Thi Ap 26 — 26. Soṇā

English translation by Jonathan S. Walters.

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Text

Therīpadāna

The Legends of the Therīs

26. Soṇā

Walt 858 The Victor, Padumuttara,

was a Master of Everything.

That Leader arose in the world

one hundred thousand aeons hence. Verse 1

Walt 859 Born then in a millionaire’s clan,

I was happy, honored, held dear.

Approaching the Excellent Sage,

I heard his words, sweet as honey. Verse 2

Walt 860 I was overjoyed having heard

the Victor praise the nun foremost

of those who make a strong effort,

doing service for the Teacher. Verse 3

Walt 861 Then worshipping the Sambuddha,
I aspired to attain that place.
The Great Hero approved of that:
“Your aspiration will succeed. Verse 4

Walt 862 In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka’s clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. Verse 5

Walt 863 Worthy heir to that one’s Dhamma,
Dhamma’s legitimate offspring,
the one known by the name Soṇā
will be the Teacher’s follower.” Verse 6

Walt 864 At that time being overjoyed,
as long as life, heart full of love,
I attended on the Victor,
the Guide, providing requisites. Verse 7

Walt 865 Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and firm resolve,
discarding my human body,
I went to Tāvatiṁsa then. Verse 8

Walt 866 And now, in my final rebirth,
I’m born in a millionaire’s clan,
rich, prosperous, very wealthy,
in Śrāvasti, best of cities. Verse 9

Walt 867 When I’d become a young woman,
having gone to a husband’s clan,
I was the mother of ten sons,
very handsome and distinguished. Verse 10

Walt 868 All of them were comfortable,
delightful in the people’s eyes,
brilliant even to enemies,
needless to say, they’re loved by me. Verse 11

Walt 869 Then, without my desiring it,
he who was my husband went forth
in the Buddha’s dispensation,
surrounded by those sons of mine. Verse 12

Walt 870 And then, alone, I reflected:
“Enough with this life here for me,
growing old and in misery,
bereft of my husband and sons. Verse 13

Walt 871 I will also go to the place
where my husband has now arrived.”
After reflecting in that way,
I went forth into homelessness. Verse 14

Walt 872 And then the nuns left me alone
in the retreat for Buddhist nuns,
going off with the instruction:
“heat up the water while we’re gone.” Verse 15

Walt 873 Then bringing water I poured it
into a small potused for that.
After placing it on the hearth,
seated, I then kindled my heart. Verse 16

Walt 874 Seeing the body’s diseased-ness,
essence-less-ness, impermanence,
throwing off all the defilements,
I achieved my arahantship. Verse 17

Walt 875 Then coming back, those Buddhist nuns,
asked me about the hot water.
Through concentration on the fire,
I quickly made the flame ignite. Verse 18

Walt 876 Astonished, the nuns made that fact
audible to the Best Victor.
Hearing it, the Lord, overjoyed,
spoke this verse about me just then: Verse 19

Walt 877 “A life lived only for one day
undertaken with strong effort,
is better than a century
lived inert, lacking energy.” Verse 20

Walt 878 The Great Hero was greatly pleased
by my exemplary conduct.
That Great Sage said that I’m foremost
of those who make a strong effort. Verse 21

Walt 879 My defilements are now burnt up;
all new existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. Verse 22

Walt 880 Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for me.
The three knowledges are attained;
I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 23

Walt 881 The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
I have done what the Buddha taught! Verse 24

Thus indeed Bhikkhunī Soṇā spoke these verses.

The legend of Soṇā Therī is finished.

Translated by Jonathan S. Walters.

Whitman College, 2017

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