Thag 12.2 — Thag 12:2 Sunīta the Outcaste

English translation by Ṭhānissaro 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

Thag 12:2 Sunīta the Outcaste

Into a lowly family I was born,

poor, with next to no food.

My work was degrading:

I gathered the spoiled,

the withered flowers from shrines

and threw them away.

People found me disgusting,

despised me, disparaged me.
Lowering my heart,
I showed reverence to many.

Then I saw the One Self-awakened,
arrayed with a squadron of monks,
the Great Hero, entering the city,
supreme, of the Magadhans.
Throwing down my carrying pole,
I approached him to do reverence.
He—the supreme man—stood still
out of sympathy
just
for me.
After paying homage
to the feet of the teacher,
I stood to one side
& requested the Going Forth from him,
supreme among all living beings.

The compassionate Teacher,
sympathetic to all the world, said:
“Come, monk.”
That was my formal Acceptance.

Alone, I stayed in the wilds,
untiring,
I followed the Teacher’s words,
just as he, the Conqueror, had taught me.

In the first watch of the night,
I recollected previous lives;

in the middle watch,

purified the divine eye;

in the last,

burst the mass of darkness.

Then, as night was ending

& the sun returning,

Indra & Brahmā came to pay homage to me,

hands palm-to-palm at their hearts:

“Homage to you,

O thoroughbred of men,

Homage to you,

O man supreme,

whose effluents are ended.

You, dear sir,

are worthy of offerings.”

Seeing me,

arrayed with a squadron of devas,

the Teacher smiled & said:

“Through austerity, celibacy,

restraint, & self-control:

That’s how one is a brahman.

He is a brahman supreme.”

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: SN 3:24; AN 3:58; Ud 5:3