

# Memoirs of a Bodhisattva

Short stories by Skip Nelson



## RATTLING THE SECRET SERVICE

Many years ago, through a close friend, who happened to be Ex-President Gerald Ford's Chief of Staff in Rancho Mirage, California, I was fortunate enough to be a personal photographer for the office.

They would call me if they needed photographs for publications. I did one photo of Mr. Ford on Thunderbird Country Club that he told Penny, his Chief-of-Staff, was the best golf shot anyone ever took of him.

The normal shots, however, were ones when special guests were there or, more often, when rotating Secret Service personnel were leaving the service of the President. It was on one of those occasions I came close to being tackled by "The Secret Service Detail of the President".

We had just finished the shoot in his office and I had walked back to chat with Penny in her office for a bit. As I was sitting there I noticed that the settings for my camera were all wrong. I brought it to Penny's attention and she immediately jumped up and said "Quick. Get in there before they all leave!!"

Normally, the approach to an ex-President's office, or any President for that matter, is slow and cautious.

Without thinking, I jumped up, exited her office and ran back to Ford's office, which was about 20 feet away. I grabbed the door and opened it.

It was at that moment that I realized what I had done. I cleared my throat and said, "Sorry Mr. President. I may have made a mistake with my shots. Can we do more?"

Needless to say Ford looked a little stunned. So did the Secret Service.

I got the shots and left.

Later that evening I called Penny to see if I still had a job. She said yes, but don't EVER do that again.

Peace and love,

Skip Nelson

