Thag 16.2 — Pārāsariya (2nd)

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Source: https://suttacentral.net/thag16.2/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
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Text

Verses of the Senior Monks 16.2

The Book of the Twenties

Chapter One

Pārāsariya (2nd)

This thought came to the ascetic,

the monk Pārāsariya,

as he was seated alone

meditating in seclusion:

“Following what procedure,

what observance, what conduct,

may a person do what they need for themselves,

without harming anyone else?

The faculties of human beings

can lead to both welfare and harm.

Unguarded they lead to harm;

guarded they lead to welfare.

By protecting the faculties,

taking care of the faculties,

I can do what I need for myself

without harming anyone else.

If your eye wanders

among sights without check,

not seeing the danger,

you’re not freed from suffering.
If your ear wanders
among sounds without check,
not seeing the danger,
you’re not freed from suffering.
If, not seeing the escape,
you indulge in a smell,
you’re not freed from suffering,
being besotted by smells.
Recollecting the sour,
the superbly sweet and the bitter,
captivated by craving for taste,
you don’t understand the heart.
Recollecting lovely
and pleasurable touches,
full of desire, you experience
many kinds of suffering because of lust.
Unable to protect
the mind from such thoughts,
suffering follows them
because of all five.
This body is full of pus and blood,
it’s home to many carcasses;
but cunning people decorate it
like a lovely painted casket.
You don’t understand that
the sweetness of honey turns bitter,
and the bonds to those we love cause pain,
like a razor’s edge smeared with honey.

Full of lust for the sight of a woman,
for the voice and the smells of a woman,
for a woman's touch,
you experience many kinds of suffering.
All of a woman's streams
flow from five to five.
Whoever, being energetic,
is able to curb these,
purposeful and firm in principle,
is clever and clear-seeing.
Though he might enjoy himself,
his duty is connected with the teaching and its goal.
One who's diligent and discerning,
thinking, 'This ought not be done',
would avoid a useless task
that's doomed to failure.
Whatever is meaningful,
and whatever happiness is principled,
let one proceed having undertaken that:
this is the best happiness.
They want to get hold of what belongs to others
by any means, fair or foul.
They kill, injure, and torment,
violently plundering what belongs to others.
Just as a strong person when building
knocks out a peg with a peg,
so the skillful person
knocks out the faculties with the faculties.
Developing faith, energy, immersion,

mindfulness, and wisdom;
destroying the five with the five,
the brahmin walks on untroubled.
Purposeful and firm in principle,
having fulfilled in every respect
the instructions spoken by the Buddha,
that person prospers in happiness.”