# 1AC – Buddhism [Elmer]

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**On a cool Spring day, a child watched a festival erupt. The festival celebrated the coming of Spring, and the new life that it brought with it after a cold frigid winter. Joy abounded. Upbeat music flooded the air and happiness rained from the sky. The people there danced vigorously, and laughed in a manner so carefree their voices could drown out the roar of a thousand starving lions. At this festival, no one cried. No one fought. No one worried that the next day they would not eat because they knew their peers would forever extend the generosity and care that would keep them alive. And the child loved to watch the beautiful colored decorations and dances from the people. But then, the child turned to look at the ground. And on the ground there were ants being trampled by the people in their celebration. Without reason or warning, their lives were ended, crushed beneath the joyous weight of the people celebrating. And it was in that moment that the child realized that in this world all life and joy is connected invariably to death.**

**As the child grew and began to learn more about the world, he knew that the ants weren't the only ones trampled by the joy of others, but other people in the village as well. And he began to ask why. Why was it that the prosperity of some must always lead to the pain of many? The elders told the child that there was nothing they could do. For it was because of the evil spirit called Death that people suffered. Death, they said, brought evil to this world. The demon was made of violence, greed, and vengeance. "You must refuse Death at every turn" they told the child. Only this could overcome the demon's deadly grip on the world. So the child clung to this with everything he had.**

**The child grew up to be a soldier. Training day and night so that he could one day fight the demon and stop the terrible suffering in the world. But he believed that he needed not only to cultivate his physical strength, but ethical conduct. And so the soldier also studied at a monastery, where he believed he could learn to have the purist values.**

**One day, when the soldier was travelling with a monk, the two approached a river. And at the river an old woman asked for their help getting across. The soldier refused to help. He politely explained that the monastic rules forbade him from touching a woman, and to do so would taint his ethical purity and spiritual cultivation. The monk however, troubled by the rule itself, helped the old woman across the river. The soldier was shocked at the monk's disavowal of the rules, and for the next three miles raved about how he couldn't believe the monk had violated the sacred monastic teachings. He was so furious that it was all he talked or thought about. It was then that the monk turned to him, and said, "I set the woman down at the edge of the river. It is you that is still carrying her."**

**And while the soldier disagreed with the monk, he respected his social superiors as a good student would. And so he simply nodded and the two continued their journey.**

**After years of monastic practice and combat training, the soldier finally met the demon. Death, in all of their evil incarnation, appeared one day at the soldier's door. The soldier pulled out his sword in preparation for battle, and for a moment it seemed as if the demon finally had met their match. But in that moment, something unbelievable happened. Under the heat of the sun, the metal sword began to melt, and became as flimsy as plastic. Infuriated, he pulled out his gun and aimed for the demon's head. But the demon merely grinned and suddenly clouds gathered and rain began to pour. The rain was so heavy that it wet the gunpowder, and the soldier couldn't fire his weapon. Still, the soldier would not give up. "I don't care how bad it gets, I will defeat you because truth and goodness are on my side!" He cried out. The demon chuckled, and asked "and why do you think that is?." And the soldier said to him, "because I am not for the suffering in this world that you cause, I am against it. I am against Death, and am fighting for Humanity"**

**The demon reared back in laughter, "Is that so? Were you not also sitting at the festival, so many years ago, trampling on the ants so that you could have your fun?"**

**And the soldier replied, "No, you did that. I am everything that you are not, and good will prevail. You will not rebuild your house again!"**

**The demon called Death simply replied, "But I am your house, and you live in me"**

**But the soldier refused to believe this. He cried out, "I will not believe your lies! I cannot live in you. You are evil, and I am good!"**

**And at that moment the demon dissipated. The soldier was filled with joy because he believed that the demon had died. He exclaimed. "There will be peace now for everyone in my village, from the people to the trees to even the ants on the ground"**

**And when the soldier returned home the villagers cheered for him, and held a festival in his name. The festival was as beautiful and joyous as the one that was held when the soldier was just a child. At this festival, too, the people danced and sang.**

**But the soldier then slowly began to realize something. Something that came with a terrible weight.**

**That at this festival, too, the people still trampled on the ants.**