SN 5.7 — SN 5:7 Sister Upacālā | Upacālā Sutta

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

Sister Upacālā

Upacālā Sutta (SN 5:7)

Near Sāvatthī. Then, early in the morning, Upacālā the nun adjusted her robes and, taking her bowl & outer robe, went into Sāvatthī for alms. When she had gone for alms in Sāvatthī and had returned from her alms round, after her meal she went to the Grove of the Blind to spend the day. Having gone deep into the Grove of the Blind, she sat down at the foot of a tree for the day’s abiding.

Then Māra the Evil One, wanting to arouse fear, horripilation, & terror in her, wanting to make her fall away from concentration, approached her & said, “Where do you want to reappear [be reborn], nun?”

“I don’t want to reappear anywhere, my friend.”

Māra:

“The Devas of the Thirty-three,

the Hours, the Contented,

devas who delight in creation,

& devas in control:

Direct your mind there

and it will enjoy

delight.”

Sister Upacālā:

“The Devas of the Thirty-three,

the Hours, the Contented,

devas who delight in creation,

& devas in control:

They are bound

with the bonds of sensuality;

they come again

under Māra’s sway.

The whole world is burning.

The whole world is aflame.

The whole world is blazing.

The whole world is shaken.

The unshaken, untrembling1

—of which people run-of-the-mill

don’t partake,

where Māra’s

never been—

that’s where my heart

truly delights.”

Then Māra the Evil One—sad & dejected at realizing, “Upacālā the nun knows me”—vanished right there.

Note

1. Acalita. This word plays on the “cālā” in Upacālā’s name.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 49; SN 4:19; SN 35:202