

# SN 5.2: Somā Sutta

## *Somā*

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

At Sāvatti. In the morning, Somā Bhikkhunī dressed, took her bowl and robe, and entered Sāvatti for alms. After collecting alms in Sāvatti, finishing her meal, and returning from almsround, she went to spend the day in the Blind Grove. She entered the Blind Grove and sat at the base of a certain tree. Then Māra the Evil One, wishing to produce fear, terror, and trepidation in Somā Bhikkhunī and wishing to make her lose concentration, approached her and spoke these verses to her:

“That which is to be reached by sages,  
That condition which is so hard to produce,  
Cannot be attained by a woman  
With her limited wisdom.”

Then Somā Bhikkhunī thought, “Who is speaking these verses – a human or a non-human?” Then she thought, “It is Māra the Evil One who is speaking these verses, wishing to produce fear, terror, and trepidation in me and wishing to make me lose concentration.” Having known “This is Māra the Evil One,” she replied to him with these verses:

“What difference does being a woman make  
When the mind is well-concentrated,  
Following the course of knowing,  
Correctly and insightfully seeing the Dhamma?

“If someone thinks ‘I am a woman’  
or ‘I am a man’  
or ‘I am anything’  
then that person is subject to Māra’s control.”<sup>1</sup>

Then Māra the Evil One, thinking “Somā Bhikkhunī knows me,” unhappy and depressed, immediately disappeared.

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1 In the Therīgāthā version, this paragraph is replaced by a different set of verses:  
*“Everywhere delight has been destroyed, the mass of darkness has been split asunder,  
“Know this, Evil One – you have been brought down, Ender!”*