Cp 29 — The Baby Quail’s Conduct

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

The Conduct Leading to Buddhahood

The Chapter With Yudhañjaya

The Perfection of Truth (3rd)

The Baby Quail’s Conduct

“Then again when I was
a baby quail in Magadha,
I was young, with wings unsprouted,
just a scrap of meat in the nest.
With food she brought in her beak
my mother nurtured me.
I survived through her touch,
for I had no physical strength.
One year, in the hot season,
the forest caught fire.
It came toward us,
a conflagration with a blackened trail.
The fire roared and rumbled
with great crests of flame,
gradually burning
closer to me.
Alarmed and terrified at the fierce fire,
my mother and father
abandoned me in the nest,

saving themselves.
I beat my feet and wings,
but I had no physical strength.
When unable to leave,
I thought this there:
‘Those to whom I ought to run,
scared and trembling with fear,
have escaped, leaving me behind.
How should I act today?
There is the quality of virtue in the world,
truth, purity, and mercy.
By this truth I will make
a supreme declaration of truth.’
Inspired by the power of Dhamma,
recollecting the former Victors,
relying on the power of truth,
I made a declaration of truth.
‘I have wings that do not fly!
I have feet that do not walk!
Mother and father have fled!
Jātaveda the fire: go back!’
As I declared this truth
the great crested flames
withdrew sixteen leagues,
as if they had come to water.
There is no one to equal my truthfulness:
this is my perfection of truth.”