

Recently a friend said he appreciated how the family narrative is firmly connected to the land, and how the story is conscious of its footsteps and footprints on the earth and in time. It's on purpose to be sure; there is no more solid evidence than the ground itself. Mother Nature neither lies, nor forgets; the scars and features of her body carry the memories.

When besieged by Mara and the greatest armies of temptation and destruction, Buddha touched the ground with his right hand and at that moment he accomplished enlightenment.

*This mudra, the earth-touching gesture (bhumisparsha mudra), formed with all five fingers of the right hand extended to touch the ground, symbolizes the Buddha's enlightenment under the bodhi tree, when he summoned the earth goddess, Sthavara, to bear witness to his attainment of enlightenment. The Buddha simply touches the earth with his right hand, and the Earth itself immediately responds: "I am your witness." Mara and his minions vanish.<sup>1</sup>*

One can see, hear, and fully sense eternity, the preciousness of this human life, when grounded in pure awareness, when in intimate contact with the land. Scratch below the surface of facts to find what's buried in time and circumstances. Turn the soil, loosen the packed earth, the memories buried there. Give sunlight a chance to caress Her, stones and all. Fresh insights grow there, they reveal who we are as a whole. Through our connection to each blossom and

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<sup>1</sup> (<https://web.stanford.edu/class/history11sc/pdfs/mudras.pdf>)

new blade of grass we understand the individuals that make up our whole. We understand Wholeness.



*Buddha Shakyamuni earth touching mudra*

Om Mani Padme Hum