SN 5.10 — Vajira Sutta: Vajira

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 Vajira dressed and, taking bowl and robe, entered Savatthi for alms. When she had walked for alms in Savatthi [135] 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 Vajira, desiring to make her fall away from concentration, approached her and addressed her in verse:

By whom has this being been created? Where is the maker of the being? Where has the being arisen? Where does the being cease?

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

Why now do you assume 'a being'? Mara, have you grasped a view? This is a heap of sheer constructions: Here no being is found. Just as, with an assemblage of parts, The word 'chariot' is used, So, when the aggregates are present, There's the convention 'a being.' It's only suffering that comes to be, Suffering that stands and falls away. Nothing but suffering comes to be, Nothing but suffering ceases.

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