Ja 246 — Telovada 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/ja246.html

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Edited by E. B. Cowell

Original edition: Cambridge University Press, volume 2, 1895

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

“The wicked kills,” etc.—This is a story which the Master told while staying in his gabled chamber near Vesali, about Sihasenapati.

It is said that this man, after he had fled to the Refuge, offered hospitality and then gave food with meat in it. The naked ascetics on hearing this were angry and displeased; they wanted to do the Buddha a mischief; “The priest Gotama,” sneered they, “with his eyes open, eats meat prepared on purpose for him.”

The Brethren discussed this matter in their Hall of Truth: “Friend, Nathaputta the Ascetic goes about sneering, because, he says, ‘Priest Gotama eats meat prepared on purpose for him, with his eyes open’.” Hearing this, the Master rejoined—“This is not the first time, Brethren, that Nathaputta has been sneering at me for eating meat which was got ready for me on purpose; he did just so in former times. And he told them an old-world tale.

Once on a time, when Brahmadatta was king of Benares, the Bodhisatta was born a brahmin. When he came of age he embraced the religious life.

He came down from Himalaya to get salt and seasoning, and next day walked the city, begging alms. A certain wealthy man designed to annoy the ascetic. So he brought him to his dwelling, and pointed out a seat, and then served him with fish. After the meal, the man sat on one side, and said,

“This food was prepared on purpose for you, by killing living creatures. Not upon my head is this wrong, but upon yours!” And he repeated the first stanza—

“The wicked kills, and cooks, and gives to eat:

He is defiled with sin that takes such meat.”

On hearing this, the Bodhisatta recited the second stanza—

“The wicked may for gift slay wife or son,

Yet, if the holy eat, no sin is done.”

And the Bodhisatta with these words of instruction rose from his seat and departed.

This discourse ended, the Master identified the Birth: “Nathaputta, the Naked Ascetic was this wealthy man, and I was the ascetic.”

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.