her classmates and the staff. She became a prefect as her cleverness in studies as well as in dancing and acting proved to be of high standard. She spoke calmly. She was attractive and her long hair enhanced her beauty. She received a large number of certificates and presents for displaying her cleverness in vivid areas in the school from sixth standard to G.C.E.(O/L) examination. After reading monthly reports Ajantha emphasized that her sister would definitely become a lady doctor. My sister has obtained above ninety marks in all the subjects she appeared.

“Then why can't she become a doctor?”, asked Ajantha.

“That is what I'm thinking”, Ramani replied. She seeks my welfare but she sneaks to my mother, she thought.

“My sister gave a kilo of rice to the aunt of the 13th house yesterday and a coconut today.”, sister told her mother.

“Ramani come here. Do you want to be a Vessanthara ?. You are being cheated by their pretence and if you give them rice and coconut like that we will become poor. That woman of the 13th house gave only a half of the rent last month. If you are going to be a philanthropist like that, I will drag you by the hair to the 13th house, mind you”, mother shouted.

“They haven't eaten rice for two days”, Ramani said calmly.

“If they are hungry, what can we do? ,they must know how to earn money for living”, mother said.

Ajantha came out with another story.

“Mother! When you were at Panadura, my sister came home with another girl. The meal was sufficient only for two of us. She gave her portion of food to her friend. She ate it greedily. I gave a half of my food to the sister but she refused. After that girl departed and my sister told me that it was a very happy day for her because she had got a chance to donate her meal to someone who was starving.”

Mother was dumb founded. Ramani expected her to be angry, but she looked at Ramani with sympathy.

“She is a strange girl”, mother told her younger daughter after a while.

As a class and house prefect Ramani had to go for sports practices at school playground in the evening to prepare for the forthcoming sports meet. While she was practicing, her class teacher asked her to bring a list of names from the principal. She went to the office in a hurry and said, “Principal !, teacher Lalani wanted me to bring the list of names of our house”, she said to her .

What ! said the principal as she got up from her seat.

“Principal ?,Is that how you addressed me ?, she slapped her.

“This girl applies powder on her face in the evening too.” She told a teacher nearby.

“No madam! Her face is like that from her birth.” said the teacher. Ramani was hurt mentally , more than physically.

“I came running impatiently and my words became jumbled. I forgot to say “Madam”, I addressed her Principal . She went out of the office and came back again. She worshipped her asking for pardon, the principal advised her how to address a head teacher.

“Pardon me madam. I got my words jumbled as I was very busy.”

The principal smiled and touched her head calmly. The slapping became a talking point in the school. Some teachers and pupils condemned Ramani's action.

Ramani's house was destroyed by a flood. So, they had to go to a new house at Kotikawatta. Her environment was changed but not the school. While she was walking to school alone one day, a young man came riding a bicycle and stopped near her and watched her face earnestly. Many young men like to see her face. She went on ignoring him. Again he met her going to school alone. He told her that, being a student at the Technical College, Katubedda he wants to become friendly with her.

“My parents will not give permission for such a friendship”, said Ramani.

“I know your house. I have seen your parents too. Shall we start our friendship with their consent?”, he told her.

“I'm still a student”, She said. He smiled.

After a week he came to Ramani's house. He spoke to the mother. She advised him saying, “Still you are a student. Don't be friendly with girls until you finish your education.”

“I know how to maintain a love affair without hampering my studies. After passing the final examination, I will get a good employment. I like to come to the house and talk to her instead of talking on the road.”

“No she will never like to have a boyfriend now”, she stressed.

Becoming silent for a moment the young man departed. In that night there was an urgent discussion between father and mother.

The discussion ended with the decision of suspending Ramani's school life. The teachers were shocked by hearing the news. They urged Ramani's parents to send her to school as there were only a few months for the G.C.E.(O/L) examination. They assured that she would pass the examination with flying colours. But Ramani's mother denied the request.

"Your dream of becoming a doctor has vanished.", said Ajantha. But Ramani's eyes were free of tears. She was thinking about the rain drops falling to her compound on rainy days. Nothing is permanent, everything is changing. These water bubbles vanish instantly and my school life also ended. Life is uncertain. She made up her mind and remained calm and quiet.

"My sister is very beautiful. Everyone looks at her. That is why she lost her school life", Ajantha told her silent sister. From that day on mother keeps all the pots and pans at the back of the kitchen and goes away. Ramani washes all the pots and pans, sweeps the kitchen and compound. All the collected garbage is placed in a pit and then she starts her daily routine. Mother is free from the burden of house work.

Ramani was confined to the kitchen and compound. She felt it as a prison. She began to think about people suffering in prisons. The priest told her about those living beings who were born and died again and again in the four hells and still transmigrating. As Podi Appuhamy grandfather told her, that this suffering state of transmigration ends only in Nibbana. He wished me Nibbana. He is a kind and compassionate person. She remembered him. Mother saw her daughter with a broom in hand looking at the mango tree as if in a trance.

"If you have finished sweeping you can take your breakfast without meditating in the compound", mother yelled.

'Meditation', she smiles.

My mother has understood my position. I have to Meditate. Meditation helps me to concentrate. Even my grandfather had practiced Meditation when he was a priest. Mother says that I am standing and Meditating.

She goes to the well and washes her hands and feet. Goes to the kitchen and takes her meals. Ramani gives meals to her brother and sister while her mother gives meals to the father. Now, the house is very clean. It is free from cobwebs and dust.

“My elder daughter keeps the house in a very good condition.”, mother says to the father. She is always busy. She wants to get rid of isolation. She doesn't want to think of her school life or the dream of becoming a doctor. Mother allowed Ramani and Ajantha to go to Nagarukkharamaya and Wimalaramaya temples at Kotikawatta on Poya days. Ramani offers some flowers and looks at the Buddha image. Ajantha saw her sister's face becoming beautiful when her sister closes her eyes and concentrates. But Ajantha never told her mother about her sister's meditating posture because her mother won't allow them to go to the temple if she knew about Ramani's trance.

CHAPTER 7

There was a play ground near Ramani's house. A new year festival was held there once and some young men came there to decorate the ground with electricity. One man among them was interested in Ramani. He came to Ramani's house and told her parents about his willingness to marry her. Parents consented to the proposal of the young man. After investigating the social background of the family, his father and the relatives agreed unanimously. Ramani's parents disregarded her consent.

"I don't want to marry.", she said to herself.

"How can a girl be without getting into marriage? Do you want to be a nun?", asked mother.

Ramani went into the room silently closing the door.

Being in bed she contemplated about this troublesome life where people rear children and become restless. She likes to be a nun. She remembered the pervious rainy day where she enjoyed a tingling sensation created by the rain drops. But she comprehended that as those rain drops vanished instantly we also vanish in the same way.

"We live in a transient world. This life will end in turmoil if we are to be married. By closing my eyes I want to seek the peace of mind.", she stressed.

When closed her eyes she saw the water bubbles arising and vanishing. She felt the coldness. Her serene mind was reflected on her pleasant face. She opened her eyes when her mother shouted. The environment was very warm with the harsh words of the mother.

Mother began her lamentation.

"It is useless thinking by closing your eyes. We ought to be free from burden of young daughters. I can't protect you forever. You should give your consent to that young man. He and his family members are very decent people."

Ramani got up and was looking at her mother.

"You aren't against this marriage.", mother told her in a soft voice. Mother thought that Ramani's silence shows her consent and she told her husband to fix a date for the marriage.

"What is your idea about this proposal?. He seems to be a fine person.", Ajantha asked her sister.

"I live here like a prisoner. I had to stop my schooling. I am fully engaged in domestic duties. Even if I go elsewhere it is just the same. Let them do anything. I'll be silent." said Ramani.

Ajantha reported the message to her mother.

"Then she is not against it.", mother said.

The marriage took place on the day of 25 th September , 1975.

A grand wedding ceremony was held for a week.

"I have an opportunity to get back the money which I gave for many weddings everywhere."

Ramani heard her father's utterance. Ramani felt that wedding is a business transaction.

A large number of chickens and goats were sacrificed for the sake of Ramani's wedding. Ramani got the information only a few hours later.

She decided not to eat a morsel of food prepared for her wedding. She refrained from taking meals at the wedding table. It was the opinion of adults that she rejected her meals due to the grief she endured after leaving her parents, sister and brother. Her eyes were full of tears. She was very sad for parting from the loved ones.

"I have been clinging to my father, mother, sisters and brother too much." She felt it on the wedding day.

"I have been affiliated to them very affectionately. It is the main cause of suffering. She remembered a stanza she heard at the Nagarukkharamaya temple on a Poya day. Affection brings sorrow and fear. Those who give up affection will never get sorrow or fear. Now I realize the cause of sorrow, it is because I was attached to my house very much. Now I can understand it. The path of living without being attached to anything was not explained to me by the priest."

Ramani sitting in the same seat closed her eyes and thought about her eyes. Her pleasant face was not visible at the decorated dais. On her wedding day that area was flooded. It was very difficult for the vehicle to reach home. Her dowry was carried by carts. When she reached her husband's residence at Kotikawatta, she was dissatisfied with her husband as he began to eat his meals alone without inviting the bride. She felt that she had come to a worst place.

Ramani began a new married life with her husband Sunil Ubeythilaka at Kotuwegedara on Saranankara Road, Nagahawela, Kotikawatta. On the day of the wedding a participant delivered a speech at the ceremony.

"You haven't seen Visakha the rich lady. She was well disciplined from her childhood. As a young girl she refrained from running on the road when it was raining. She was obedient to her parents. She was a beautiful lady with a golden colour. Ramani the bride has all these characteristics. You can be happy as if you have seen Visakha. Such a virtuous bride is

she. The bride groom Sunil is fortunate enough to get such a wife. Her mother protected her as an eye. The bride possesses a pure character.”

All are happy about that speech.

But that phrase was confined only to the wedding. When she went to the house, she understood that the bride groom was not a kind person. He gave her, commands. There were some brothers of the bride groom living in that house. In front of them Sunil treated her as a servant. She tolerated this unhappy state with equanimity.

“It was sorrowful in the house where I was born. Now I have come here to suffer again. Life is full of sorrow. How can I get out of this situation and find emancipation? Suicide is not a solution. Grandfather Podi Appuhamy told me that emancipation is to be found in Nibbana . How can I get that?”, she was thinking while in bed.

Sunil was of the opinion that the women are the slaves of men. That is a patriarchal belief. He followed the same attitude even when he was in the bed with her.

“I couldn't tolerate this mishap. This can be a result of my past Kamma . If not this can be an opportunity for me to understand reality.” she sighed. But, Sunil's mother was a pious woman. She used to observe Sil on full moon Poya days. She reads religious books and participates in offering flowers to the Bodhi tree with Ramani. It was a great consolation for Ramani.



CHAPTER 8

Ramani went to the temple with her mother-in-law, three or four days per week. They offered flowers and Pooja to the Bodhi tree. They swept the temple compound and then Ramani was looking at the Buddha image and closed her eyes. But now she can't get those pleasant images she used to get before marriage. She's devoid of her mental happiness now. She opened her eyes. She saw her mother-in-law muttering at the Buddha image. Ramani tried again but in vain. She was worried. Ramani and her mother-in-law went to Kalapaluwawa hermitage at Rajagiriya on a Poya day. They observed Sil. Ramani sat under a tree and practiced Meditation. Although it was a pleasant environment she was restless. According to the instructions given us by a priest at the hermitage, the mind goes astray even though we concentrate on breathing. But, she was able to concentrate well earlier without instructions from others. Is it the power of concentration? I don't know.

She was unable to concentrate even with instructions from priests. She informed this to her mother-in-law.

"Don't worry. I have been meditating for a long time. But still I can't concentrate. It is very difficult to tame our mind.", she told Ramani.

Sunil didn't object to these religious activities because he is afraid of his mother. Therefore Ramani was free to participate in religious observances.

Ramani performed all household activities. She washed even the dirty clothes of Sunil's brothers. As she was very busy, she refrained from talking with others except with her mother-in-law.

One day, Ramani was examining her mother-in-law's lousy head. Mother-in-law inquired from Ramani about her wish from those meritorious deeds. Ramani was silent for a moment and then replied.

"I have no wish at all."

Mother-in-law told her that we must wish at least one of the three fold Bodhies. Ramani remained silent. Mother-in-law explained the three fold Boddhi to Ramani. It is the enlightened Lord Buddha, the Pachcheka Buddha and Arahant. We can't aspire to become Buddha. We have to seek Arahant Bodhi. What I want is to be enlightened and to comprehend Nibbana. When Ramani hears the word Nibbana she always gets a pleasant feeling.

"I also like to be an Arhant," Ramani said.

"Let us wish that. We can go to the hermitage every Poya day and observe Sil. After Meditation we have to wish the Arhant Bodhi," said the mother-in-law. Every Poya day Ramani went to the hermitage with her mother-in-law. They observed Sil and Meditated.

Mother-in-law offered alms twice a year to the forest temple priests of Dimbulagala. Everyone in the village helps her alms-giving and Ramani too participated in that occasion. The priests residing in the temple of Dimbulagala as well as the priests Meditating at the hermitage are calm and quiet. They usually come out of their hermitage to go to door to door for alms.

Ramani admired their calm and pleasant life. They are free from pathetic nature of the layman. Ramani thought of her plight. If not for her mother-in-law, she would have been mad by now. She was thinking so while returning home. One day she was sitting in front of a Buddha image. Her mother-in-law told her to wish for a son. Ramani looked at her for a while and promised her to do the same. She sees the Buddhist image and closes her eyes. Then she wishes to have a son. In a moment she saw a part of the beautiful moon coming out of the thicket and entering into her stomach. She was astonished as she felt a difference in both mind and body. A medical examination after two weeks confirmed her pregnancy. "I'm

going to be a mother. I have to be a good and kind mother.”, she thought. She refrained from killing even lice and mosquitoes. She developed loving-kindness to everyone including animals. She observed Sil at the hermitage for about six months. She walked to the temple with her mother-in-law. Climbing and descending hills she had to undergo difficulties but it was helpful for her confinement, said mother-in-law.

Mother-in-law gave her an eakle broom for her to sweep the compound as an exercise. Ramani was asked to sell goods at their small boutique near the house. Ramani's husband never appreciates her work but she didn't show him any dissatisfaction.

“Let my husband be healthy ,” she wished him with loving kindness. After seven months she felt her baby struggling in her womb. She was full of loving kindness to her baby. She found it difficult to perform her household duties alone. One day she told her husband that it was more convenient for her to go home for confinement. Then her husband agreed to take Ramani to her native place. Sunil's mother also agreed. She came to her house where her mother, father, brother and sister welcomed her affectionately. She was very happy with them.

Her mother noticed a change in her daughter's behavior.

“With the rain, moonlight and sunrise, she concentrated in them to achieve inner calmness and happiness but after the marriage she has got rid of her illness. That is good.”, mother thought. She engaged in meritorious acts by going to the village temple daily. She Meditated there. She wished her child good luck. Wished her husband, the householders, the village and the whole world, loving-kindness. On the way people admired to see her coming slowly and calmly from the temple. She was admitted to the maternity ward of the Castle Hospital at Borella. She was in great pain. She remembered the pain that her mother felt when her sister was born. After a severe pain for three consecutive days she gave birth to a son.

“A handsome child.”, said a nurse.

Her pain and sorrow disappeared. When she saw her son's face she was pleased to be in possession of a son. 'Noel Lasantha' was the name given to her child. Her husband Sunil was very happy to see his son. But yet, he doesn't have a pleasant feeling about his wife. After one month, she went to her husband's house with the child. Her mother-in-law and others in the house were very kind to the child. Although Ramani did not perform all the household activities as before, Sunil did not blame her. Ramani was pregnant again when her son was just eleven months old.

“I would like to go home for about two days.”, Ramani told her husband. He went home with her and the son.

“You can come again in three days to accompany us.”, said Ramani.

CHAPTER 9

Ramani was at the verandah with her son . Suddenly a lamentation was heard inside the house and a fireball burst in to the verandah . It was Ajantha . She fell down .

“My sister is on fire” saying that Ramani jumped to the compound and screamed . Neighbours came there and threw a few buckets of water on her . Even she was taken to the hospital , it was in vain , because she had succumbed to her injuries .

When Ramani saw her sister's deformed dead body it was only a burnt heap of ash . At once , a beautiful figure turned into a loathsome body . Ramani comprehended that everything is liable to change . It is the reality.

“You never kindle a fire again” , a sound was heard from inside the brain . This fire kindled because of the birth . Those who eliminated the birth won't be caught by fire . She was recollecting some of the sermons delivered by the Priests of the hermitage . Her eyes were closed . She saw a light similar to a flower coming out of her heart.

“ Extinguish all fires in this world itself . Fires of lust , wrath and ignorance should be quenched , you will definitely do it ”.

It was the same voice heard from her own mind . Since then she didn't scream or cry . Ajantha's corpse was dressed with Ramani's wedding saree . Her coffin was kept on the spot where Ramani's decorated dais was placed on her wedding day . Ramani recollects every thing . It was a wedding ceremony ; this is a funeral ; to separate from loved ones is sorrow . Now receiving of aspiring things is sorrow . we have a transient life . It is as she heard , all these sermons from the thicket of the hermitage . Even though it is impossible to bare with the death of her sister , she was unable to witness her mother's pain and shock . Mother behaves as if she

is insane . She fainted several times . Oh ! the sermons I heard . They were of great consolation to me , but my mother hasn't got that . Therefore she is in great pain .

After a few days of the funeral , Sunil summoned Ramani and her son to his house.

Ramani's mother was crying and weeping because of her daughter's death . She used to kiss a frock and then called her daughter Ajantha in a very sad voice . She was lamenting . Ramani heard her lamentation and felt very sad . Even though a son and a daughter live with mother , she needs me very much thought Ramani .

But , how can I go to her ? . Husband will not give his consent for such a request . She opened the cupboard . There are many sarees in that . I don't want such a large number of sarees . Two are enough for me . She remembered a poor teacher . I'll give her five sarees . She went there with five sarees . Her teacher's eyes were full of tears . She has four children . Husband is without employment . This is a great merit . Your dead sister will be given the merit .

Some people live in great difficulty . There monthly salary is insufficient for them to run the family . All though they are smiling but their hearts are burning . The happiness of the teacher was a great consolation for Ramani .

After offering flowers to the image of the Buddha Ramani offered merit to the gods and transferred the merit to her sister . Keeping only five sarees with her , she distributed all the other sarees to her neighbours . Two layers of the cupboard became empty .

One night she told her husband .

“I don't feel sorry for my sister” , husband agreed .

“I know you didn't shed a tear for your sister that day . Everybody was surprisingly watching you . I got tears in my eyes . Some people had said that Ramani was a wicked woman “ , Ramani smiled .

She won't get her life back again even if we cry or weep . Nothing is permanent . Why do we become shocked when we lose an impermanent life .

“I know you won't cry even if I die “ , said Sunil .

“Yes I may not cry . Sunil , I told you that I am not sad about my sister ; but I feel sorry for my mother . Keeping a soiled frock in hand and then pressing it to her heart , she is still crying . She is restless . I can understand her sadness because I am also a mother now . I want to go home and live with her for a few days . Your mother is also agreeable to my suggestion .” , Ramani emphasized .

Sunil was looking at her in silence . “ I will go with the children and return in few days “ .

Sunil gave his consent . Ramni went home with her son . She is pregnant again . Ramani's aim was to extinguish her mother's feeling of grief .

Mother approached her . She seems to be paying attention to Ramani's words . Ramani gave her some rice , after eating it she slept with her elder daughter Ramani . Mother sees her younger daughter Ajantha coming out of the fire ball , she screams , gets up and cries . Ramani consoles her chanting Buddha stanzas and touches her head . She sleeps again . She slept for nearly three hours .

Two weeks passed . Sunil came and asked her to go to his house .

“I'll have to be with mother for another few days .”

“If you want you can stay, but I take the child with me.”, saying so he took the child and went to the compound.

How can I feed my child She muttered. He didn't listen to her, taking the child he went home.

She was shocked when her husband took the child from her. She was thinking about this impermanent world and was able to look at this world indifferently. With a deep breath she sat beside her mother. Attachment and bondage brings sorrow or deep sadness. She felt it intensely, tears came to her eyes. It was very difficult for her to concentrate.

My attachment and bondage to my son is the cause of my grief. When shall I be free from this bondage? When will I enter the path of this Noble Dhamma? On the one hand, I am attached to my son. On the other hand I am fond of my mother. I am pressed between these two strong desires. She was in a world of thinking. She goes to the village for collecting flowers for the evening Bodhi Pooja at the temple. Village woman saw her jacket wet with breast milk and they felt very sad about it. At night she hears her son crying for breast milk.

One day she was out of control. She went to her husband's house. He was not at home. She took her son and came to the compound. When she was at the road her mother-in-law was shouting about her taking the child home.

But no one tried to stop her walking on the road. Ramani was looking after her son at home. Her husband has come to the neighbouring houses and inquired about the child.

Sunil is very fond of our son. But he doesn't show me affection. He is a man of good character. There are some of his brothers living in that house. But, he doesn't have any doubts about me. He wanted to keep me under his domination. He is not wrathful. He has a patriarchal attitude to

life . He wants to condemn me in front his mother and brothers . But he is quite different when he is with outsiders . She wished her husband loving-kindness . May he be healthy .

Ramani gave birth to another child . He was also born at the Castle Hospital , Borella . He was named Ajantha in memory of her sister Ajantha .

“Now I am a father of two sons ”, Sunil told her wife happily .

“Shall we go to our house ?” ,Sunil spoke with love .

Ramani went to his house with her two sons . Ramani was confident that she was free from ill treatment . He began to discuss various things with her in a friendly manner .

One day the younger son was shouting with the pain in his throat . Ramani went to hospital with the son . The doctor recommended surgery . Two surgeries were done . But the thorn was not to be seen .

“We have done everything possible . It is difficult to cure the child “, doctors told Ramani . As Kisagothami who went along the street keeping the dead child on her shoulders , Ramani also rang along the hospital corridor with her child . Another doctor who saw her running as a mad woman stopped her . A nurse told the story to the doctor . He took the child to the surgery and examined .

“ This is the bone of fish stuck in the throat . Hereafter give him fish without bones. Do you understand ? “ , said the doctor .

She saluted and thanked the doctor wishing him merit .

I was like a mad woman because of my affection to the child . The truth of the Lord Buddha's doctrine is apparent further , she thought while on her

way home . She gave a birth to a daughter after some time . Her daughter's name is Dilhani . After Dilhani's birth unity in the family increased . The kind and cheerful words could be heard every time . The life has become anew .

Sunil lost his job . It had occurred during Ramani's absence . Their poverty stricken life was a misery . Ramani and her husband opened up a small hotel.

Everyone saw her courage, good spirit and self reliance through dedication to the hotel management. She worked in the hotel from morning till night .

“ This effort is to help my husband and three children to live without depending on others . There is no lust for accumulating wealth “ , she thought thus when she went to bed .

Greater attachment to the family brings more sadness . Those Priests in the hermitage are free from attachment and lust , therefore they are happy . In the night she remembered the hermitage . Sunil knows Ramani's religious inclinations . He gave her leave to observe Sil at temple every full moon Poya day . She went to the hermitage with her mother-in-law . Sunil work in the hotel and looked after the children alone .

“ Now he has understood me very well “ , Ramani told her mother-in-law while going to the hermitage .

“ I can see my son has changed a lot . You never quarreled with him . I know you have tolerated your husband's indifference . That is why he became so good . “ , said the mother-in-law .

A young Bhikkuni lived in a small compartment (Kuti) abandoning her wealth . Ramani was friendly with her . Ramani noticed the spiritual happiness of the nun reflected in her face .

“I know you are living with great sorrow and pain , and also I have heard that you have been tolerating your husband all the time . Because of that your family happiness has increased “, said the nun .

“I meditated but I haven't attained a deep Meditative State of mind now . Before the marriage I had a concentrated mind . “ , Ramani explained to the nun.

“The lust has expelled your Meditative State of mind . You will get it again when you give up your lust and attachment . Remember that birth is the cause of all those sufferings , Nothing to be sorrowful if we were not born. Why were we born?, how can we annihilate the birth ? . Only from Buddha Dhamma you can get solutions for these problems . By learning Dhamma and Meditating regularly you can annihilate sorrow . I'm trying to do so . Don't be in a hurry . You will get the Meditative State as soon as you are distanced from the five hindrances “ , said the nun . Ramani was greatly impressed by her words . Ramani and her mother-in-law started again to go to the hermitage . Ramani contemplated the truth of the sermon delivered by the young Bikkhuni recently .

Birth occurs when we embrace and grasp the world with lust . Any one who renounces the world will never be born again . He is free from suffering . Only those who come into this world have to suffer . What will make someone to embrace this world ? . Eye , ear , nose , tongue and the body are the five senses that embrace the world .

The eye , ear , nose , tongue , body and mind embrace the world by being attached to Form , Sound , Smell , Taste and Contact . When we renounce , clinging to such objects we obtained happiness and it will never turn in to sorrow again . Being laity how can I relinquish this grasping ? , Why not ?

Visaka became a Stream-enterer while she was a laity . Son of Yasakula Puth , King Bimbisara , Anepindu Situware , King

Suddodhana , Mahanama Shakya attained the Path of Stream-entry as laymen . King Suddodhana became a Stream-enterer , then he obtained the second stage of enlightenment and at the death bed he attained the state of an Arahant and died .

All of them lived a busy life . But all of them followed the path of Nibbana .

“Then why can't I?”, she resolved .

“I must Meditate whenever possible . I will attain Nibbana in this life itself . I remember what my grandfather Podi Appuhamy had said . I will try to get that bliss while I perform my duties to my husband and three children .

CHAPTER 10

Ramani came to know about Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero, a former superintendent of police, who ordained after retirement. He was dedicated to the path of Nibbana.

Once a fortnight, Meditation programmes are conducted by the Priest Venerable Amathagaveshi at the Jayasekararamaya temple at Kuppiyawatte, Maradana. There are contributors who supply alms and other necessities for those who participate in that Meditation programme. She told her husband about it.

“We are busy at the hotel on Saturdays,” said her husband.

“Only once in two weeks. Saturday is a school holiday too.”

“Doesn't matter, you may go.”

Ramani was happy for getting a chance to go to the temple.

“It's a great merit.”, she said.

She went to the Meditation Center wearing a colored saree. All the other devotees were clad in white sarees and jackets.

“How can I go there?”, she thought. She went to the center and sat where the Priest could not see her. The Priest sat on a small seat.

He explained them how to start Meditation. After a short interval he instructed the Meditators to concentrate on breathing. But Ramani's focus on Meditation vanished after a while. She was struggling to concentrate. In a fortnight she went to the temple with a friend. She was clad in a white saree this time. The Priest asked the Meditators to forward their problems. Ramani came forward and told the Priest about her life

and chores. She informed the Priest of her special experiences during her childhood. The Priest listened to her with closed eyes.

“I am sure you can comprehend Nibbana in this life itself. You must be in a state of celibacy. It is better if you can refrain from eating meat”, said the Priest. When she heard with the word Nibbana, she felt something cold penetrating her body. She shuddered.

She told her husband everything that the Priest told her. He was not interested in it.

“What will happen to me if you attain Nibbana?”, he asked.

Every morning she observed Sil at home. She gets up early in the morning prepares meals and sweeps the house and compound. She takes her children to school and comes home after school. She Meditated at the school garden without letting others know it. She was concentrating on the breath. The mind goes away from the breath suddenly. She feel very tired and gets up. She comes home with her children and she observes Sil. Then after sometime she washes the clothes of her husband and children. She also helps her children in their studies. After dinner she Meditates on a chair. When her husband comes home late at night, she gives his meals and then again starts Meditation. She is restless but never gave up Meditation.

“I’ll tame this mind somehow”, she thinks. Husband sees her wife on Meditation. He goes to bed alone. He too cannot sleep till mid night.

Daughter gets up and cries. Ramani stops Meditation and attends to her. With the attention of the mother she goes to sleep again. Then the second son too wakes up. They all need mother's love. Sometimes she has to play with them. After fulfilling their needs she went to Kuppiyawatta temple for Meditation every fortnight. She went to the hermitage with her mother-in-law every Poya day.

The Priest instructed all those who were preparing for Meditation how to achieve concentration when the five-fold hindrances are annihilated. He told them how to concentrate on one object. The Meditators told about their experiences to the Priest. Ramani also expressed her own experience. She said she has seen sea waves when Meditating. Then the Priest shouted and asked her to go out and Meditate again.

“On that day some of them attained concentration,” said the Priest.

Some of them who couldn't, decided to give up Meditation. But Ramani never lost her courage. After a little while she saw a flag during the Meditation. She told it to the Priest.



“Concentration is not a flag”, the Priest told Ramani. The Priest saw Ramani's dedication to achieve one pointedness of mind and he showed her the way to be mindful.

“When you get up from the bed contemplate only of your action. You repeat the same thing when you go to the kitchen, how to set your feet as right and left. When you take the kettle to boil water, think only of that action of taking the kettle. You take the coconut, raise the knife, break the coconut, take a half of it and go to the coconut scraper, bend, sit on it, scrape coconut. For each and every action you have to be attentive. Don't think of some other thing when you are doing one thing. If the mind goes

astray then think that it has gone astray. You have to concentrate on one thing only. On the first day you work for fifteen minutes. Then twenty minutes on the second day. Then increase the time of mindfulness. Repeat the same thing for one hour and then twenty four hours. When you practice this kind of mindfulness every day you will achieve concentration.

She woke up thinking of opening eyes, getting up and getting down from bed. Ramani took to memory all the instructions given by the Priest. On the following day she practiced that method of concentration at home in the morning. Opening the kitchen door, taking the kettle, fill it with water and kept it on the fire. For fifteen minutes she did everything with mindfulness.

She went to the temple for Meditation. When Meditating that day she noticed a difference. Her time of concentration was prolonged. But when she was with her children she was unable to concentrate. Children tell everything they saw and did in the school to their mother. She listens to them. They quarrel with each other. Mother is the judge who gives judgment. She takes their writing books, read them and show them the errors. She watches their home work and helps them. She feeds her children and after they go to bed she begins her Meditation. She recollects the advice given by the Priest.

“You Meditate here only one day. All the other thirteen days you spend a sensuous life. You can't attain Nibbana in that way. But you can't get rid of your domestic life. Perform domestic work with mindfulness. Then your Meditation will improve. Live the whole day in mindfulness. She apprehended the value of those instructions and understood that by controlling the three doors viz. mind, body and speech, she can Meditate successfully. The retention of the mind on the breath was prolonged. Domestic activities became very easy and Ramani could do everything very happily.

One day Sunil returned home drunk . He began to shout . Ramani was silent . Taking children within her care , she spoke to the husband with love . So , they could go to sleep without any aversion .

One day Ramani said that there were no coconuts in the house . Sunil asked her to pluck coconuts . She took a long stick with a knife tied to one end of the stick and plucked some coconuts from a coconut tree of their own land .

“I know you listen carefully to Sunil's words and you plucked coconuts . That is the result of your Meditation “ , mother-in-law said .

I never argue . I think his words are only another sound my ears contacted . I didn't pay attention to it . It didn't give me pain . I am ready for anything . If I accept them only I get angry . I allowed that sound to flow away . We always behave like that . We act according to the instructions given by the Priest . Ramani told her mother-in-law .

“Very good . You follow the same path . We will look after the children . You go to the temple in the evening and Meditate” , said the mother-in-law .

It is my fortune to get a mother-in-law who appreciate Meditation . She wished her merit .

She goes to school with her children and then goes to temple for Meditation . After the school is over she comes back with her children to the house . Then sharp at 3 p.m., she again goes to the temple for Meditation . Mother-in-law looks after the children. But Ramani feels sorry for her children .

“Lust brings sorrow “ , she recollects.

In the evening she went to the temple with her children .She was

Meditating at the Bodhi Tree terrace . When the children shout others who come to the temple didn't like it . Then she asked her children to come and be with her . They began to sleep there . In the evening she went home with her children .

There were some people who disliked her behavior .

“This woman is going to be enlightened . Her children will be destitute . She lets her children to sleep and she Meditates . It's a foolish act” , they said . Sunil and his mother had heard these reproaches , but they never told anything to her .

She went on her way . She does everything at home . She never gives us any difficulty . Nobody can drag her back . Children are doing well . They pass examinations with high marks . She and her children never disturb others who come to the temple . “If any one comes to the temple and Meditates like this , It is good for the temple too” , said the mother-in-law to those critics.

On one full moon Poya day, Ramani went to the hermitage with her mother-in-law . They began to Meditate under the shade of a tree. Ramani was in deep Meditation and she felt light and easy. Her mind became very calm. Mother-in-law got up after about ten minutes because she experienced a back pain and an ache in her knees. Ramani is still in Meditation. Her face was visible to the mother-in-law. It was very pleasant , it had a charming smile. The other Meditators got up and began to walk. They saw the Meditating Ramani, as a statue, for nearly two hours.

She put her hands on her forehead and worshipped. She opened her eyes. She saw some women including her mother-in-law looking at her. “Her face is shining today.”, Said one of the devotees.

“I was unaware of what had happened to me.”, She replied.

After taking the midday alms she meditated at the same venue. Two hours later she felt the same experience of the morning session. After that she devoted more time to Meditate in the house. As soon as her husband and the children went to sleep, she began her meditation till mid night. Now , she experiences the same happiness she enjoyed before marriage. Rain , moon light, sunrise, dancing leaves in the breeze gave her calmness of the mind. She recollected. That power of the mind vanished after the marriage. Now it has come back.

“I have got it with much effort now. But I got it earlier without effort. This can be the concentration.”, She thought.

Children become ill often. Then she has to be awake. She takes about three or four hours to help her children's education. Cooking , sewing and other household activities are performed tirelessly. Venerable Amathagashi Thero's instructions helped her to be conscious of what she does at that moment . She lost her concentration when her children fell ill. She spent those days as if she was insane. Working daily with that mental state of mindfulness was to achieve concentration. Because she Worked very happily with that state of mind.

At the Kuppiawatta Meditation Centre, Venerable Amathagaweshi Thero, praised Ramanis efforts. She is a mother of three children, While doing all the household work alone she practices Meditation. But the priest talked about concentration only to her .

“Now you are good at concentration . But still not up to the standard. You must try to prolong the time of concentration more than two hours at a stretch. I will give you some more instructions later on.”, said the priest.

One day she was meditating in the temple Bodhi tree terrace , keeping her children in the school. She saw a clock . She was out of concentration. It was the time for her to get her children back home. She hurried to school. She was very happy. Why should I have a watch now? She gave

it to her sister. From that day on, She knew the exact time of doing something without a watch.

Once she was in Meditation , she noticed a women called Mala who died when her husband stabbed her with a knife. She lived in a rented house that belonged to Ramani's mother. She was in need of merit. Ramani told this to Priest . Then she offered a robe to the priest and gave merit to the dead woman.

Ramani thought that this woman should have been freed from the woeful existence.

“You see such things when the Meditation improve. But not for every one . I heard you have a special mental power. You can improve more and more.”, said the Priest.

One day she began Meditation at eleven p.m. after completing her duties at home. She became concentrated with in two minutes. She got up at 5 a.m. from concentration. She was very happy. Her husband asked the time of her waking up , while he was coming out of the kitchen. His voice was not rough. He must have seen her in Meditation.

She boiled water. Put the pot of rice on the hearth. Scraped coconuts. She prepared tea and gave a cup of tea to her husband. She woke up the children , then she cooked meals for two sessions for the morning and the noon. All the children were fed and taken to school. Before that she swept the house . When her children went to their classes , she went to the Meditation center. She spent a sleepless night on the day before. But she was not tired. She started the Meditation again. She got up at the time of going to school with the children. While in the bus she used to close her eyes and start Meditation if she gets a corner seat. She thinks of the place where she gets down from the bus and she wakes up in time. She informed all her experiences during two weeks to the Priest.

Now you must practice deep absorptions. Before starting Meditation make a resolution to attain the first absorption and start from the Meditation of loving kindness. Tell me about your experience. Ramani was very happy. The Monk gave the instructions to start how to enter the first absorption (Jhana). So she worshipped the Triple Gem begged forgiveness from the noble ones she made a resolution to enter the first Jhana (Dhyana). The Meditation started with the loving kindness to all beings. Her Meditation gave way to the Meditation of Anapana.

Her mind vibrated when she came to a stage of deep concentration. This is different from the previous concentration. With the conception of thought and discursive thinking she got a great happiness and a deep concentration. At once the talking inside her mind stopped. Happiness and concentration was retrained for a moment. Then the happiness vanished leaving only a deep concentration. It lasted only for a moment. Then comfortable feeling also terminated and only the deep concentration prevailed. She saw her mind glittering. It was pure. That pure glittering mind spread through the whole body just as if her body was covered with a white cloth. She was in that posture till she heard a bell ringing. She opened her eyes. Her body seems to be very light, pleasant and charming. This time it was different from the previous four of five hours of Meditation. She looked at the Priest. He was with a smiling face. He asked Ramani to take alms and then meet him.

The devotees gave her alms. She looked at the plate of rice and closed her eyes. This delicious meal will become faeces in a few minutes. She understood impermanent state of this meal. She concentrates and takes her meals, listening to the chanting of Bhikkunis.

Then she went to the Meditation center and waited there till the Monk returned. He called her up. She explained her Meditative experiences to the Monk. He listened with closed eyes and said,

“I told you to practice the first step of absorption but you have gone up to

all the four stages, so you have successfully performed that because you must have done it in previous existences. Now you can continue those deep concentrations. There are ways of mastering it so that you can enter and leave the absorption at will.”

“You will stay on the first absorption for five minutes. Then in the second, third and the fourth for five minutes each. Practice like that. Then increase the time by ten, fifteen, twenty and one hour. You will be a very good at absorptions. I am pleased about your efforts. Now you can go. Wish you the help of the Triple Gem.”, said the Priest.

She got tears into her eyes. She worshipped him. She wished him long life and good health. At home and in the temple she concentrated. She prolonged the time of concentration for about three hours. It was the maximum number of hours she could devote for concentration for a day.

CHAPTER 11

Once a mother of a doctor attached to the General Hospital in Colombo visited Ramani's residence.

“Please allow me to wash your feet with Champak Water“ she said.

“Why is that ?”, Ramani asked her.

“ I have a severe pain on one of my legs . So , one day when I was dreaming in a sleep , somebody came and told me , if you want to cure your feet you should wash Ramani's feet with Champak Water”, she said . Ramani came to the verandah and that old lady washed her feet with Champak Water.

She walked on the compound for several minutes and found that her pain on the leg had already been vanished.

“Now I am cured , thank you very much, The Triple Gem bless you” .

“ So , I am going now . Excuse me , if I gave you any inconvenience “ , she said.

Ramani's husband was also watching it.

“What has happened ?, when she washed your feet with Champak Water, she got cured , Isn't it ? “ , he asked Ramani .

“I'm also surprised”, Ramani said.

She was not proud of that incidence.

“This is a Power of Dhamma”, she thought.

Her son Ajantha got a tumor on his leg. He cried for a long time, but it was difficult to take him to the hospital due to floods. He was given home-remedies but in vain. He was taken to the bus route with the help of a canoe. Doctors recommended to do a Surgery and a date was fixed for it. The child was screaming with pain and the residents of the house were very sad about it. When the child fell into a slumber, Ramani began to Meditate. When she was engaged in Meditation she heard that somebody is saying, "You can cure this child".

Two days before the Surgery, she rubbed his leg and wished him of an immediate cure.

The crying of the son has decreased.

Ramani and Sunil went to the hospital with their son. The doctors examined him and told his parents that the tumor is to burst today and no need to do the Surgery. It has happened as said. Sunil and his neighbors were surprised about this incident.

The news that "the Ramani is having a Mysterious Power of curing patients", has spread all over the village.

One day a woman came to Ramani's home with rambling hair. She was of eccentric appearance.

"No one is to help me, that's why I came here", she said.

Ramani saw that she was of unsound mind. She invited the woman to the house and placed her in five percepts and rubbed her head while chanting "Paritta". In a moment her insanity disappeared and an innocent smile was seen on her face. The heat and tightness of her head eased and her confusing mind turned to normal. She worshipped Ramani and ask for something to eat. Sunil gave her a plate of rice.

A large number of cobras came to Ramani's neighboring land. Ramani's children as well as neighbors were in great fear.

Every one ask "Why such a number of cobras coming to the land?"

Ramani chanted Paritta (recitation of stanzas of certain Buddhist Scriptures for protection) and gave Merit to those creatures . It was repeated for three days . After that the cobras never came there .

When she was in Meditation , one day she heard a woman crying. Her body was of purple colour . She said " I am in a large box of rice on the attic of my house. Please set me free from my evil state of existence . I had a child , he has grown up now ; he is entitled to my property. The children of my husband's second wife shouldn't be given them. The deeds of all that property are in a green envelope in the almirah. You can help my child to obtain that property from my husband." Ramani asked her to bring her husband and the son to her house. Then only she can help her. On the following day in the evening an old man and a young person came there. Ramani knew them.

"After the death of your wife , she has entered into a spiritual world and she lives in your house . Give her Merit after offering alms. Give her property to her son. The deed is in the Almirah . You must do this without further delay " , she told them .

All the property belonging to his dead wife were given to her son and on the day of the alms giving , he invited Ramani to his house . After the alms giving , Ramani also gave Merit to the dead woman . At that time a portion of the roof of that house collapsed. Ramani said " It is a sign of your dead wife's departure."

CHAPTER 12

Numerous patients suffering from mental and physical ailments came to her house. They were grief stricken and she heard their lamentation.

Being in possession of Spirits some people needed treatment and she had to devote a substantial time for it . So , she couldn't meditate in the noon .

“ Priority should be given to be free from Sansara or transmigratory existence “ , she thought .

But I have to attend to these things too . How can I ignore them ? , I love everyone equally as my love for husband and children . I will help them as much as possible . She entered into absorption only at mid-night and befired in the dawn . When she goes to the temple Jayasekaramaya at Kuppitawatte , she took her children with her . They were also practicing Concentration to a certain extent . They behave well at the Bodhi Terrace without disturbing other meditators . Once the teacher Monk addressed Ramani and told her that she was in a higher meditative position now . Therefore , it is necessary for her to understand Mind and Matter . I have already explained this earlier . You have obtained a knowledge about it but now you have to comprehend them . To attain Nibbana , you must understand the reality of this body . Those who cannot realize it think about a living being, a person and a soul . They are in the wrong vision of “I” and “Myself”. You can recollect my early instructions and then to find out the reality of Mind and Matter .

Ramani thinking about those instructions came home . While she was coming home , after getting down from the bus she tried to understand Mind and Matter . When she sets her foot on the ground , it is the Matter or 'Rupa' , the knowledge of setting the foot on the ground is Mind or 'Nama' . When both these combined, then comes action . She practiced this kind of Meditation while doing her domestic activities . There exists only Mind and Matter . There is no person or soul

One day she was sweeping the compound and thought of Mind and Matter . She wanted to remove garbage to the boundary of the field . When the garbage and the broom turned at a tree full of flowers suddenly she felt something going out of her body . It was as same as Ramani . That is the Mind . She began to concentrate immediately . She told this experience to the teacher Monk . He was listening to her intently.

“ It is a very comprehensive wisdom that you have gained . Don't tell others about it except to the teacher . The others will try to get the same experience . But , all are not the same . They get it in different ways . But , by following you , if they are unable to get the same experience they will be discouraged and give up meditation . Now you are developing insight knowledge . So you can develop these by constant practice . Next time you have to obtain an understanding of the three characteristics of all living beings , viz. , impermanence, suffering and soullessness. Even now , you are competent in these so , you must concentrate yourself and then you will comprehend this knowledge . The 'Sammassana Gnana' (knowledge) gives a clear view of all phenomena as impermanent miserable and self-less .This knowledge will further improve by Meditating while in Samadhi . Realization of these three factors in all phenomena is important till one becomes an Arahant .

There are nine stages of Vipassana .

1. Udayabbayanu Passana Gnanaya
2. Bhanganu Passana Gnanaya
3. Bhayatu Pattana Gnanaya
4. Adhinavanu Passana Gnanaya
5. Nibbhidanu Passana Gnanaya
6. Munchittukamyatha Gnanaya
7. Patisankanu Passana Gnanaya
8. Sankarupekkha Passana Gnanaya
9. Sachchanu Lomika Gnanaya

You must Meditate on each of these Vipassana knowledge till you comprehend them deeply. You will see the path clearly . You have to perform these while you are engage in your daily domestic activities. Don't be in a hurry .Too much of effort Is also a hindrance for this Path . Be patient and Meditate . May the Triple Gem be With You !”.

Ramani worshipped the Teacher Monk and went to the Bodhi Terrace , and Meditated on Mind and Matter . She realized the Doctrine of Cause and Effect . Every action is a combination of Mind and Matter. There is no person , self or soul. She understood the Doctrine of Cause and Effect .

She heard a sound of a Bell . That sound contact the ear and thought arose . It disappeared . Again it occurred and disappeared . Then the odour of a Joss-stick contacted the nose that too ceased. Everything happened as a result of a Cause and Effect . For that an external power, a person or a soul didn't interfere . Every thing is soulless . She Meditated till another woman invited her for tea . After the Dinner , Ramani went to bed with her children .She determined to wake up in two hours . She woke up in two hours . After washing her face she drank a cup of tea and began to Meditate .

The rain she saw in her childhood came again to her mind . The rain drops falling on to the compound created bubbles of water and vanished . Then again the compound was full of water bubbles , they spring and vanished suddenly . She saw springing and vanishing water bubbles at a stretch on the compound full of rain water . She is thinking about millions and billions of sub-atomic forms in the body (arise and cease) . It repeats like water bubbles .

She feels her body trembling. She sees how various(regions of Rupa Kalapa) arise and cease immediately. She sees her own mind . Feeling , perception, thought and consciousness appear and disappear. Everything is liable to change. Nothing is permanent. She thinks of a living tree. The flowers, fruits , tender leaves, the stem and the roots

consist millions of sub atomic forms. They exist and die. Every form of the tree appears and disappears. She sees how the sub atomic cells appear and vanish in her as well as others and in the trees. She woke up happily. Even when she goes to school with her children in the following morning she will experience the usual trembling in her body .

In that night she saw the exploding mountains and buildings , everything vanishes. Nothing exists. All existing things are vanishing. She experienced those mental images during that week . She told these things to the teacher Monk when she visited the temple on the following day . He was very happy . The teacher Monk advised her to continue the same Meditation . The Monk promised to discuss further details of these experiences later . She went back to her place of Meditation again .

CHAPTER 13

Ramani's domestic life became congenial and happy. Sunil has changed for better . He has given up liquor. Now he is calm and quiet . He likes to live with his children. Ramani goes for Meditation only after completing all her duties at home .

Sunil began to think of his wife Ramani . She is more suited for an ecclesiastical life. Her behavior is congenial to a monastic life. She never becomes angry when Sunil was in anger . She remained calm as a cool stream . She cooled Sunil's mind by being tolerant and detached . He felt sorry and disappointed for his own vicious way of speaking to her . She is virtuous and pious .

“She is a clean woman worthy of worshipping “, he told his mother .

Mother approved it with a smile . When she goes to the hermitage with her mother-in-law , every one including the Priests in the hermitage respected her as a Meditative woman with absorptions . Sunil told his mother about the sin of keeping Ramani as a laity.

“Then what about your children ? “, asked the mother .

“We will look after them “, he said .

“Did Ramani tell you about renouncing lay life”

“No , but I feel so “ .

“I too think that way “ .

Ramani is virtuous enough to attain Nibbana in this life itself . Yesterday evening Ramani went to the nearby shop . When she came home she found that the shop keeper had given her the balance in excess. She wanted to return that money immediately .

But I said, “It doesn't matter, you keep that money with you, because the shop-keeper is a black marketer”.

But Ramani refused it saying that she can't Meditate when she remembers that dishonest act. Ramani went back to the shop with her mother-in-law. The shop keeper was pleased to get the money back and said that he was quiet sure oh her honesty and goodness. The shop-keeper thanked Ramani.

Ramani is a very pious woman. She never does any sinful act. She must be in a Monastery. Although I observe Sil on every Poya day. I have not refrained from every sinful act. Still I kill mosquitoes when they sting me. But I don't think it a sin. Ramani is quite contrary to my thinking.

“If she ask me about Ordination, I will give my consent. Earlier I was against it. Once I told her to live as a Bhikkuni at home, but it was impossible, I understood later.”, said Sunil.

If Ramani becomes a nun, it will be a great loss for her children.

“No, it is not impossible for us to look after them. They are used to Meditation too.” said the mother.

“Has she told you anything about Ordination?”, asked mother.

“No, but I feel so.”, said Sunil.

Mother was silent. She looked at the blue sky. She told her son about an incident of Ramani's childhood. Ramani's mother had told me about her piety towards Lord Buddha.

One day Ramani went to a shop with her mother, brother and sisters to buy toys. Her brother and sisters bought balloons, toy elephants and

toy cars , but Ramani bought a small Buddha image .

“ Can you play with a Buddha image ? “ , mother had asked her .

“ I don't want to play with it , but I want to worship in it in the morning and in the evening “ , she has replied .

She had kept it in her room . She was such a devotee of the Lord Buddha from her childhood .

One day she saw fishermen catching fish in a village brook . They catch and put the fish in to a basket . The fish jump up asking for life . They die soon . From the day she saw these , she gave up eating fish . She never quarreled with her brothers and sisters . She was in full of loving kindness from her childhood . You know how you treated her . But , she never protested . She never hates you .

When she Meditates in the Monastery her body becomes very cool . That is her loving kindness to the whole world . She gets profound experiences in Meditation . Although I Meditated a lot , I didn't go to that extent .

Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero had told me that Ramani must have been practicing Meditation from her early births . Lets allow her to tread on the path she likes . “ We'll look after our children ” , Sunil said .

Ramani was seated on a chair after Meditation . She heard the conversation between her husband and the mother-in-law . My husband has understood me . He is willing to help me in my mission . May they be happy and healthy . She was in loving kindness with them . She was in a trance for about half an hour .

CHAPTER 14

Taking the eakle broom to his hand , Sunil asked Ramani to continue her Meditation . He took all her responsibilities including taking children to school and taking them back home . Ramani felt her husband's affection and kindness more and more . She could devote much time for Meditation .

She sees the rising water bubbles vanishing in a moment . She understands that every thing is impermanent or transient . She feels all the formations are vanishing . Past , Present and Future formations are transient . This is a fearful existence . Now my mind is travelling towards the knowledge of the dissolution of phenomena . There is no medicine to arrest the dissolution of phenomena . No strong person or secure place to stop these dissolution . Therefore phenomena is helpless . To be born , sustain , existence , amassing Karma and future birth , age , disease, death , sorrow , grief , dissatisfaction and weariness are all frustrating and evil . To be devoid of all these miserable phenomena will be a great happiness . But , I am not fearful . She remembers Venerable Rerukane Chandawimala Thero's teaching.

As if the bubbles of water in a pot of rice break and as mustard roasted in a pan and as the rain drops break , the body changes like-wise the fleeting perception , thought the consciousness (Mind) also arise and ceases. This is the cause of birth , decay , disease , sorrow and death. Ramani was aware of the evil effects of formation . With the development of 'Adinawa Gnana' , she became thoroughly repugnant of these formations . She noticed that she is becoming free from the attachment of formations . She wondered weather it is the 'Nibbidanu Gnana' .

She is unaware of the time . She engages only in Meditation. With this despondency she can't be in this existence any more . She is determined to escape these mind formations as early as possible. She determined to be free from egotism .

The only path to escape suffering is to be free from formations . She was ready to sacrifice her life in order to achieve it . She realized that it is 'Munchittukamyatha Gnanaya' , that has arisen in the mind .

It is meaningless to be attached to formations that are in impermanent suffering and self-less . This attachment is a result of a delusion as it makes formations appear to be permanent . If formations are mine they should behave according to my wish . It does not happen . Formations are not "me" , not "mine" , not "myself" . She was in deep concentration .

Ramani's daughter came crying towards her . Ramani's mind trembled .
“What has happened to you my daughter ? ,” she got up .

“When I was running my leg clashed with a stone and got injured ,” she told her mother .

“Let me see” . She examined her knee , it is only a bruise but there were a few drops of blood . It is only a scratch , we shall apply some surgical spirits . Her daughter began to cry loudly . Don't apply it , it is burning , she ran to the compound . Ramani smiled . Her husband and the mother-in-law were not at home . She went to the kitchen . The water in the kettle was boiling .

Her mother-in-law came running as she heard the child crying . I want to buy some sugar . The daughter was playing there with Malini's daughter .
“It might have disturbed your Meditation” , she said .

“Yes , I was afraid a little “, saying so Ramani prepared tea . After a fortnight Ramani met her Teacher Monk . She told him about her new experience of Meditation . He listened to her with closed eyes and remained silent for a while .

“You have gone so far ,and you seem to be achieving deep religious concentration . You have already passed several stages of insight

Meditation and your experience is unique. There are many others who have reached that stage but you are very quick in attaining those stages one by one and reaching the highest 'Munchittukamyatha Gnanaya'. These experiences are exceptional and it is a result of completing perfections in earlier births. There are Bikkhus who have spent many years trying to develop insight knowledge, regular practice will bring more clarity.

You had an urge to abstain from thought formations but your daughter's sudden cry enabled these volitional activities to be stronger. Your attachment to the daughter returned. Your attachments to formations increased. You will experience such things at home in future. The next Meditation steps are profound. You will have to concentrate away from home. It is difficult to overcome obstructions at home. I Thought it would happen very soon. If you are going to be a nun, your husband has decided to help you. You can renunciate the household life very soon.

Ramani's eyes were wet with tears. You feel sympathy for your family members. "No these came neither for sorrow nor joy of mine but they are the tears of detachment. The teacher Monk smiled.

When Ramani was free from Meditation a widow came there and told her about a demon who creates trouble in the house. She appealed to her for help.

She told the woman to prepare an alms giving in the house and to get rid of the demon after offering him Merit. A date was fixed. Ramani went there on the day of alms giving. A gentleman who was waiting for her opened the gate and welcomed her. After closing the gate he went to the back of the house. Ramani sat in the parlour. She saw a picture with a big garland there.

"Is this your deceased husband?"

“Yes“, said the widow.

Ramani thought of the gate keeper who welcomed her , She didn't tell others anything about it. There was no body similar to the person who opened the gate to be seen there .

“Had he some brothers ?“, Ramani asked .

“No , he was the only child in his family .“

After the alms giving , she asked the demon to desert the house . Some thing falling on the roof was heard . Now you will be free from your worries and also you will be cured of your back ache . Ramani wished her blessings . That is the end of the possession by the spirit .

CHAPTER 15

After sending children to school , Ramani was at the verandah thinking about the statement made by the Priest .

“It is difficult for you to get rid of those encumbrances at home , you will be able to get the renunciation of household life very soon “.

She comprehended it's truth . In order to gain higher insight wisdom , the present environment is unsuitable . The consent of her husband and the mother-in-law has also being given to her to renounce the household life . My children are also in a state of understanding my needs . So , I must go . Why should I delay my renunciation ? . Am I attached to my family life?.

An elderly person came there and worshipped her . He must have come to get a solution for his problems . Ramani thought . But , when he was worshipping her a small pistol and a kris knife fell from his two pockets . Ramani went to the room quickly and when her husband and the mother-in-law came there , that visitor had gone . It was impossible for him to depart so quickly as he hadn't come by a vehicle . What happened?.

Who is he ? Why did he bring two weapons here ? It was a great problem.

Some body must have to come to kill Ramani . Thought every one . Sunil told the Priest about this incident and expected a solution from the Priest .

“Ramani should renunciate immediately. She can get shelter in the Monastery at Embuldeniya “ the Priests said. “ There is a magical power to separate me from the family”, she thought.

Venerable Amathgaveshi Thero informed this incidence to an Army officer who was sick for some time but was cured of his illness by Ramani . He came there and took her to the Monastery at Embuldeniya , Nugegoda. The Bhikkunis in the Monastery welcomed her cordially .

“Your arrival is a great benefit . Help us to win this Sansara existence .
“ , they said .

“I will help you as far as I can ,” , she said .

There were twenty five others who had observed the ten precepts in that Centre. They are also Meditating continuously . Ramani received a Meditation Kuti . She was unable to Meditate till mid night on the first day of her arrival there .

Sometimes she thought about her home . But , this is not a decision taken by me to cause my husband , mother-in-law and children to shed tears . The person who brought the pistol and the Kris knife created a panic-stricken environment in the house . But no one thought it as a cause for renunciation . Sometimes her children may think that their mother who went to the Monastery for protection would come back . But I will never go back to laity. A mysterious power brought me to the Monastery by showing a pistol and a 'Kris ' knife . This is an indication of the path that I should go . She sees thoughts appear and disappear in quick succession . All these thoughts are uncertain , suffering and soulless . I relinquish all these . In the midnight she closed her eyes and began Meditation . Starting with 'Udayabbayanu Passana Gnanaya' Ramani Meditated on the other relevant 'Gnana' respectively up to 'Munchittukamyatha Gnanaya'.

Then she heard the morning bell while she was in a deep Meditation . She woke up , washed her face and drank a cup of tea . The ringing of the bell is an invitation to begin the day . After a while she took her break-fast and then after walking for some time went in to the 'Kuti' for Meditation . She saw the fearful thought formations and their futility . She urgently needed to escape from them . Without getting deceived by the pleasure of thought formations , comprehending their futility, she apprehended their uncertainty . Suffering and soullessness and in keeping with the deep Meditation she understood and saw clearly these three

characteristics of all living beings . She recalled constantly the impermanence , suffering and soullessness in formations . She comprehended them as never before .

Now she is fully aware of those three characteristics associated with any human being , impermanence , suffering and soullessness. This is what the Teacher Monk taught her . Am I in that stage of Meditation called 'Patisankara Gnana ' , now ? . I will be released from these formations only by this profound knowledge . She was reluctant to get up from the seat and recalled the three characteristics again and again .

The Teacher Monk proceeded to the Monastery after giving meditative instructions and subjects for Meditation (Karmasthana) .The Monk invited Ramani .

“ What is your experience after coming to the new place ?” , asked The Monk.

She explained to The Monk how she Meditated and her experiences.

“ You are correct . Now you have already reached an advanced wisdom namely , 'Patisankanu Passana Gnana” . Your next step is another profound wisdom called 'Sankarupekkha Passana Gnanaya . Now you must understand deeply the emptiness more than ever before.

"there is nothing called “I”, “my” or “my self”. You have to understand this soullessness deeply within you. The Form , Feeling, Perception Formations and consciousness are not to be taken as “mine” or “myself. This understanding must be unique. I am confident that you are apprehending this Dhamma by deep meditation. Did you bring your books here?”. No reverend sir , she said.

“Don't find soullessness from books. You have obtained enough knowledge in the past. Now you must apprehend that wisdom. Triple

Gem bless you. “, said the monk.

Ramani went to her kuti of Meditation. She fell into a profound Meditation by knowing impermanence, suffering and soullessness and comprehending how these Formations rise and fall. Her profound wisdom in the three characteristics emerged again. She Meditated without sleeping at night and on the following day she concentrated on soullessness. She perceived the voidness of soul the soullessness. If those Formations are not mine and not me, why should I be attached to them? Why am I afraid of them? I relinquish every thing. Now she is never attached to any thing. She looked upon Formations with equanimity. She was in a state of detachment and disgust. This equanimity lasted a long time. This was 'Sankarupekkha Passana Gnanaya', she surmised. She became indifferent to formations, she continued her course of Meditation with detachment.

Ramani was absorbed in meditation. When analyzing impermanence, suffering and soullessness through 'Sankarupekkha Passana Gnanaya', her mind was brimming with Faith in the Triple Gem as never before. She kept on thinking that she owed a (debt) of gratitude to the Triple Gem. The happiness experienced is because of the Triple Gem and her eyes filled with tears. This surge of faith affected the mind as well as the body. With relentless effort she resolved to proceed with Meditation and here she experienced a deep Samadhi with 'Sankarupekkha Passana Gnanaya'.

She didn't hear the bell for her midday meal and she continued her Meditation uninterrupted. She became calm and got into a pleasant mood. She was in that stage for about three hours. Ramani met the teacher after a week. She told him about her achievements so far. The teacher listened to her attentively. “you have gained effectively the art of looking at Formations with detachment. But you have to be very careful at this juncture. You should never allow your mind to embrace or get attached to formations.

Those who are in this stage of Meditation, will be within sight of 'Nibbana'. You repeat this course of Meditation again and again. Think of the three characteristics of all living beings.

Then you will achieve 'Anuloma Gnana' (adaptation of truth) . The 'Gnana' of the knowledge that follows is free from Formations. That is the end of aiming at Formations , the priest said.

While she was in Meditation her mind was full of faith. She thought that she was indebted to the Three Gems, the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. Her eyes were full of blissful tears . Her efforts for the future have strengthened. She was in deep Meditation again. There was a golden pinnacle in the dark. The pinnacle was visible for a lightning second but was invisible in a moment. It was repeated in her memory. After a while she became calm and quiet.



CHAPTER 16

After Meditation Ramani went to the door of her Kuti . Suddenly she saw her husband and the daughter at the door. The daughter was having fever. She had a pale face. It was pathetic.

“Mother, how long have you been here? Don't you belong to us? “, asked the daughter. Ramani went into her Kuti as she felt a change in her mind. The husband went back with his daughter on motor bike.

“Don't you belong to us? “, she heard that voice from a very long distance. Ramani felt as though she had abandoned the entire world. She closed her eyes . She saw her mind dissolving. She recalled impermanence. She was in a deep Meditation and felt that she was walking steadily through a brightly illuminated cave. A brawny , black man squeezed and dragged Ramani's finger. “ You the god of destruction Mara ,you can't defeat me “, she said. He fled away.

The mind went deeper and deeper. All these aggregates are impermanent. Her elder son came in front of her in his school uniform.

“My son , you are also impermanent. The son vanished .

Second son also came there .

“My son , you are also impermanent. He too vanished .

Her daughter came crying .

“My daughter , you are also transient “, she also disappeared.

All the three children vanished from the view . The biggest three attachments of the world became impermanent. All the formations faded away as these are impermanent. She saw her three children

relinquishing from her mind. Then she felt that all the formations are vanishing. She became calm again, but she could not repeat the fact of impermanence in words. Her mind became quiet and she found herself in a profound silence. The earth seemed to be vibrating. A blaze of fire sprang up and surrounded her body. A drop of cool water fell upon her head. The whole body became cool. The flame was extinguished. A calm and pleasant feeling possessed her mind. She observed a Lotus. It wasn't a Lotus. It was her own heart which she offered to the Lord Buddha with great faith. She opened her eyes. She sees the Lord Buddha. Oh ! Lord, your noble doctrine gave me consolation, Ramani uttered.



She heard somebody knocking at the door. "I'm Visaka"; A Bhikkuni said. Ramani opened her eyes, it was a persistent knocking. The priest has come. "We all are going to the Meditating Hall." Visaka informed Ramani.

Ramani was reluctant to get up, but after a little while she got up and opened the door of her Kuti. "Your face is like a blooming Lotus flower", Visaka said.

Ramani remembered the Lotus flower of the heart she saw a little while ago. The teaching Monk looked at Ramani after giving instructions to other Bhikkunis (who engaged in virtuous conduct) in Meditation. Her eyes were closed and the face was of very calm and charming to see. Ramani was asked to go to the teacher. She went there and worshipped the teacher.

Then "What happened", asked the teacher. She began to explain her experience while the teacher was listening to her intently. The teacher

was pleased and said ; “The other day you explained to me about your 'Sankarupekkha Passana Gnanaya'.

You have already got the 'Anuloma Gnana' . Now you have overcome your largest three bondages in a dramatic way.

You abandoned your three children in three stages one by one . You saw the impermanency of formations . You have seen how these formations are vanquished . What happened then? , when all the formations are renounced absolutely you are nearing the bliss of Nibbana . Now you have acquired all the wisdom necessary for you to achieve ' Gothrabhu Gnana' which precede the realization of Nibbana .

This transferred you from the worldly to the supramundane to join the Arya clan . Now you can turn back and recall the path you have travelled so far . After that you must enter fruition of the path . I will explain that later said the Monk . You have achieved good results after Meditating for about two years and I urge you to continue Meditation on the impermanence of the five aggregates . She listened to the teacher Monk with tearful eyes. I am now experiencing the noblest happiness in the world . Reverend teacher who encouraged me and showed the path may you live long with good health and happiness !! .

She worshipped the teacher and transferred merit to all those who made it possible for her to achieve this . She remembered her mother-in-law , husband , children , parents , brothers , sisters and all those who Meditated with her in Jayasekaramaya Daham Medura and transferred the merit to them. She sat beside the statue of the Buddha in the shrine and remembered the virtues of the Buddha . She felt as she was in a Trance . She was not aware of how she went to her Kuti .

She went there as if she was going through the air without treading the foot path . She felt comfortable and lightness in body and mind .

Before the mid day meal some visitors had come to meet her . Ramani had washed her clothes when Sunil came there with her two sons and the daughter . Daughter ran towards her . We came here last week to meet you; but Visaka aunt told us that you were in Meditation . So we went back. She told this in a sad manner.

“ I started Meditation from the day I came here . So how is your school work ? “ , she asked her by rubbing her head.

“Now I am the prefect of my class from last week , she said.”

“Very good. Are you kind to your class mates ? Do they obey you ?“

“ Yes , every one likes me. Now they are very happy about my new appointment . “

“ Lets go home mother ,” said the two sons .

“ I will visit you on a later day “ , she said .

“Not to visit . Please come and stay at home .” they said .

Ramani was silent .

“ Mother will come home in a short time . She has to Meditate some more .” , Sunil told his two sons . Sunil gave her some fruits . The children worshipped their mother . Their eyes were wet with tears . Ramani rubbed their heads wishing them the protection of the Three Gems . She came to the Kuti . She didn't look at them again . But Sunil and his children looked at her till she went out of sight .



CHAPTER 17

A change of meditation programmes occurred in the Daham Medura. Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero gave instructions to Meditators while Ramani gave subjects for Meditation. Ramani was reluctant to accept the duty saying that she was not capable to handle such tasks as the Priest does. But the Priest insisted her to use her experiences of Meditation and instruct other Meditating Bhikkunis and show them the real path. Listen to them very carefully. Ultimately she had to accept the request of the teacher.

The Monk preaches the doctrine with Meditation instructions for about half an hour. Then Ramani takes the Meditating Bhikkunis individually giving them advise by discussing their experiences and showing them the real way to 'Nibbana'. Those Meditators discussed their problems with Ramani without hesitation. Ramani gave solutions to their problems in a very kind manner. If she gets a difficult problem she used to get instructions from the teacher and then discussed it with the Meditators.

There was an increase of Meditators participating in the program. She gave them novel experience of Meditation. All were happy with the way she handled her sister Bhikkunis. The members of the contributory council took steps to look after her children's health too.

Ramani was famous even in distant places for her ability to cure patients by the paranormal power. A large number of patients came to the Daham Medura. She was able to treat them without hindering Meditators.

Golden Ratwatte, an ex. Police officer and land owner was suffering from a cancer. His relatives brought him to the Daham Medura and she chanted Paritta and wished him good health. He was cured in a short time. He was pleased much and participated

in Meditation programmes in Kandy .He invited her and the Priest to conduct Meditation Programmes .

A weekly Meditation Programme was conducted at the YMBA hall in Kandy . A large number of men and women participated . The programme became very popular .As the Meditation Centre was over crowded the programme was held in Palkelele Gam Udawa Center in Kandy in the following month .The programme was conducted monthly and it became very popular . Ramani's reputation spread in the Central Province too .The Priest requested Ramani to accompany Sunil and the children when they go to distant places for Meditation Programmes. It is because the Priest saw , many people are attracted to her and better not to go alone for her safety . Golden Ratwatte wanted to start a Meditation Centre in the Kandy Town . The two gentlemen Gamanayake and Wisumperuma met the then President Hon. Chandrika Bandaranayake and obtained a building from the Gam Udawa Centre at Palkelele in Kandy for a Meditation Centre .

A Bhikkuni Monastery was also established there .

There were separate Meditation Kutis for male and female Meditators .Ramani also had a separate Kuti . She stayed there for a week in a month and gave instructions and trained them .She was young and kind hearted . Because of her calm and pleasant appearance , a large number of people came there to practice Meditation .



CHAPTER 18

Tourists arrived at the Daham Medura at Embuldeniya and Pallekele Meditation Centres. They had read books on Buddhist Doctrine but they preferred practical knowledge. They understood that Buddhism is a path of liberation by oneself without the help of God. They wanted to experience it by practicing Meditation. They participated in Meditation Programs conducted at Pallekele and Embuldeniya Meditation Centres with the guidance of Ramani the Pious Upasika, they attempted to concentrate with vigour with the intention of comprehending the truth of Dhamma. They felt, saw and understood how their prolonged stress dissolved in that concentration and their minds becoming calm and pleasant. They saw the necessity of giving this calmness and consolation to their relatives and friends of own countries. They invited Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero and Ramani the Pious Upasika to visit their countries. They appealed them to bestow the same consolation they received, to the people of their own countries. The invitation was accepted.

Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero accompanied by some Pious Upasika's namely, Ramani, Kusuma Devendra, Lala Tennakoon, Rabel and Weerasinghe went to Singapore.

A large number of people had gathered at the Singapore airport to welcome them. They were given board and lodging at the Lanka Viharaya in Singapore.

Those Singapore citizens who attended Pallekele and Embuldeniya Meditation Centres made arrangements to conduct Meditation Programmes in Singapore. The Priest and the Pious Upasika Ramani conducted those Meditation Programmes and a few devotees of England and America also followed these Meditation Programmes. Some persons in Singapore knew the Pious Upasika Ramani's ability to cure patients with her Paranormal power. One Singapore woman came to

meet her. That woman spoke and behaved like a male. “I have to tell you a story”, she said. She spoke in Japanese language and it was translated in to Sinhala. She was in a state of semi-consciousness.

“I was in Japan earlier. My husband and I died in an accident. I was born in Singapore. I can speak Japanese language along with the language of this country. My husband became a Spirit. He entered my body. Now he directs me. I am shown male characteristics. He tortures me, but I like him. I like he is with me, but it bothers him. But I am not worried about it”.



Upasika Ramani chanted Paritta and blessed her by touching the head. “It bothers both of you. You must be separated and It is a consolation for both. We shall resolve this well. Let us offer him Merits and she agreed. The Spirit departed after offering alms and giving him Merit. Now she was transformed from her male appearance and became a normal woman. She participated in Meditation too.

What ever you do, do it mindfully advises Upasika Ramani. Otherwise the mind will lose the object of Meditation. There will be confusion and the Meditation will be unsuccessful. Samadhi or concentration will develop with the practice of mindfulness. Without a strong 'Samadhi' there will be no wisdom. The crux of Buddhism lies in Vipassana or Insight Meditation. Without it our goal of Nibbana cannot be reached. As soon as you get up in the morning try to be in good mindfulness for

about fifteen minutes . If it is successful be in mindfulness for another thirty minutes . So you can extend this process for about three hours. If you are in mindfulness daily you can get in to 'Samadhi' and see the impermanence , sorrow and soullessness in the five aggregates of the sentient being . Pious Upasika Ramani instructed other Meditators by telling them about her experience.

Her Chinese disciples said “ We meditated for a long time but we couldn't concentrate . You have taught us to achieve concentration in three days ”. When instructing them she never used difficult words . Her way of practicing Meditation was very attractive . The fascinated coaching paved the way for a large number of devotees to enter Lankarama Temple Dhamma Hall for Meditation. It was full as a result of patients also coming there. It caused interruption for Meditation . Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero viewed this problem with equanimity . “They come to meet you as they have confidence in you. Many people have lost confidence in doctors, soothsayers and charmers and they need your help , that is why they come . You can't ignore them. It can be an obstruction for your Meditation, but you have to find solutions for their problems. You can spare about two days for them when it is generally known the patients will come only on those two days”, Priest said to her. Then she allocated two days for patients . But some mental patients pounced on to the Monastery without thinking of a date or time. It was impossible for the organizers of these Programs to expel them. Upasika Ramani provided treatment for them. For other patients she told like this.

“ The cause of many diseases is the unwholesome actions they committed in the past . You have to protect your mind from anger, hatred and jealousy, the mind becomes pure . Then the effects of unwholesome Kamma is subdued. The wholesome thoughts become powerful. There arises joy and physical well being and Samadhi (concentration). The happy mind leads to a healthy body. If you join us we will tell how to keep your mind and body in good health. After conducting Meditation Programmes in Singapore for two weeks

Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero , Upasika Ramani and others went to Malaysia and the chief Bikkhu of Malaysia , Venerable Dr. Kirinde Dhammananda Thero welcomed them. Some of the Malaysian devotees who were trained in the Palkelele Meditation Centre requested the Priest to conduct Meditation Training Programs in Malaysia. The request was granted. The Meditation Programs were a huge success. A substantial number of devotees were able to enter the path of Dhamma , with gratitude they mentioned this fact to the Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero and Upasika Ramani. Dathok Frankichuwa a wealthy businessman was peaceful after Meditation and he suggested to offer a land in extent of two hundred acres to the Order (the Order of Buddhist nuns). He said , he wanted to built one hundred Meditation Kutis and convert it to a Meditation Centre. Pious Upasika Ramani consented to his request.

The land was converted to a jungle. He constructed one hundred Kutis , preaching halls , alms giving halls , a shrine room and other buildings. It became the chief Insight Meditation Centre in Malaysia. During her stay in that Meditation Centre for two weeks she performed an unforgettable service by training hundreds of devotees in Meditation and relieving many patients of their ailments. It was an memorable experience for Malaysians. That Meditation Centre is situated near the town of Contav in Malaysia. It is a beautiful and serene hermitage where only the birds twitter occasionally. Now it is full of Meditation Yogis who dwell in peace having developed Jhana and Concentration.





The Pious Upasika Ramani visits that Meditation Centre frequently and encourage the Yogis.

She has to conduct Meditation Programs in Singapore at least once in three months. The benefactors of Lanka Viharaya wanted to build a Buddha Statue . They collected money and materials necessary for the purpose and was about to start work under various obstructions. Some people wanted to abandon it , while some others thought it fit to get the blessings of Upasika Ramani. She went there . It was full of muddy water . She meditated there for about one hour. She recited Paritta and blessed it . She wished that the 'Buddha' Statue will be made without delay. On the following day the ground was cleared. The construction work of the Buddha Statue had begun. The benefactors asked Upasika Ramani for some Buddha Relics to be deposited in the Buddha Statue .

She came to Sri Lanka in a few days time. She went on a pilgrimage to Kiri Vehera in Kataragama with some Bhikkunis. When they were descending the steps of “Kiri Vehera “ , they saw an old man clad in white robes. He asked from where the Bhikkunis came from.

“This is a mother of three children” , he said showing Upasika Ramani.

“The elder son is Noel Lasantha, the second son is Ajantha, the youngest daughter is Dilhani. Am I correct?” , he asked.

“Yes, you are correct.” , said Upasika Ramani.

“You came here in search of Buddha Relics?”.

“Yes , we want them. We meditate here and resolve to get them” said the Upasika Ramani .

“When are you going back?”

“Tomorrow morning” .

They Meditated at the Kiri Vehera compound in the whole night. The Upasika Ramani was in deep Meditation and determined to obtain the 'Buddha' Relics in the morning. When they were descending the steps they met that old man again.

“Where is the chief Bhikkuni?” , he asked from the other Bhikkunis. She came forward .



“You are in need of Buddha Relics , show your hand” , he said.

He twisted a folded white handkerchief over her hand.

Three glittering Buddha Relics came to her hand. All the eyes were

directed towards them.

There was neither a handkerchief nor the old man to be seen.

A Bhikkuni took a casket from her bag and the Upasika Ramani placed the Relics in it. It's a messenger of Deva, and he fulfilled our desire and vanished, the Bhikkunis thought.

They went to Singapore within few days. The benefactors of Lankaramaya were waiting at the air-port to welcome the Bhikkunis.

The casket was taken to the temple in a procession. The priests tried to take the 'Buddha' Relics out of the casket amid the shouts of joy, but it was very difficult for them to open it. The chief Priest asked a benefactor to summon Upasika Ramani to the temple. She came there and touched the casket. It opened in an instant and the Relics came out. The Relics were placed in a different casket and deposited in the Buddha Statue. At that time there was a rain of dew. The devotees were bathed in the dew. It was a day of dew combined with tears of joy. The Upasika Ramani offered a handful of fragrant flowers to the Buddha Statue.



CHAPTER 19

Many people came to consult Upasika Ramani and to get practical training in Meditation. They lacked facilities for Meditation. Therefore the other Bhikkunis urged Upasika Ramani to build another Meditation Centre. she was looking for a suitable venue. One day they went to Meegoda through the High Level Road and from the Naduhena junction they had to go to an old Rubber land about four kilo-meters away. It was a calm environment. So they decided to inform benefactors about it. Some of the benefactors got together and bought the land and offered it to Upasika Ramani. She went with some Bhikkunis and settled there after building a thatched hut.

Even though there were mosquitoes and rain they began Meditation.

“A beautiful and calm place where we can easily attain Concentration”, said the Bhikkunis with great pleasure.

“We came to the real and most suitable place. We appreciate the Upasika Ramani's selection”, they said.

In Malaysia Mr. Dathok Frankichuwa came to meet Upasika Ramani to get her blessings. She chanted Paritta for about an hour and blessed him. In a very short time his business became successful. He amassed an enormous wealth. He heard that Upasika Ramani was living in a thatched hut. He came to Sri Lanka and with the help of some wealthy merchants built a Meditation Centre with all the facilities. There were fifty Meditation Kuti's, single storey and two storey buildings, halls for taking alms and Dhammahalls. The 'Dhamma Hall' is a two storied building. In the first floor there was a shrine room and in the second floor is the shrine with the 'Buddha Relics'.

As a result of Upasika Ramani's resolution an omniscient Tooth Relic appeared in the shrine of Relics. This hall can accommodate about

five hundred people. The library is in the corner of the down stairs.

There are three Bo-saplings of the Sri Maha Bodhi at Anuradhapura can be seen here.

Now this place is popular as Batawala, Prajapathy Meditation Centre.

The Upasika Ramani directs the local and foreign devotees to the path showed in Dhamma and frequently visits Singapore and Malaysia to fulfill their needs.

The Upasika Ramani's husband Sunil Perera died of a sudden heart attack. After his wife's renunciation he looked after his children and his wife's religious activities too. He spent a righteous life. He was closely associate with Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero and the Priest advised him to go with the children for her protection, when Upasika Ramani went far away to conduct Meditation Programs.

Learning Abidhamma and Meditating regularly, he took steps to manage his childrens' educational matters.

He was an exemplary father.

The devotee benefactors of Malaysia and Singapore met the Upasika Ramani when they heard the news of her husband Sunil's death. "We will look after the second son Ajantha Kumara and the youngest daughter Dilhani and help for their education", they said.

At that time the elder son Lasantha was married.

The second son and the daughter were taken to Malaysia. They were given computer education. Ajantha is still in Malaysia doing a job. Dilhani came to Sri Lanka after completing her education. A mother's duty to her children was performed by Malaysian devotees regarding

Upasika Ramani's children.

“You went to Malaysia and gave Malaysian people a spiritual blessings. They paid their gratitude by helping your children . It is very important. Now you are free from your duties to your children” , said Upasika Uttama who stayed with Upasika Ramani.

CHAPTER 20



The Buddhist devotee Upasika Ramani clad in white robes with a flowing hair wanted to shave her head and get into yellow robes with the intention of entering the Buddhist Order as a nun.

While she was in concentration somebody told her to go on a pilgrimage to Sri Pada (Adam's Peak). Two days after that several Singapore devotees visited the Prajapathy Meditation Centre and they went to Sri Pada with the Buddhist devotee Upasika Ramani. The Upasika Ramani made a wish to obtain the Ordination after worshipping the foot of the Lord Buddha. On the 29th of December, 2001 she became a Buddhist nun with other twelve devotees under Priestess Dr. Kusuma's guidance. The Ordination ceremony was held at the Prajapathy Meditation Centre with the leadership of Venerable Thalalle Dhammaloka Thero and Venerable Porawagama Somalankara Thero. Some of the foreign nuns too participated. Since then the Upasika Ramani is known as Priestess Kotikawatte Gothami.

When at the Ordination ceremony shaving of her hair brought tears into the eyes of her friends and relatives, but the Upasika Ramani was not sad about it. She had already abandoned the attachment to her beautiful hair as it is impermanent, sorrowful and soulless. How ignorant are they?

They cry because of losing the hair belonging to some other person. Since then , the Meditation Centre shined with the white clad devotees began to shine as a yellow robed nun's Monastery.

The Priestess spent a week in Meditation after the Ordination. A large number of patients came there to meet the nun but could not do so. The Priestess Gothami spent many hours enjoying the fruits of her attainment. When the Priestess Gothami heard about the disappointments of patients , she allocated several days for them. We need to find remedies for the diseases of Sansara or transmigratory existence. But people come here to get remedies for their physical and mental problems. The Buddha was an incomparable doctor who discovered the means of annihilation the sorrow of existence. As a daughter of the Buddha, I have to treat the disease of existence. But I can't send away others who visits here looking for my treatments. How can I send them back empty handed?. Thinking so , the Priestess Gothami blessed and treated a substantial number of patients who arrived at the Monastery.

Once a beautiful young pregnant woman from Hatton , came to meet the Priestess Gothami with her mother.

“From a few months my daughter is suffering from a disease, please help her.”, the mother appealed.

“Can you remember , your son seduced a girl and killed her. It is that the dead girl who is in your daughter-in-law 's womb and tortures her” , the Priestess Gothami explained.

“I admit that my son has committed such a crime “, the mother said with tears in her eyes. The nun chanted Paritta and blessed her for a comfortable delivery. Her physical discomfort disappeared.

A tea factory owner from Haputale arrived at the Monastery.

“For a considerable period of time it has been impossible to operate the factory. The machines brake down and though I got them repaired well. They continued to break down. My business is bankrupt. Please help me”, he told the Priestess.

The nun went to Haputale with the factory owner. While travelling by car, the Priestess concentrated. She saw a young woman.

“This tea factory owner seduced and killed me. Now I am in the tea factory. I want to take revenge from him, and I break these machines”, said the Spirit. The factory owner admitted his fault. The Priestess chanted Paritta and blessed the woman. She deserted. Since then the function of the tea factory became normal.

“My husband went abroad for six months”, a woman told the Priestess Gothami. She is Diana de Soyza from Rajagiriya.

“He will return in six days”, said the Priestess.

“He will come back in six months”.

The Priestess Gothami smiled and kept quiet.

He returned after six days.

“You are correct. He returned in six days”, the Diana said.

One day a mother came to the Prajapathy Meditation Centre with her young pregnant daughter. Mother told the Priestess about her daughter's sufferings. The Priestess concentrated and asked the young woman about an abortion done eight years ago. They were shivering.

“Is it true or false?”

“It is true”, the mother said. A certain young man deceived my daughter. She was pregnant and we paid a doctor to get an abortion. The

Priestess was silent for a while . The Priestess later told them that the embryo in the mother's womb is a life. You have murdered a human being. This is a great sin and you will suffer for it in this life. It is called Ditta Dhamma Vedaniya Kamma.

The child to be born is suffering due to his past Kamma . But we will try to protect the child. It is useless to repeat the past sins. Repentance is fruitless. The Priestess chanted Paritta and touched her abdomen and blessed the child. Pregnant mother was relieved. The mother stayed in the Meditation Centre for a week and Meditated. She directed her daughter to start Meditation. Delivery became comfortable. That mother and daughter determined to be virtuous and they lived by the Meditation of loving-kindness.



CHAPTER 21



Priestess Gothami was devoid of rest due to administrative functions of the Prajapathy Meditation Centre and the healing activities of the visiting patients and other social services rendered frequently. Therefore the Priestess felt the need for Meditating and resting in a distant place occasionally. Priestess Gothami went to the Kirivehera in Kataragama and the Ruwanweli Seya in Anuradhapura for Meditation. The moment she enters the Ruwanweli Seya premises she gets into concentration (Samadhi). “These are the holy places where the thousands of sanctificated Arahants Meditated and lived in deep concentration”, the Priestess Gothami, whispered.

A Malaysian devotee suggested the importance of starting a Meditation Centre at Anuradhapura. The Priestess concentrated on that suggestion and determined to achieve that object. In a short time the Priestess heard a voice.

“ There was a place where a monastery for nuns , situated close to Mihintale , during the reign of the king Devanampiyatissa. The Queen Anula , consort of the king ordained and lived there. You can go there . We will show you the way. It is the most suitable place for you to establish a new Meditative Monastery. Thousands of sanctificated Arahants lived there in the past.”

The Priestess blessed the person who gave that information and got up very happily. After informing that news to the foreign devotees the Priestess Gothami set off to Mihintale with a Colonel of the Army and some soldiers. The Priestess Gothami was able to trace the spot where the Arahant Anula lived. The soldiers built a thatched hut and after few days it was offered to the Priestess.

It was a gorgeous occasion. A heavy rain poured ending the prolonged drought prevailed in that area.

The Army officers were very happy.

The Priestess Gothami stayed in that hut with some other nuns. In the first day they Meditated in the whole night. The Priestess Gothami was in concentration for three hours.



The foreign devotees donated the necessary funds to build the Anula Monastery. It consists of Meditation Kuti's and large buildings with all the facilities. It was declared open on the 11th of June, 2003. It was the happiest day of the life of Priestess Gothami, but she received the sad news about the demise of her teacher Venerable Amathgaveshi Thero in the same day. When the Thero was sick our Priestess Gothami visited and chanted Paritta and blessed him. The priest was listening to her Paritta recitation in a semi-conscious state.

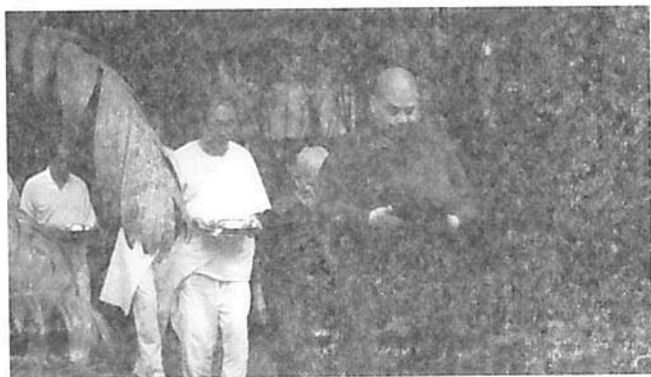
Venerable Amathagaveshi Thero lived in the 'International Insight Meditation Centre' at Pallelkele for a long time and directed a large number of devotees to the path of Nibbana . After paying the last respects to the late Priest as his chief student , the Priestess Gothami went to Mihintale to declare open the Anula Monastery '. The death of the teacher and the birth of the Anula Monastery occurred in the same day. It was a sort of coincidence recalled the Priestess Gothmi. The teacher had heard about the construction of Anula Monastery for nuns about a year back and he was very happy . But the teacher could not get an opportunity to see it with his own eyes.

Every thing is Transient!, Transient!!, Transient!!!.

About two thousand years ago the Arahant Anula with thousands of other Arahant Priestesses lived with deep concentration in this calm and peaceful environment . The emergence of that holy ground again was a great victory achieved in the life time of the Priestess Gothmi of Kotikawatte .

Priestesses , local and foreign devotees of the Buddha began to arrived at the Anula Monastery in large groups for Meditation .

“ There is a Miraculous Power in this land to bring the mind into deep concentration “ , said some of the Malaysian Devotees who participated in Meditation Programmes.



CHAPTER 22

Prajapathy Meditation Centre at Batawala, Padukka, Anula Monastery for nuns at Mihintale, Meditation Centre in Malaysia, Lankaramaya at Singapore were bathed with the rain of Dhamma caused due to the Priestess Gothmi's effort. Hundreds of plants sprung up bearing fruits of the path of Nibbana.

The Prajapathy Meditation Centre was an offering to the Great Prajapathy Arahant Bhikkuni who is the pioneer of the Buddhist Order of the Bhikkuni.

The Anula Meditation Centre at Mihintale is an offering to the Arahant Anula who started the first Buddhist Order for Bhikkunis in Sri Lanka. Hundreds of thousands of Arahant Bhikkunis illuminated the Order of Buddhist Nuns. The Priestess Gothmi conduct the novice nuns to make the Bhikkuni Buddhist Order of Sri Lanka a productive institution by studying their life stories (and preaching to a great extent).

Sumana a girl who was born to a Brahmin family in Sewath Nuwara in Dambadiva heard about the Lord Buddha and received the Ordination under the Arahant Priestess Great Prajapathy at the age of twenty. After the mid-day meals (Dana), Sumana the nun started Insight Meditation in a peaceful environment. The 'Lord Buddha' after sending a ray of light he preached this stanza to Sumana.

“Dhatuyo Dukkatho Disva
Ma Jathian Punaragami
Bhave Chandan Virajethwa
Upasatta Charissaye ”

The nun Sumana contemplated on this stanza and became an Arahant. The Priestess Gothami explains the meaning of this stanza.

The body made of elements , earth, water, fire and wind is suffering .

Rising and Ceasing is also suffering. Be free from the craving for Sensuous existence (Kama Bhava) . Fine material existence (Rupa Bhava) , immaterial existence (Arupa Bhava) .



“Eliminate lust , then you will become very calm and live with calmness in the mind. Why did you enter into this Buddhist Order ?” . The Priestess Gothami asked the novices , but she gave the answer herself.

“To end the journey of Sansara and to attain Nibbana always perform meritorious acts and devote your life for the attainment of Nibbana . To reach that goal you must have the faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. Be always in mindfulness and in awareness. In this opportune moment you should try to get the benefit and make use of it .

Tissa of Kimbulwathpura born in the Sakya clan pleased with the Lord Buddha in her old age, and joined in the Great Prajapthy's journey on foot to meet the Lord Buddha . On the permission of The Lord Buddha she ordained as a Bhikkuni . She tried hard to comprehend Nibbana before the death as she is very old. She concentrated and Meditated . The Lord Buddha proclaimed her a stanza which helped her to attain Arahant-ship .

“Thisse Sikkassa Sikkaya
Mathan Yoga Uppachchagun
Sabba Yoga Visan Yuththa
Chara Loke Anasava ”

Having heard this she enhanced her effort to progress in Insight Meditation. She attained the status of an Arahant .

The stanza that the Lord Buddha had declared was for her joyful utterance. The meaning is as follows.

“ Tissa , discipline yourself in virtue concentration and wisdom. You have been born as a human being with normal sense organs. Born with faith into the living age of the Lord Buddha do not forsake this remarkable opportunity. Be free from sense, desire, process of existence, wrong views and delusion and live untainted by defilements. This can be an example to you.

Though the Lord Buddha is not alive today the doctrine he proclaimed is preserved in its pristine purity. Where the Dhamma is the 'Buddha' prevails .

You too take this opportunity to attain Nibbana without putting it off to another existence.

Another old Brahmin woman named Uttama listened to the exposition of Dhamma by the Enlightened one which made her realize the truth of selflessness. She became a nun and by the development of Insight Meditation she realized Arahant-ship . Her words of joy are important to us .

These are her words of joy .

“ I understand that there is nothing called “I”, “my” or “mine” . After comprehending deep religious concentration I could become a daughter

of the 'Lord Buddha'. I am always in Nibbana. I annihilated all the sensual pleasure. Stopped the journey of Sansara or the transmigration existence and no rebirth for me“.

The Priestess Gothami preached to the other nuns about the exemplary lives of Arahant nuns . The Priestess Gothami has seen in deep concentration or Samadhi , like the Arahant nuns 'Patachara', 'Khema', 'Sangamitta', and 'Anula' who lived in Anuradhapura.

The Priestess Gothami recalled the prediction of her grand-father Podi Appuhamy who examined her horoscope and said “ the lass is on the Threshold”.

“ Grandfather, I tried to jump out of the Threshold , that is a threshold of the prison of Sansara . I tell all of you nuns and lay folk who in my presence, try to get out from the Threshold of the prison of Sansara which is full of sorrow. The effort will be fruitful to those who have faith in the Triple Gem. Get out from this Threshold and eliminate sorrow by developing faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom.



CHAPTER 23

The Priestess Gothami's Higher Ordination was held on the 17th day of the July, 2014 at the Sri Wijaya Vidharshana Pirivena in Anuradhapura. Her spiritual teachers and instructors were Professor Kamburugamuwe Vajira Thero and the Venerable Porawagama Somalankara Thero. The teachers of Meditation were Venerable Angulmaduwe Dhammaratana Thero and Venerable Kalupahane Piyaaratana Thero. The spiritual teacher Bhikkunis were foreigners Chey Men, Yi Hang, Man Tho and Dr. Kusuma of Sri Lanka. The teacher Bhikkunis instructing in Meditation were Thalawatugoda Dhamma Deepani Theri and Badalgama Dhamma Nandini Theri.

As a result of The Priestess Gothami's dedication, the Buddhist Dispensation received about twenty virtuous and kind Bhikkunis. Some of them were

Bhikkuni Hanwelle Uttama,
 Bhikkuni Mahanuwara Upekkha,
 Bhikkuni Pelmadulle Metta,
 Bhikkuni Akuresse Dhammadinna,
 Bhikkuni Udugama Chala,
 Bhikkuni Balapitiye Uttara,
 Bhikkuni Ratnapura Kusala,
 Bhikkuni Matara Amitha,
 Bhikkuni Kahahene Mettika,
 Bhikkuni Walapane Upasama,
 Bhikkuni Nedimale Khema,
 Bhikkuni Imbulgoda Vajira.



There were some more Bhikkunis serving the Buddhist Order as pupils of the Priestess Gothami.

In the modern Order of Buddhist nuns in Sri LankaThe prestige

Aryan Priestess Kotikawatte Gothami has renounced everything even before her Ordination. Those who are suffering from the disease of transmigration existence as well as physical and mental diseases were cured of their disturbances by the Priestess Gothami who was an epitome of Kindness.

The Priestess Gothami devotes a greater part of her time to live in the joy of her attainments. She attends to her patients only for a limited time. But , even now patients from various parts of Sri Lanka visit the Monastery. The devotees from Singapore , Malaysia and other European countries are also visit frequently . They return home with great satisfaction.

The Priestess Gothami performed her duties to her father, mother, sister, brother, husband, two sons, daughter, and the mother-in-law and fed with the nectar of Dhamma . They were also directed to the path of the Dhamma . Those who entered the Order as student nuns also doing well. Many have entered the Noble Path. Those benefactors and students living in Singapore and Malaysia have entered the Noble Path.

The wish of the Priestess Gothami is to see the entire world treading to the Noble Path of Dhamma and to see them all well and happy.



THE THRESHOLD

She sees the rising water bubbles vanishing in a moment . She understands that every thing is impermanent or transient . She feels all the formations are vanishing . Past , Present and Future formations are transient . This is a fearful existence .

Now my mind is travelling towards the knowledge of the dissolution of phenomena . There is no medicine to arrest the dissolution of phenomena . No strong person or secure place to stop these dissolution . Therefore phenomena is helpless . To be born , sustain , existence , amassing Karma and future birth , age , disease, death , sorrow , grief , dissatisfaction and weariness are all frustrating and evil . To be devoid of all these miserable phenomena will be a great happiness . But , I am not fearful .



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