

Sathara pera nimithi **The Four Omens**

Sickness stalks the earth in varying forms
Torturous, bed-confining
Dismembering; grotesquely disfiguring
Old age gradually sets in.

Losing of faculties; helplessly dependent
Burdensome.
Death is certain.
Longevity yes: but not immortality.
Birth is death.
Realisation
Of the inevitability
Of sickness, old age. Death'

These limitations of life
The ascetic withdraws to a life of contemplation.
The sight of these
Sickness, old age, death and asceticism
Caused the Holy One
To renounce his princely life
For a life of asceticism
In his search of the truth
Gaining enlightenment.

*J.C.
Kelaniya.*

Those were the days

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To the Groves of Veluwana and Jetawana
Men and women, Nobility and Royalty
Thronged to seek answers to their queries,
From the Enlightened One.
The queries ranged from the mundane,
To queries about the complexities of life;
How a person could be happy and contented,
Face traumatic experiences,
Rise from depths of despair and insanity.
On quiet nights, when the world was asleep
Celestial beings approached the Buddha,
Posed uncertainties and clarified their views.
Accompanying His disciples or treading alone,
Traversing long distances,
He led a strenuous path,
To lift the thick veil of ignorance
Enveloping the lives of many;
A super human effort it was
Searching for and disseminating the Dhamma,
We remember with gratitude
Offer these flowers at His feet
And worship Him
On the thrice-blessed full moon day of Vesak.

- *Sunila Nanayakkara*