AN 4.113 — AN 4:113 The Goad-stick | Patoda Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

The Goad-stick

Patoda Sutta (AN 4:113)

"There are these four types of excellent thoroughbred horses to be found existing in the world. Which four? There is the case where an excellent thoroughbred horse, on seeing the shadow of the goad-stick, is stirred & agitated, (thinking,) 'I wonder what task the trainer will have me do today? What should I do in response?' Some excellent thoroughbred horses are like this. And this is the first type of excellent thoroughbred horse to be found existing in the world.

"And further, there is the case where an excellent thoroughbred horse isn't stirred & agitated on seeing the shadow of the goad-stick, but when his coat is pricked (with the

goad stick) he is stirred & agitated, (thinking,) 'I wonder what task the trainer will have me do today? What should I do in response?' Some excellent thoroughbred horses are like this. And this is the second type of excellent thoroughbred horse to be found existing in the world.

"And further, there is the case where an excellent thoroughbred horse isn't stirred & agitated on seeing the shadow of the goad-stick, or when his coat is pricked, but when his hide is pricked (with the goad stick) he is stirred & agitated, (thinking,) 'I wonder what task the trainer will have me do today? What should I do in response?' Some excellent thoroughbred horses are like this. And this is the third type of excellent thoroughbred horse to be found existing in the world.

"And further, there is the case where an excellent thoroughbred horse isn't stirred & agitated on seeing the shadow of the goad-stick, or when his coat is pricked, or when his hide is pricked, but when his bone is pricked (with the goad stick) he is stirred & agitated, (thinking,) 'I wonder what task the trainer will have me do today? What should I do in response?' Some excellent thoroughbred horses are like this. And this is the fourth type of excellent thoroughbred horse to be found existing in the world.

"These are the four types of excellent thoroughbred horses to be found existing in the world.

"Now, there are these four types of excellent thoroughbred persons to be found existing in the world. Which four?

"There is the case where a certain excellent thoroughbred person hears, 'In that town or village over there, a man or woman is in pain or has died.' He is stirred & agitated by that. Stirred, he becomes appropriately resolute. Resolute, he both realizes with his body the highest truth and, having penetrated it with discernment, sees. This type of excellent thoroughbred person, I tell you, is like the excellent thoroughbred horse who, on seeing the shadow of the goad-stick, is stirred & agitated. Some excellent thoroughbred people are like this. And this is the first type of excellent thoroughbred person to be found existing in the world.

"And further, there is the case where a certain excellent thoroughbred person doesn't hear, 'In that town or village over there, a man or woman is in pain or has died.' But he himself sees a man or woman in pain or dead. He is stirred & agitated by that. Stirred, he becomes appropriately resolute. Resolute, he both realizes with his body the highest truth and, having penetrated it with discernment, sees. This type of excellent thoroughbred person, I tell you, is like the excellent thoroughbred horse who, when its coat is pricked with the goad-stick, is stirred & agitated. Some excellent thoroughbred people are like this. And this is the second type of excellent thoroughbred person to be found existing in the world.

"And further, there is the case where a certain excellent thoroughbred person doesn't hear, 'In that town or village over there, a man or woman is in pain or has died.' And he

himself doesn't see a man or woman in pain or dead. But he sees one of his own blood relatives in pain or dead. He is stirred & agitated by that. Stirred, he becomes appropriately resolute. Resolute, he both realizes with his body the highest truth and, having penetrated it with discernment, sees. This type of excellent thoroughbred person, I tell you, is like the excellent thoroughbred horse who, when its hide is pricked with the goad-stick, is stirred & agitated. Some excellent thoroughbred people are like this. And this is the third type of excellent thoroughbred person to be found existing in the world.

"And further, there is the case where a certain excellent thoroughbred person doesn't hear, 'In that town or village over there, a man or woman is in pain or has died.' And he himself doesn't see a man or woman in pain or dead, nor does he see one of his own blood relatives in pain or dead. But he himself is touched by bodily feelings that are painful, fierce, sharp, wracking, repellent, disagreeable, life-threatening. He is stirred & agitated by that. Stirred, he becomes appropriately resolute. Resolute, he both realizes with his body the highest truth and, having penetrated it with discernment, sees. This type of excellent thoroughbred person, I tell you, is like the excellent thoroughbred horse who, when its bone is pricked with the goad-stick, is stirred & agitated. Some excellent thoroughbred people are like this. And this is the fourth type of excellent thoroughbred person to be found existing in the world.

"These are the four types of excellent thoroughbred persons to be found existing in the world."

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: SN 3:17; AN 6:19—20; AN 8:13—14; AN 10:15; AN 11:10; Dhp 21–32; Sn 1:4; Sn 3:8