Thig 11.1 — Uppalavaṇṇā

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Verses of the Senior Nuns 11.1

The Book of the Twelves

Uppalavaṇṇā

“The two of us were co-wives,

though we were mother and daughter.

I was struck with a sense of urgency,

so astonishing and hair-raising!

Curse those filthy sensual pleasures,

so nasty and thorny,

where we, both mother and daughter,

had to be co-wives together.

Seeing the danger in sensual pleasures,

seeing renunciation as sanctuary,

I went forth in Rājagaha

from the lay life to homelessness.

I know my past lives;

my clairvoyance is clarified;

I encompass the minds of others;

my clairaudience is purified;

I’ve realized the psychic powers,

and attained the ending of defilements.

I’ve realized the six kinds of direct knowledge,

and fulfilled the Buddha’s instructions.

I created a four-horsed chariot
using my psychic powers.
Then I bowed at the feet of the Buddha,
the glorious protector of the world.”
“You’ve come to this sal tree all crowned with flowers,
and stand at its root all alone.
But you have no male companion with you—
silly girl, aren’t you afraid of rascals?”
“Even if 100,000 rascals like this
were to gang up,
I’d stir not a hair nor tremble.
What could you do to me all alone, Māra?
I’ll vanish,
or I’ll enter your belly;
I could stand between your eyebrows
and you still wouldn’t see me.
I’m the master of my own mind,
I’ve developed the bases of psychic power well.
I’ve realized the six kinds of direct knowledge,
and fulfilled the Buddha’s instructions.
Sensual pleasures are like swords and spears;
the aggregates are their chopping block.
What you call erotic delight
is now no delight for me.
Relishing is banished in every respect,
and the mass of darkness is shattered.
So know this, Wicked One:
you’re beaten, terminator!”