Ja 295 — Anta 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/ja295.html

Source revision: 2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b

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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

“Like to a bull,” etc.— This is another story told by the Master in the same place and about the same people. The circumstances are the sane as before.

Once upon a time, when Brahmadatta was king of Benares, the Bodhisatta became the spirit of a castor-oil-tree which stood in the approach to a certain village. An old ox died in a certain village; and they dragged the carcase out and threw it down in the grove of these trees by the village gate. A Jackal came and began to eat its flesh. Then came a Crow, and perched upon the tree. When she saw the Jackal, she cast about whether by flattery she could not get some of this carcase to eat. And so she repeated the first stanza:

“Like to a bull your body seems to be,

Like to a lion your activity.

O king of beasts! all glory be to thee!

Please don’t forget to leave a bit for me.”

On hearing this the Jackal repeated the second:

“They that of gentle birth and breeding be

Know how to praise the gentle worthily,

O Crow, whose neck is like the peacock’s neck,

Come down from off’ the tree and take a peck!”

The Tree-spirit, on seeing this, repeated the third:

“The lowest of all beasts the Jackal is,

The Crow is lowest of all birds y-wis,

The Castor-oil of trees the lowest tree:

And now these lowest things are here all three!”

When the Master had ended this discourse he identified the Birth: “At that time Devadatta was the Jackal, Kokalika was the Crow, but the Tree-spirit 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.

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Prepared for SuttaCentral by Bhikkhu Sujato.