Thig 13.2 — Rohinī

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Verses of the Senior Nuns 13.2

The Book of the Twenties

Rohinī

“You fell asleep saying ‘ascetics’;

you woke up saying ‘ascetics’;

you only praise ascetics, madam—

surely you’ll become an ascetic.

You provide ascetics

with abundant food and drink.

I ask you now, Rohiṇī:

why do you like ascetics?

They don’t like to work, they’re lazy,

they live on charity;

always on the lookout, greedy for sweets—

so why do you like ascetics?”

“Dad, for a long time now

you’ve questioned me about ascetics.

I shall extol for you

their wisdom, ethics, and vigor.

They like to work, they’re not lazy;

by giving up greed and hate,

they do the best kind of work—

that’s why I like ascetics.

As for the three roots of evil,
by pure deeds they shake them off.
They have given up all wickedness—
that's why I like ascetics.
Their bodily actions are pure;
their actions of speech likewise;
their actions of mind are pure—
that's why I like ascetics.
Immaculate as a conch-shell,
they're pure inside and out,
full of bright qualities—
that's why I like ascetics.
They're learned and memorize the teaching,
noble, living righteously,
teaching the text and its meaning:
that's why I like ascetics.
They're learned and memorize the teaching,
noble, living righteously,
unified in mind, and mindful—
that's why I like ascetics.
Traveling afar, and mindful,
thoughtful in counsel, not restless,
they understand the end of suffering—
that's why I like ascetics.
When they leave a village,
they don't look back with longing,
but proceed without concern—
that's why I like ascetics.
They hoard no goods in storerooms,

nor in pots or baskets.
They seek food prepared by others—
that's why I like ascetics.
They don't receive gold coins,
or gold or silver;
feeding on whatever comes that day,
that's why I like ascetics.
They have gone forth from different families,
even different countries,
and yet they all love one another—
that's why I like ascetics."
"Dear Rohinī, it was truly for our benefit
that you were born in our family!
You have faith and such keen respect
for the Buddha, his teaching, and the Saṅgha.
For you understand this
supreme field of merit.
These ascetics will henceforth
receive our religious donation, too.
For there we will place our sacrifice,
and it shall be abundant."
"If you fear suffering,
if you don't like suffering,
go for refuge to the Buddha, the unaffected,
to his teaching and to the Saṅgha.
Undertake the precepts,
that will be good for you."
"I go for refuge to the Buddha, the unaffected,
to his teaching and to the Saṅgha.

I undertake the precepts,

that will be good for me.

I used to be brahmin only by kin,

now I genuinely am a brahmin.

Master of the three knowledges, I’m a scholar,

a knowledge master, a bathed initiate.”