# Ja 312 — Kassapamandiya 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/ja312.html

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Edited by E. B. Cowell

Original edition: Cambridge University Press, volume 3, 1897

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

“Should foolish youth,” etc.—This story the Master told while residing at Jetavana, about an aged Brother. A young nobleman at Savatthi, tradition says, from a sense of the evil consequences of sinful desires received ordination at the hands of the Master, and by devotion to the rite by which ecstasy may be induced, in no long time attained to Sainthood. By and bye on the death of his mother, he admitted his father and younger brother to orders, and they took up their abode at Jetavana.

At the opening of the rainy season, hearing of a village retreat where the necessary robes were to be easily obtained, they all three entered upon the Vassa residence there, and when it was ended they returned straight to Jetavana. The youthful Brother, when they came to a spot not far from Jetavana, told the novice lad to bring on the old man quietly, while he himself pushed on ahead to Jetavana to get ready their cell. The old priest walked slowly on. The novice repeatedly butted him, as it were, with his head, and dragged him along by force, crying, “Come on, Master.” The elder said, “You are pulling me along against my will,” and turning back he made a fresh start from the beginning. As they were thus quarrelling, the sun went down and darkness set in. The young Brother meanwhile swept out his hut, set water in the pots, and not seeing them coming, he took a torch and went to meet them. When he saw them coming, he asked what made them so late. The old man gave the reason. So he made them rest and brought them slowly on their way. That day he found no time to pay his respects to the Buddha. So on the next day, when he had come to pay his respects to Buddha, after he had saluted him and taken his seat, the Master asked, “When did you arrive?” “Yesterday, Sir.” “You came yesterday and pay your respects to me only to-day?” “Yes, Sir,” he answered, and told him the reason. The Master rebuked the elder: “Not now only does he act like this. Of old too he did just the same. Now it is you that are annoyed by him. Formerly he annoyed wise men.” And at the Brother’s request he told an old story.

Once upon a time when Brahmadatta reigned in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life in a brahmin family in a town of the Kasi country. When he was grown up, his mother died. And after due performance of her funeral rites, at the end of six weeks he gave away in alms all the money that was in the house, and taking his father and younger brother with him he put on the bark garment of somebody or other, and adopted the religious life of an ascetic in the Himalaya country. And there he dwelt in a pleasant grove, supporting himself by gleaning in the fields and living on roots and wild fruits.

Now in the Himalaya, during the rainy season, when the rains are incessant, as it is impossible to dig up any bulb or root, or to get any wild fruits, and the leaves begin to fall, the ascetics for the most part come down from the Himalayas, and take up their abode amidst the haunts of men. And at this time the Bodhisatta, after living here with his father and younger brother, as soon as the Himalaya country began to blossom again and bear fruit, took his two companions and returned to his hermitage in the Himalayas. And at sunset when they were not far from his hut he left them, saying, "You can come on slowly, while I go forward and set the hermitage in order."

Now the young hermit coming on slowly with his father kept butting him in the waist with his head. The old man said, "I do not like the way in which you are taking me home." So he turned back and started afresh from the same point. And while they were thus quarrelling, darkness set in. But the Bodhisatta as soon as he had swept out his hut of leaves, and got ready some water, took a torch and returned on the way back, and when he found them he asked why they had taken such a long time. And the boy ascetic told him what his father had done. But the Bodhisatta brought them quietly home, and having stowed safely away all the Buddhist requisites, he gave his father a bath, and washed and anointed his feet and shampooed his back. Then he set out a pan of charcoal and when his father had recovered from his fatigue, he sat near him and said, "Father, young boys are just like earthen vessels: they are broken in a moment, and when they are once broken, it is impossible to mend them again. Old men should bear with them patiently, when they are abusive." And for the admonition of his father Kassapa, he repeated these stanzas—

Should foolish youth in word or deed offend,

'Tis wisdom's part long-suffering to display;

Quarrels of good men find a speedy end,

Fools part asunder, like untempered clay.

Men wise to learn, of their own sins aware,

Friendship can prove, that suffers no decay;

Such are a brother's burden strong to bear,

And strife of neighbours skilful to allay.

Thus did the Bodhisatta admonish his father. And he from that time forward exercised self-restraint.

The Master, having brought his lesson to an end, identified the Birth: “At that time the old priest was the father hermit, the novice was the boy hermit, and I myself was the son who admonished his father.”

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.