Ja 160 — Vinilaka Jātaka

English translation by W. H. D. Rouse.

Source: https://raw.githubusercontent.com/suttacentral/sc-data/2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b/html_text/en/pli/sutta/kn/ja/vol2/ja160.html

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Edited by E. B. Cowell

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Pinned source revision: https://github.com/suttacentral/sc-data/commit/2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b

Scope: Complete numbered source article from the traditional Jātaka commentary; canonical verses appear in story context. This is not a verse-only edition.

Changes: Converted the pinned SuttaCentral HTML article to plain text; removed inline print page-reference labels and normalized whitespace. The original source retains references.

Text

“As yonder king goes galloping,” etc.—This story the Master told during a sojourn in Veluvana, how Devadatta imitated the Buddha.

The two chief Disciples went to visit Gayasisa, where Devadatta imitated the Buddha, and fell; the Elders then both returned, after delivering a discourse, taking with them their own pupils. On arriving at Veluvana, the Master asked them what Devadatta had done when he saw them? “Sir,” they said, “he imitated the Buddha, and was utterly destroyed.” The Master answered, “It is not only now, Sariputta, that Devadatta came to dire destruction by mimicking me; it was just the same before.” Then at the Elder’s request, he told an old-world tale.

Once upon a time, when Videha was reigning at Mithila in the realm of Videha, the Bodhisatta became a son of his Queen Consort. He grew up in due course, and was educated at Takkasila; and on his father’s decease he inherited his kingdom.

At that time a certain king of the Golden Geese paired with a Crow at the feeding-grounds, and to them was born a son. He was like neither mother nor father. All dingy blue-black he was, and accordingly they gave him Dingy to his name. The Goose-king often visited his offspring; and he had besides two other sons, geese like himself. These remarked that he often used to go to the regions where mankind do frequent, and asked him what should be the reason. “My sons,” said he, “I have a mate there, a Crow, and she has given me a son, whose name is Dingy. He it is I go to visit.” “Where do they live?” they asked. “On a palm-top near Mithila in the kingdom of Videha,” describing the spot. “Father,” said they, “where men are, there is fear and peril. You ought not to go there; let us go and fetch him to you.”

So they took a stick, and perched Dingy upon it; then catching the ends in their beaks, they flew over the city of Mithila.

At that moment King Videha chanced to be sitting in a magnificent carriage drawn by a team of four milk-white thoroughbreds, as he made a triumphal circuit of the city. Dingy saw him, and thought he—"What is the difference between King Videha and me? He is riding in state around his capital in a chariot drawn by four white horses; and I am carried in a vehicle drawn by a pair of Geese." So as he passed through the air he repeated the first stanza:

"As yonder king goes galloping with his milk-white four-in-hand,

Dingy has these, his pair of Geese, to bear him over the land!"

These words made the Geese angry. Their first thought was "Let us drop him here, and leave him!" But then again they bethought them—"What will our father say!" So for fear of rebuke, they brought the creature to their father, and recounted all that he had done. The father grew angry when he heard it: "What!" said he, "are you my sons' superior, that you make yourself master over them, and treat them like horses in a carriage? You don't know your measure. This is no place for you; get you back to your mother!" And with this censure he repeated the second stanza:

"Dingy, my dear, there's danger here; this is no place for you;

By village gates your mother waits—there you must hasten too."

With this censure, he bade his sons convey the bird to the dunghill outside the city of Mithila; and so they did.

This lesson ended, the Master identified the Birth: "Devadatta in those days was Dingy, the two Elders were the two young Geese, Ananda was the father Goose, and I was king Videha myself."

The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births, edited by E.B. Cowell, published by The Cambridge University Press.

Vol. 1, translated by Robert Chalmers, 1895.

Vol. 2, translated by W.H.D. Rouse, 1895.

Vol. 3, translated by H.T. Francis and R.A. Neil, 1897.

Vol. 4, translated by W.H.D. Rouse, 1901.

Vol. 5, translated by H.T. Francis, 1905.

Vol. 6, translated by E.B. Cowell and W.H.D. Rouse, 1907.

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