0.0.1 The Invitation (excerpt)

10. Then the Auspicious One said this to those bhikkhus: “But in what way, O bhikkhus, united and happily together, without disputing, spent a comfortable rains retreat, and not fatigued on account of almsfood?”

11. Here, O Bhante, many of us bhikkhus, friends and associates, accepted a certain residence in the Kosalan country for the rains retreat. It occurred to us, O Bhante: “By what means might we united and happily together, without disputing, spent a comfortable rains retreat, and not fatigued on account of almsfood?”

12. Then it occurred to us, O Bhante: “If we neither speak nor converse with one another, [and would have] the one who returns from village alms gathering first set out the seats, the foot-washing water, the foot stool, the foot-washing wooden block, the bowl for left-overs having washed it, set out the drinking water and the rinsing water. The one who returns from village alms gathering last, if there is any food left over, may eat it if he so desires. If he does not desire, he would throw it away where there is little plant life or in water where there are no living beings. He would pack up the seats, the foot-washing water, the foot stool, the foot-washing wooden block, the bowl for left-overs having washed it, he would set in order the drinking water and the rinsing water, he would sweep up the refactory. Whoever sees

the drinking water vessel, the rinsing water vessel or the toilet water vessel empty and void, would refill it. If it would not be possible for him, then having invited another with the wave of hands, they would fill it by joining hands together, but not on that account should they break into speech. In this way, united and happily together, without disputing, we will spent a comfortable rains retreat, and not fatigued on account of almsfood?"

13. "So then, O Bhante, we neither spoke nor conversed with one another. The one who returned from village alms gathering first set out the seats, the foot-washing water, the foot stool, the foot-washing wooden block, the bowl for left-overs having washed it, set out the drinking water and the rinsing water. The one who returned from village alms gathering last, if there were any food left over, would eat it if he so desired. If he did not desire, he threw it away where there was little plant life or in water where there were no living beings. He packed up the seats, the foot-washing water, the foot stool, the foot-washing wooden block, the bowl for left-overs having washed it, he set in order the drinking water and the rinsing water, he swept up the refactory. Whoever saw the drinking water vessel, the rinsing water vessel or the toilet water vessel empty and void, refilled it. If it were not possible for him, then having invited another with the wave of hands, they filled it by joining hands together, but not on that account did they break into speech. It is in this way, O Bhante, that united and happily together,

without disputing, we will spent a comfortable rains retreat, and not fatigued on account of almsfood?"

14. Then the Auspicious One addressed the bhikkhus: "Indeed these empty men, O bhikkhus, simply having spent an uncomfortable [rains retreat], presume to have spent an equally comfortable [rains retreat]. Indeed these empty men, O bhikkhus, simply having lived together like beasts, presume to have spent an equally comfortable [rains retreat]. Indeed these empty men, O bhikkhus, simply having lived together like sheep, presume to have spent an equally comfortable [rains retreat]. Indeed these empty men, O bhikkhus, simply having lived together like enemies, presume to have spent an equally comfortable [rains retreat]. For how indeed, O bhikkhus, could these empty men, undertake the practice of followers of other standpoints, the observance of silence? This, O bhikkhus, neither [inspires] confidence in those with little confidence, nor increase the confidence of those with confidence. Rather, this only diminish the confidence of those with little confidence and cause wavering in some of those with confidence." Then the Auspicious One, having reprimanded those bhikkhus in various ways with Dhamma talk, addressed the bhikkhus: (or how many) the bhikkhus address: The practice of followers of other standpoints, O bhikkhus, the observance of silence is not to be undertaken. Whoever would undertake it incurs an offence of wrong-doing. I allow you, O bhikkhus, to invite the bhikkhus you live with

during the rains retreat [for feedback] on three grounds, what is seen, heard or suspected. That for you will be a state suitable for communication, a state allowing for rehabilitation from offences, a state honoring the vinaya.