Ja 261 — Paduma 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/ja261.html

Source revision: 2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b

License: Public Domain (original English edition, published 1895–1907)

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

“Cut, and cut, and cut again,” etc. This story the Master told at Jetavana, about some Brethren who made offering of garlands under Ananda’s tree. The circumstances will be given in the Kalinga-bodhi Birth. This was called Ananda’s tree, because Ananda planted it. All India heard tell haw the Elder had planted this tree by the gate of Jetavana.

Some Brethren who lived in the country thought they would make offerings before Ananda’s tree. They journeyed to Jetavana, did their devoirs to the Master, and next day wended their way to Savatthi, to the Lotus Street; but not a garland could they get. So they told Ananda, how they had wished to make an offering to the tree, but that not a garland was to be had in all the Lotus Street. The Elder promised to fetch some; so he went off to the Lotus Street, and returned with many handfuls of blue lotus, which he gave them. With these they made their offering to the tree.

When the Brethren got wind of this, they began discussing the Elder’s merits in the Hall of Truth: “Friend, some brothers of little merit from the country could not get a single nosegay in the Lotus Bazaar; but the Elder went and fetched them some.” The Master entered, and asked what they were talking of as they sat there; and they told him. Said he, “Brethren, this is not the first time that the clever tongue has gained a garland for clever speaking; it was the same before.” And he told them an old-world tale.

Once on a time, when Brahmadatta reigned in Benares, the Bodhisatta was a rich merchant’s son. In the town was a tank, in which the lotus flowered. A man who had lost his nose looked after the tank.

It happened one day that they proclaimed holiday in Benares; and the three sons of this rich man thought that they would put wreaths upon them, and go a merrymaking. “We’ll flatter up the old lacknose fellow, and then we’ll beg some flowers of him.” So at the time when he used to pluck the lotus flowers, to the tank they went, and waited. And one of

them uttered the first stanza:

“Cut, and cut, and cut again,

Hair and whiskers grow amain;

And your nose will grow like these,

Give me just one lotus, please!”

But the man was angry, and gave none. Then the second said the second stanza:

“In the autumn seeds are sown

Which ere long are fully grown;

May your nose sprout up like these.

Give me just one lotus, please!”

Again the man was angry, and gave no lotus. Then the third of them repeated the third stanza:

“Babbling fools! to think that they

Can get a lotus in this way.

Say they yes, or say they no,

Noses cut no more will grow.

See, I ask you honestly:

Give a lotus, air, to me!”

On hearing this the lake keeper said, “The other two lied, but you have spoken the truth. You deserve to have some lotuses.” So he gave him a great bunch of lotus, and went back to his lake.

When the Master had ended this discourse, he identified the Birth: “The boy who got the lotus was I 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.

These translations are in the public domain. You are free to do whatever you like with them.

Scanned, proofed and formatted at sacred-texts.com, January 2006–February 2010, by John Bruno Hare and others. Thanks to the Sacred Texts Archive for making these texts available in digital form.

Prepared for SuttaCentral by Bhikkhu Sujato.