# SN 5.9 — Sela Sutta: Sister Sela

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn05/sn05.009.than.html

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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

At Savatthi. Then, early in the morning, Sela the nun put on her robes and, taking her bowl & outer robe, went into Savatthi for alms. When she had gone for alms in Savatthi 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 Mara the Evil One, wanting to arouse fear, horripilation, & terror in her, wanting to make her fall away from concentration, approached her & addressed her in verse:

By whom was this doll created? Where is the doll's maker? Where has the doll originated? Where does it cease?

Then the thought occurred to Sela the nun: "Now who has recited this verse — a human being or a non-human one?" Then it occurred to her: "This is Mara the Evil One, who has recited this verse wanting to arouse fear, horripilation, & terror in me, wanting to make me fall away from concentration."

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

This doll isn't self-made, nor is this misery made by another.[1] In dependence on a cause it comes into play. With the dissolution of the cause it ceases. Just as a seed grows — when planted in a field — because of the soil's savor together with moisture; in the same way, these aggregates, properties, sense media — in dependence on a cause — come into play. With the dissolution of the cause they cease.

Then Mara the Evil One — sad & dejected at realizing, "Sela the nun knows me" — vanished right there.

Note

1.

Alternative reading:

This doll, this misery, isn't created.