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### Letter to Endo Saemon-no-jo



I RECENTLY received an official pardon, and I will return to Kamakura. Can this be the year in which the passage “What I long ago hoped for has now been fulfilled”<sup>1</sup> comes true for me?

Without your protection, could I possibly have sustained my life? Could I have survived to be pardoned? My life’s achievements are due entirely to you and to those like you. The Lotus Sutra says, “The young sons of heavenly beings will wait on him and serve him. Swords and staves will not touch him and poison will have no power to harm him.”<sup>2</sup> How reassuring this sutra is!

Therefore you must be an envoy

sent by the heavenly gods Brahma and Shakra. I will bestow my seals upon you as a promise that you will be re-born in [the pure land of] Eagle Peak. You should take one of them with you to your next existence. [When you arrive] at Eagle Peak, call out, “Nichiren, Nichiren,” and at that time I will come to meet you.

I will write to you again from Kamakura.

Nichiren

The twelfth day of the third month in the eleventh year of Bun’ei (1274), cyclical sign *kinoe-inu*

To Endo Saemon-no-jo



### Background

On the eighth day of the third month in 1274, a government envoy arrived at Sado Island with a pardon for Nichiren Daishonin, thus ending more than two years of exile there. During this period the Daishonin wrote several of his most important works, laying the doctrinal foundations for his inscribing the object of devotion for attaining Buddhahood.

The Daishonin and his party left Ichi-

nosawa, Sado, on the thirteenth day of the third month. He wrote this letter to Endo Saemon-no-jo the day before his departure. Little is known about Endo Saemon-no-jo, though he appears to have been a samurai. According to one opinion, he was a relative of Abutsu-bo. This is the only extant letter addressed to him. In that sense, he may be said to represent the many courageous followers of the Daishonin whose

names have not come down to us.

Though extremely brief, this letter vividly conveys the Daishonin's gratitude for Endo's assistance during his

time of exile. He also warmly assures Endo that his devotion in faith will guarantee his future happiness.

### Notes

1. Lotus Sutra, chap. 2.
2. Ibid., chap. 14. This passage refers to the blessings of one who embraces the Lotus Sutra.