Ja 304 — Daddara Jātaka

English translation by H. T. Francis and R. A. Neil.

Source: https://raw.githubusercontent.com/suttacentral/sc-data/2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b/html_text/en/pli/sutta/kn/ja/vol3/ja304.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

“O Daddara, who,” etc.—This story the Master told while dwelling at Jetavana, about a certain choleric fellow. The circumstance has been already related before. On this occasion when a discussion had arisen in the Hall of Truth about the passionate nature of the man, the Master came up, and when in answer to his inquiry he was told by the Brethren the subject of their discourse, he sent for the man and asked, “Is it true, Brother, what they say, that you are passionate?” “Yes, my Lord, it is so,” he replied. Then the Master said, “Not now only, Brethren, but of old too this fellow was very choleric, and owing to his passionate temper wise men of former days though continuing to lead perfectly innocent lives as Naga princes, had to dwell three years on a filthy dunghill.” And herewith he told an old story.

Once upon a time when Brahmadatta was reigning at Benares, the Daddara Nagas dwelt at the foot of Mount Daddara in the Himalaya region and the Bodhisatta came to life as Mahadaddara, the son of Suradaddara, the king of that country, with a younger brother named Culladaddara. The latter was passionate and cruel, and went about abusing and striking the Naga maidens. The Naga king, on hearing of his cruelty, gave orders for his expulsion from the Naga world. But Mahadaddara got his father to forgive him and saved his brother from expulsion. A second time the king was wroth with him, and again he was induced to forgive him. But on the third occasion the king said, “You have prevented me from expelling this good-for-nothing fellow; now both of you get you gone from this Naga world, and live for three years at Benares on a dunghill.”

So he drove them forth from the Naga country and they went and lived at Benares. And when the village boys saw them looking for their food in a ditch bounding the dunghill, they struck them and threw clods and sticks and other missiles at them, and crying out, “What have we here—water lizards with big heads and tails like needles?” uttered other words of abuse. But Culladaddara, by reason of his fierce and passionate nature, being unable to put up with such disrespect said, “Brother, these boys are mocking us. They don’t

know that we are venomous serpents. I can't stand their contempt for us. I will destroy them by the breath of my nostril." And then addressing his brother, he repeated the first stanza:

O Daddara, who such an insult could bear?

"Ho! frog-eating stick-i'-the-mud," they cry:

To think that these poor harmless creatures should dare

A serpent with poisonous fang to defy!

On hearing his words Mahadaddara uttered the rest of the stanzas:

An exile driven to a foreign shore

Must of abuse lay up a goodly store;

For where his rank and virtues none can know,

Only the fool his pride would care to show.

He who at home a "shining light" may be,

Abroad must suffer men of low degree.

So they dwelt there three years. Then their father recalled them home. And from that day their pride was abated.

When the Master had brought his discourse to an end, he proclaimed the Truths and identified the Birth—At the conclusion of the Truths the choleric Brother attained Fruition of the Third Path—"At that time the choleric Brother was Culladaddara, and I myself was Mahadaddara."

See the Fakeer as he swings on his iron,

See the thin Hermit that starves in the wild;

Think ye no pleasures the penance environ,

And hope the sole bliss by which pain is beguiled?

No! in the kingdoms those spirits are reaching,

Vain are our words the emotions to tell;

Vain the distinctions our senses are teaching,

For Pain has its Heaven and Pleasure its Hell!

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.