Thag 11.1 — Sankicca

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

What do you want in the woods, my boy, like a bird[1] exposed to the rain? Monsoons refresh you, for seclusion is for those in jhana. As the monsoon wind drives the clouds in the rainy season, so thoughts concerned with seclusion impel me. * * * A black crow making its home in a charnel ground inspires within me mindfulness in — based on dispassion for — the body.[2] * * * One whom others don't guard, who doesn't guard others: He is a monk who lies down in ease, unconcerned with sensual passions. * * * With clear waters & massive boulders, frequented by monkeys & deer, covered with moss & water weeds: those rocky crags refresh me. * * * I've lived in wildernesses, canyons, & caves, isolated dwellings frequented by predator & prey, but never have I known an ignoble, aversive resolve: "May these beings be destroyed, be slaughtered, fall into pain." * * * The Teacher has been served by me; the Awakened One's bidding, done; the heavy load, laid down; the guide to becoming,[3] uprooted. And the goal for which I went forth from home life into homelessness I've reached: the end of all fetters. I don't delight in death, don't delight in living. I await my time like a worker his wage. I don't delight in death, don't delight in living. I await my time mindful, alert.

Notes

1.

Ujjuhaana. The Commentary offers two interpretations for this word. The first is that it is a hill covered with jungle and many streams that tended to overflow in the rainy season. The other is that it is the name of a bird that could stay comfortable even when exposed to cold, wind, and rain. I've chosen the second alternative. K.R. Norman speculates that the term could be written ujjahaana, in which case it would be the present participle for a verb meaning abandoned or cast off. However, none of the manuscripts support his speculation.

2.

In other words, the sight of the crow taking up residence in skulls and other body parts provided a chastening perspective on how the mind takes up residence in the body.

3.

The guide to becoming is craving.

See also: Thag 5.8; Thag 14.1; Thag 18.