SN 20.6 — Dhanuggaha Sutta: The Archer

English translation by Thanissaro 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

Staying at Savatthi. "Monks, suppose there were four strong archers — well-trained, practiced, & drilled — standing in the four directions, and a man were to come along saying, 'I will catch & bring down the arrows let fly by these four strong archers — well-trained, practiced, & drilled — before they have fallen to the ground.' What do you think? Would that be enough to call him a swift man, endowed with the foremost speed?"

"Even if he were to catch & bring down the arrows let fly by one archer — well-trained, practiced, & drilled — before they fell to the ground, lord, that would be enough to call him a swift man, endowed with the foremost speed, to say nothing of four such archers."

"Faster than the speed of that man, monks, is the speed of the sun & moon. Faster than the speed of that man, faster than the speed of the sun & moon, is the speed of the devas who rush ahead of the sun & moon. Faster than the speed of that man, faster than the speed of the sun & moon, faster than the speed of the devas who rush ahead of the sun & moon, the force of one's life span comes to an end. Thus you should train yourselves: 'We will live heedfully.' That's how you should train yourselves."

See also: SN 2.19; Sn 4.6.