Ja 197 — Mittamitta 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/ja197.html

Source revision: 2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b

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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

“He smiles not,” etc.—This story the Master told whilst dwelling at Savatthi, about a certain Brother.

This Brother took a piece of cloth, deposited by his teacher, feeling confident that if he took it his teacher would not be angry. Then he made a shoe-bag of it, and took his leave. When this teacher asked why he took it, he replied he had felt confident, if he did, that his teacher would not be angry. The teacher flew into a passion, got up and struck him a blow. “What confidence is there between you and me?” he asked.

This fact became known among the Brotherhood. One day the brothers were all together talking about it in the Hall of Truth. “Friend, young Brother So-and-so felt so confident of his teacher’s friendship, that he took a piece of cloth, and made it into a shoe-bag. Then the teacher asked him what confidence there was between them, flew into a passion, jumped up, and gave him a blow.” The Master came in, and asked them what they were talking of as they sat there together. They told him. Then he said, “This is not the first time, Brothers, that this man has disappointed the confidence of his fellow. He did the same before.” And then he told an old-world tale.

Once upon a time, when Brahmadatta was king of Benares, the Bodhisatta was born as a brahmin’s son in the realm of Kasi. When he came of age, he renounced the world; he caused to grow in him the Supernatural Faculties and the Attainments, and took up his abode in the region of Himalaya with a band of disciples. One of this band of ascetics disobeyed the voice of the Bodhisatta, and kept a young elephant which had lost its dam. This creature by and by grew big, then killed its master and made off into the forest. The ascetics did his obsequies; and then, coming about the Bodhisatta, they put this question to him.

“Sir, how may we know whether one is a friend or an enemy?”

This the Bodhisatta declared to them in the following stanzas—

“He smiles not when he sees him, no welcome will he show,

He will not turn his eyes that way, and answers him with No.

“These are the marks and tokens by which your foe you see:

These if a wise man sees and hears he knows his enemy.”

In these words the Bodhisatta declared the marks of friend and foe. Thereafter he cultivated the Excellences, and entered the heaven of Brahma.

When the Master had ended this discourse, he identified the Birth—“The Brother in question was he who kept the pet elephant, his teacher was the elephant, the Buddha’s followers were then the band of hermits, and I myself was their chief.”

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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Prepared for SuttaCentral by Bhikkhu Sujato.