SN 5.2 — Soma Sutta: Soma

English translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi.

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

Completeness: UNKNOWN. Entire protected source unit, including notes and verses, preserved; canonical completeness has not been independently established.

Text

Setting at Savatthi. Then, in the morning, the bhikkhuni Soma dressed and, taking bowl and robe, entered Savatthi for alms. When she had walked for alms in Savatthi and had returned from her alms round, after her meal she went to the Blind Men's Grove for the day's abiding. Having plunged into the Blind Men's Grove, she sat down at the foot of a tree for the day's abiding.

Then Mara the Evil One, desiring to arouse fear, trepidation, and terror in the bhikkhuni Soma, desiring to make her fall away from concentration, approached her and addressed her in verse:

That state so hard to achieve Which is to be attained by the seers, Can't be attained by a woman With her two-fingered wisdom.

Then it occurred to the bhikkhuni Soma: "Now who is this that recited the verse — a human being or a non-human being?" Then it occurred to her: "This is Mara the Evil One,

who has recited the verse desiring to arouse fear, trepidation, and terror in me, desiring to make me fall away from concentration."

Then the bhikkhuni Soma, having understood, "This is Mara the Evil One," replied to him in verses:

What does womanhood matter at all When the mind is concentrated well, When knowledge flows on steadily As one sees correctly into Dhamma. One to whom it might occur, 'I'm a woman' or 'I'm a man' Or 'I'm anything at all' — Is fit for Mara to address.

Then Mara the Evil One, realizing, "The bhikkhuni Soma knows me," sad and disappointed, disappeared right there.