

The Loss of Friends (Panchatantra, Part I)

Once upon a time, Amarasakti ruled the city-state of Mahilaropyam in the south of India. He had three witless sons who became a matter of endless worry for him. Realizing that his sons had no interest in learning, the king summoned his ministers and said:

“You know I am not happy with my sons. According to men of learning an unborn son and a stillborn son are better than a son who is a dimwit. What good is a barren cow? A son who is stupid will bring dishonour to his father. How can I make them fit to be my successors? I turn to you for advice.”

One of the ministers suggested the name of Vishnu Sharman, a great scholar enjoying the respect of hundreds of his disciples. “He is the most competent person to tutor your children. Entrust them to his care and very soon you will see the change.”

The king summoned Vishnu Sharman and pleaded with him “Oh, venerable scholar, take pity on me and please train my sons into great scholars and I will make you the lord of hundred villages.”

Vishnu Sharman said “Oh, king, listen to my pledge. Hundred villages do not tempt me to vend learning. Count six months from today. If I do not make your children great scholars, you can ask me to change my name.”

The king immediately called his sons and handed them to the care of the learned man. Sharman took them to his monastery where he started teaching them the five strategies (Panchatantra). Keeping his word, he finished the task the king entrusted him in six months. Since then, Panchatantra became popular all over the world as children's guide in solving problems of life.



Now begins the Loss of Friends (first of the five strategies) series. These are stories that figure in a dialogue between two jackals named Karataka and Damanaka.

Long, long ago, a merchant named Vardhaman lived in a town in the south of India. As he was resting on his bed one day it struck him that money was the axis of the world and that the more he had of it the more he would be powerful. Even enemies seek the friendship of a rich man, he told himself. The old become young if they have riches and the young become old if they do not have wealth. Business is one of the six ways that help man amass wealth. This was his logic.

Mobilizing all his wares, Vardhaman set out on an auspicious day for Madhura in search of markets for his goods. He began his travel in a gaily-decorated cart drawn by two bullocks. On the way, tired of the long haul, one of the bullocks named Sanjeevaka collapsed in the middle of a jungle near river Jamuna. But the merchant continued his journey asking some of his servants to take care of the animal. But the servants abandoned the bullock soon after their master had left. Joining him later, they told him that the bullock was dead.

In fact, Sanjeevaka was not dead. Feeding on the abundant fresh and tender grass in the forest, he regained strength and began to merrily explore the jungle, dancing and singing in joy. In the same forest lived Pingalaka, the lion. Sanjeevaka, content with his new life in the jungle would waltz and sing uproariously with joy. One day, Pingalaka and other animals were drinking water in the Jamuna when the lion heard the frightening bellow

of the bullock. In panic, the lion withdrew into the forest and sat deeply lost in thought and surrounded by other animals.



Sensing the predicament of their king, two jackals, Karataka and Damanaka, sons of two dismissed ministers, were clueless as to what had happened to their king.

“What could have happened to the lord of the forest,” asked Damanaka.

“Why should we poke our nose into affairs that are not our concern? Haven't you heard the **story of the monkey which pulled out the wedge from the log**,” asked Damanaka.

“Sounds interesting. Why don't you tell me what happened to the monkey,” pleaded Damanaka.

“Now, listen,” said Damanaka and began narrating the story of the monkey.

The Monkey And The Wedge



A merchant once started building a temple in the middle of his garden. Many masons and carpenters were working for the merchant. They took time off every day to go to the town for their lunch. One day, when the workers left for lunch a batch of monkeys landed at the temple site and began playing with whatever caught their fancy. One of the monkeys saw a partly sawed log of wood and a wedge fixed in it so that it does not close up.

Curious to know what it is, the monkey began furiously tugging at the wedge. At last the wedge came off, not before trapping the legs of the monkey into the rift of the log. Very soon, not able to get his legs out of the closed wood, the monkey died.

“Therefore,” Karataka told Damanaka, “it is not wise to poke our nose into affairs that are not our concern. We have a food store. Why should we bother ourselves about this lion?”

Damanaka retorted, “Food is not the centre of our life. The elders have said that wise men seek the help of the king to help friends and harm foes. There are hundred ways of collecting food. What matters is a life full of learning, courage and wealth. If living somehow is the goal, even the crow lives long eating leftovers.”

"True, but we are not ministers any more. The elders have always said that the stupid person who offers uncalled for advice to the king invites not only insult but also deceit," said Karataka.

"No," Damanaka said, "anyone who serves the king with devotion is bound to earn his favour in the long run. The one who does not remains where he is. Those who understand why the king is angry or generous will one-day rise in office. It is necessary to be in the good books of the king."

"Okay, what do you want to do now?" asked Karataka.

"You know the king is scared now. We will ask him what frightens him and using the six ways of diplomacy get close to him."

"How do you know the king is scared?"

"Changes in posture, signs, pace, actions, conversation, looks and expression indicate the working of the mind. I will approach the fear-struck king today and with my intelligence, I will dispel his fear and once again become his minister," said Damanaka.

"How can you do it when you do not know principles of service?" asked Karataka.

Damanaka told him all he knew and learnt about what makes a good and loyal servant in the service of the king.

"In that case, I wish you all good luck," said Karataka.

Taking leave of Karataka, Damanaka then called on the king. Recognizing that he was the son of his old minister, King Pingalaka told his sentry to bring him into his presence. Damanaka came down on his knees to pay respects to the king.

"We haven't seen you for a long time," the king said.

"I don't know of what use I can be to you, my lord. Yet, according to the learned, there are occasions when every person however high or low will be of use to the king. For generations we have served the king with devotion. Yet I am out of your majesty's favour."

"All right, competent or incompetent you are the son of our old minister. Go ahead and tell me whatever you have in your mind," the king ordered Damanaka.

"May I ask you humbly, my lord, what made you come back from the lake without drinking water," asked Damanaka reluctantly.

"O' Damanaka, haven't you heard the great and frightening sounds in the distance? I want to leave this forest. The strange animal that could make such sounds ought to be as powerful as the sounds he makes."

"Your majesty, if it is only sound that is your problem, I wish to submit that sounds are misleading. I can tell you the story of the jackal, how it overcame the fear of sound."

Let us hear it, said the king.

The Jackal And The Drum

A hungry jackal set out in search of food and ended up at an abandoned battlefield whence he heard loud and strange sounds. Scared, he thought, "I must disappear from here before the man who is making these sounds gets me." After a while he told himself, "I must not run away like that. Let me find out what really the sounds are and who is making them because whether it is fear or happiness one must know its cause. Such a person will never regret his actions. So, let me first look for the source of these noises."

Warily, the jackal marched in the direction of the sounds and found a drum there. It was this drum, which was sending the sounds whenever the branches of the tree above brushed against it. Relieved, the jackal began playing the drum and thought that there could be food inside it. The jackal entered the drum by piercing its side. He was disappointed to find no food in it. Yet he consoled himself saying that he rid himself of the fear of sound.

"Therefore", Damanaka told king Pingalaka, "your majesty should not be afraid of sounds. I seek your permission to go and see what the sounds are."

"Okay," said the king. Taking leave of the king, Damanaka proceeded in the direction of the sound.



The king now began worrying himself about Damanaka's intentions. "He may have a grudge against me for dismissing him once. Such persons seek revenge. I should not have taken him into confidence. Let me keep an eye on him. Wise men have always maintained that it is difficult to kill even a weak man who does not easily trust others but easy to kill a strong man who readily trusts others," the king thought.

As the king kept an eye on him, Damanaka moved slowly towards Sanjeevaka, the bullock, and found that he was after all an animal and thought, "This is a good omen. This will help me to get back into the good books of the king. Kings never follow the advice of their ministers unless they are in peril or grief. Just as a healthy man never thinks of a doctor, a strong and secure king also never remembers the need for a minister."

Assured that what he saw was only a bullock, Damanaka returned to the king and told him what he saw.

"Is it true?" the king asked.

"The king is God. The man who lies to a king perishes. He alone has the power to grant favours."

"I believe you. Great men do not harm weaker people. They take on only their equals. That is what is unique about brave people."

"What your majesty says is true. Sanjeevaka is great. If your lordship permits me, I will persuade him to be one of your servants."

"All right, I am taking you back as a minister," said the king, pleased.

Damanaka at once hurried back to Sanjeevaka and told him to stop bellowing and come and meet his king. But the bullock wanted to know who this Pingalaka was. "What? You do not know our lord? Wait, you will know shortly the cost of this ignorance. There he is, surrounded by his retinue under the banyan tree." Sanjeevaka thought his days were numbered and pleaded with Damanaka, "Sir, you seem to be a man of great wisdom and wit. You alone can save me. I can come only if you can assure me that no harm will come to me." Damanaka told the bullock to wait for the right time to meet the king.



Returning to the king, Damanaka told him “My lord, he is not an ordinary being. He is the vehicle of Lord Shiva. He told me that Lord Shiva had permitted him to feed on the tender grass in the neighbourhood of Jamuna. But I told him that the forest belonged to our lion king who is the vehicle of goddess Chandika. You are our guest. You can see our king and seek a separate space for you to graze. He agreed to this plan provided he has an assurance from your majesty.”

“Yes, certainly. But I will need assurance from him in return. Bring him here,” the king told Damanaka. Going back to the bullock Damanaka advised him, “You have the assurance of the king. But this new position should not go to your head. We have to work together. That is how we can prosper. Otherwise, he who does not respect everyone, however high or low, will forfeit the favour of kings like Dantila.”

“What about Dantila?” asked Sanjeevaka.

The Fall And Rise of A Merchant



In the city of Vardhaman, there lived a wealthy merchant named Dantila. He held a great reception for his wedding attended by the king, the queen, their ministers and all the rich and influential persons in the city. Present at the reception was Gorambha, a lowly sweeper in the royal household. When Dantila saw him occupying a seat reserved for the nobles of the king, he ordered his servants to throw him out of his house.

Thus insulted, Gorambha thought to himself, “I am a poor man and so cannot give a fitting reply to such a wealthy person as Dantila. I must some how see that the king stops his favours to him.” Then he hit upon a plan to take revenge on Dantila.

One early morning when the king was still in sleep, Gorambha pretending to sweep the king's bedroom began loudly murmuring, “Oh, how arrogant is Dantila! He has the cheek to lock the queen in his embrace.” Hearing this, the king demanded to know whether what Gorambha was murmuring is true. Did Dantila embrace the queen?

"Oh, your majesty, I don't remember nor do I know what I was saying because I was drowsy having spent the entire night in gambling," the sweeper told the king.

Not satisfied with his reply the king thought that it was possible that the sweeper had seen Dantila, who had equal access to the royal household as Gorambha, embracing the queen. He remembered wise men saying that men were likely to talk in their sleep about what they did, saw and desired in the day. Women were chaste because men were not within reach or they were afraid of prying servants. Convinced that Dantila had indeed embraced the queen, the king barred Dantila from entering the royal household.

The merchant began grieving his fate though he had not done any harm to the king or his relatives even in his dreams. One day as Dantila was trying to enter the king's palace he was barred by the king's men. Seeing this Gorambha told them, "You fools, you are barring the great Dantila who has won the king's favours. He is powerful. If you stop him, you will meet with the same fate as I did at the hands of Dantila one day."

The merchant thought that it would do him good to make Gorambha happy and win his confidence. One evening he invited the sweeper for tea and presented him with expensive clothes and told him, "Friend, I had never meant to insult you. You had occupied a seat I had set apart for the learned. Kindly pardon me."

Pleased, the sweeper promised to win the king's favour for Dantila again. The next day, Gorambha repeated the same drama of pretending to talk irrelevantly, raving that the king was eating cucumber in the rest room. "What nonsense are you talking? Did you ever see me doing such things?" the king demanded to know. "No, your majesty. I do not know nor do I remember what I was saying because I was drowsy having spent the entire night in gambling," the sweeper said.

The king then realized that if what the sweeper had said about him was not true what he had said about Dantila also could not be true. A person like Dantila could not have done what Gorambha had told him. The king also found that without Dantila the affairs of the state had suffered and civic administration had come to a standstill. The king immediately summoned the merchant to his palace and restored to him all the authority he had enjoyed before he fell out of king's favour.

Damanaka resumed, "That is why we must know that pride goes before fall." Sanjeevaka agreed. Taking him to the lion king, Damanaka introduced Sanjeevaka to Pingalaka. After exchanging pleasantries, the king asked him to relate his past and the purpose of staying in that jungle. On the bullock relating his story, the king said, "Friend, don't be afraid. I assure you that I will protect you from wild animals here because even stronger animals feel insecure here."

Since then, the king asked Karataka and Damanaka to look after the affairs of the state and began happily spending his time in the company of Sanjeevaka. But the jackals were worried that after Sanjeevaka had become a good friend of the king, the king gave up his royal sports and pastime and became a saint.

The jackal twins thought, "the king has stopped taking us into confidence after Sanjeevaka became his best friend. He is also indifferent to his kingly duties. What shall we do now?"

Karataka said, "The king may not heed our advice. But it is our duty to advise him on it if it is good for him. Elders have always held that even if the king is not willing to heed good advice, it is the duty of his ministers to offer him advice. "You are right," said Damanaka. "The mistake is mine. What happened to the sage and the jackal should not happen to us."

Karataka then pleaded with him to tell the story of the sage and the jackal. Damanaka began telling him.

The Foolish Sage And The Jackal

In a monastery far away from human habitation lived a saint called Deva Sarma. He amassed a lot of wealth by selling clothes gifted to him by well-wishers and disciples. It became a burden for him to guard that wealth. Since he did not trust anyone, he put all his money into a bag and carried it with him wherever he went. Ashadhabhooti, an experienced cheat, noticed Deva Sarma carrying his bag always with him and assuming that it certainly contained something valuable, began planning to snatch it from him.



One day, the cheat met the saint and promptly fell on his feet and said, "Oh, know-all, I have realized that this life is an illusion; youth is fleeting and all familial ties are like a dream. Please show me the correct path that delivers me from all worldly ties."

Pleased with his humility, Deva Sarma said, "Child, you are the blessed one who has thought of renouncing worldly pleasures. Listen, however low his caste is, the person that chants 'Om Namahshivayah' and smears holy ash on his forehead, becomes Siva himself and knows no rebirth. I shall accept you as my portage but you must not enter the hermitage in the night because company is forbidden for saints. After initiation, you have to live in the hut at the entrance of the monastery."

Ashadhabhooti promised the saint that he would consider every sign from him as a command and carry it out. Satisfied, the saint accepted the cheat as his disciple. Ashadhabhooti too began making Deva Sarma happy by attending to every need of his. But seeing that the saint never separated the money-bag from his person, Ashadhabhooti thought, "the old man is very crafty and keeps the bag always with him. How can I snatch it from him? Shall I kill him?"



As the cheat was at a loss to achieve his goal, the son of a disciple came calling on the sage. The visitor invited Deva Sarma to come to his village and perform the sacred thread ceremony of his son. The saint accepted the invitation and set out for the village taking Ashadhabhooti with him.

On the way, the guru and his disciple had to cross a river. After bathing in the river and wanting to rest for a while, Deva Sarma took the money bag and pushed it into a quilt he was carrying and told the disciple, "I have to respond to nature's call. I am leaving this holy quilt of Siva here. Keep an eye on it." The moment the guru went out of his sight, Ashadhabhooti collected the bag and fled the place.



With great trust in his disciple, Deva Sarma decided to spend time by joining a crowd watching two well-fed goats fighting ferociously. As blood was running down their heads, a jackal came there to feast on the blood the two goats were shedding. Deva Sarma saw the jackal entering the scene and thought that the jackal would surely die caught between the two warring goats. His surmise came true and the jackal died, gored by the two goats.

Brooding over the demise of the jackal, Deva Sarma returned to where he had left the money-bag with Ashadhabhooti and panicked when he found Ashadhabhooti missing. The holy quilt was there but not the money-bag in it. He began wailing, "Oh, trickster, what have you done? I have lost everything in this world." After a vain search for the trickster, the foolish saint returned home dejected.



Damanaka asked Karataka, "What do you learn from this episode?"

"You alone can tell me."

"The sage and the jackal have none to blame except themselves."

"In a similar situation, what should we do?"

Damanaka said, "Yes, I know what to do now. With my cunning I will create a rift between king Pingalaka and Sanjeevaka. Haven't you heard that though you cannot subdue the enemy with a volley of arrows, you can destroy him by your wit?"

"Wait," said Karataka. "Suppose the lion king and the roving bullock come to know of your plans to separate them, get ready to meet your end."

"My friend, you are too pessimistic. When time and tide are against you, don't give up. Wise men keep on trying till they succeed in getting what they want. Haven't you heard the elders saying?"

"The Goddess of Wealth favours the man who persists.

Pray God by all means, but put in your own effort.

Even if you don't succeed, you will be free of blame."

Karataka was not convinced that Damanaka could create rift between the fierce lion king and the wise bullock.

Damanaka told him, "Here is how through cunning two crows, husband and wife, managed to save their children from a cobra. Every time, the wife hatched the eggs, a cobra would come and feast on the offspring. The couple asked a jackal who was their friend to show them the way. The jackal told the crow not to despair for there is nothing that a trick cannot achieve. That is how a crab killed a greedy crane that was preying on the fish in the lake. The female crow asked the jackal how the crab had killed the crane."

Damanaka then asked Karataka to listen to **the story of the crane and the crab.**

The Crafty Crane And The Craftier Crab



Once upon a time an old crane lived on the rim of a large lake in the middle of a jungle. Because of age, it was not able to prey on fish and other insects. Unable to suffer hunger, the crane stood on the edge of the lake and began crying pitifully. Moved at the sight, a crab passing by asked the crane:

"Friend, what is the matter? Why are you not hunting for food today?"

"Son, you have correctly guessed. I am feeling guilty because I have swallowed too many fish. I have decided to fast unto death and am not harming even the fish that are within my reach," said the crane.

"But why are you so philosophical today," asked the crab.

"What shall I tell you? I have heard that there will be no rains for the coming twelve years. Astrologers have forecast an evil conjunction of the planets. As a result, there won't be rains on this earth for another twelve years. All these years we have all played and lived together. I am now worried about the fate waiting for these poor fish and other creatures in the lake. They will die and I will be alone and without them."

"Is there no way we can save ourselves?"

"At present, fish and other water creatures in other lakes are migrating to bigger lakes with the help of their relatives. Here, nobody seems to worry about the dark future. At this rate, there won't be any kind of fish left."

The crab carried this information to all the fish and other water creatures in the lake. Alarmed, all of them came to the crane and pleaded with him to show them the way to overcome this danger.

"Why not. There is a big lake not far from here that has plenty of water throughout the year and lotuses always in bloom. That lake does not go dry even if there are no rains for twenty-four years. I can ferry all of you one by one to that lake."



The poor fish and other water creatures at once put all the trust in the crane and agreed to be ferried. Every day, the crane would take one of them at a time to a lonely place, smash them against a stone and eat them. He would return to the lake and repeat the trick every day.

One day the crab asked the crane, "Uncle, you are taking everyone to the faraway lake and not me. Why don't you take me there today and save my life?"

Tired with eating fish every day, the crane too was happy to carry the crab to the lake that did not exist. The crab was happy and mounted on the back of the crane. As the crane was flying close to the spot where he ate all the fish, the crab saw a heap of fish bones and asked the crane, "Uncle, we have come a long distance and I see no lake anywhere. Tell me, where is the lake?"

"You are a fool to trust me. There is no lake. Nor is there water. Say your prayers now; I am going to kill you." The crafty crab at once caught the neck of the crane in his claws and tore through it to death. Slowly, carrying the crane's neck, the crab reached the lake where all his friends, worried that the crane did not come back, asked him what made him come back.



The crab said, "you fools, that crane was taking all of us to a lonely place where it would smash the victims against a rock and have them for lunch. I found out his mischief and saved myself by slicing his neck. From today, all of us can live happily without fear."

Then the crows asked the jackal how they could get rid of the cobra that was feasting on their offspring. The jackal told them to go to a big city and snatch any item of jewellery from a palace and drop it in the hollow of the tree that is the cobra's home. In search of the jewellery, the king's men would reach the tree and kill the cobra.

The crow couple flew off to a lake where the women in the king's harem were revealing in water. Before entering water, the women left their jewellery and clothes on the waterside. The female crow skillfully dived and snatched a gold necklace and began slowly flying towards the cobra's hideout. The king's men who saw the

crow fly off with the necklace followed the female crow and saw it dropping the necklace into the hollow of the tree. They ran to the tree and pulling it out killed the cobra.

"That's why," Damanaka told Karataka, "elders say that he who is wise is stronger than the strong. That is how a small hare killed the almighty lion."

"How is that?" asked Karataka.

"That is another story," said Damanaka.

The Cunning Hare and The Witless Lion



Bhasuraka was a lion lording over the jungle, killing deer, boars, rabbits, bison's, etc. Yet he was not happy with his kill. The victims too were unhappy and met the lion one day in a delegation. "Oh, lord," they said, "why do you kill so many animals every day when you need only one for your food? Let us come to an understanding. From today, you need not move from your place. We will send an animal every day to you. That will spare you the trouble of hunting and us our lives."

"Our forebears have said that the duty of the king is to rule and not to destroy. Just as a seed sprouts, grows into a tree and yields fruit, a people protected by the king come to his rescue in times of need."

"What you say is true," the lion said and added a condition. "If you fail to send one animal every day, I shall kill all of you."



"Agreed," said the animals and began roaming the forest without fear and sending one of their own folk to the lion for his lunch. One day it was the turn of a hare. He started leisurely on his last journey and saw a big well on the way and saw his own reflection when he peeped into the well from curiosity.

Suddenly an idea struck the hare. "I will somehow tempt the lion to the well and persuade him to jump into it," the hare thought to himself. It was late in the evening when the hare reached the lion's den. The lion was hungry and so angry and decided to kill all the animals when the hare came and knelt before him.

"First, you are too small for my lunch. Second, you have come late. I shall kill you and all the others too," the lion warned the hare.

"My lord, it is not my fault or the fault of other animals."

"Let me know who it is who delayed you and I will kill him at once."



"Our folks have decided that it is my turn today. Since I do not make a full meal, they have sent three more hares with me for your meal. As we were all coming to you, a big lion came out of his den and demanded to know where we were all going."

"We are all going to Bhasuraka as his meal according to our arrangement, we said. The big lion said that this jungle belonged to him and that all animals obeyed its orders. He also told us that you are a cheat and asked us to bring you to him for a trial of strength. Whoever is the victor will become the king. He commanded me to summon you to his fort. That's why I am late. It is now for you to decide," the hare told the lion.

"In that case," Bhasuraka told the hare, "show me that lion. I will kill him and have him for lunch. According to the elders territory, friendship and gold are the rewards of war. Wise men do not go to war unless there are gains."

"Yes, my lord," said the hare, "what you say is true. But the big lion lives in a fort. He knows that the king without a fort is like a cobra without fangs and an elephant without heat."

"Stop that nonsense and bring him here. Don't you know that you have to crush the enemy and disease at the first opportunity? Otherwise, they will grow in strength and crush you."

"But the big lion seems to be very strong. Haven't you heard elders saying that one should not go to war without assessing one's own strength and the strength of the enemy? He who meets the enemy in haste will perish like the locusts in a fire."



Growing impatient, the lion roared, "why all this tall talk. Show him to me." Asking the lion to accompany him, the hare took him to the well. He told the lion that the big lion was there in that fort and showed him the well. The lion then peeped into the well and mistaking his reflection in the water for the big lion jumped into the well to kill him. Thus the foolish lion perished and all the animals in the jungle lived happily ever after.

Damanaka resumed, "This is how with my skills I will create a rift between Pingalaka and Sanjeevaka."

"All right, best of luck to you," said Karataka.

One day when Pingalaka was alone, Damanaka visited him and bowed to him.

"We haven't seen you for a long time," said Pingalaka. "Of what use am I to you? Yet, when your rule is breaking up, I thought I should inform you. Even without asking, offer good advice to him whom you want to protect from indignity, said our elders."

"Whatever you want to say, say it without hesitation."

Gathering courage, Damanaka said, "My lord, Sanjeevaka wants to harm you. Taking me into confidence, he once told me that he would kill you, become the king and make me a minister."

"But Sanjeevaka is a trusted friend of mine. Why should he think of harming me?"

"There is no loyal or disloyal servant. There is no servant who does not covet power. My lord, what made you to take Sanjeevaka into confidence? Don't think he is a strong animal able to kill your enemies. This will not happen because he is a vegetarian and my lord feasts on meat. It is better to get rid of him."

"You remember I gave him the word on your advice. How can I kill him who has won assurance from me."

"My lord, according to wise men, you should not make friends with people you do not know. You know how an [innocent flea died for the fault of a bug](#)."

Pingalaka demanded to know the story. Damanaka began to relate.

The Bug and The Poor Flea

Once upon a time a bug named Mandavisarpini made for itself a small home in the folds of the milk-white sheets of linen spread on the king's ornamental bed. One day, the bug saw a flea drifting into the king's bedroom and told the flea that he had come to a wrong place and asked him to leave before somebody noticed him.

The flea, whose name was Agnimukha, said, "Oh venerable sir, it is not proper for you to ask a guest to leave even if he is a wicked person. You must welcome him, ask him about his health, say words that comfort him and request him to take rest. That is how good hosts treat their guests. Besides, I have tasted the blood of a variety of men and animals. Never did I taste royal blood. The king's blood is a compound of rich foods and is bound to taste rich. Please permit me to relish this delicacy."

The flea continued, "Everything we do in this world we do to slake our hunger. I have come to you in search of food. It is not proper for you to siphon off the king's blood all alone. You should share it with me also."

The bug told him, "oh, flea, I suck the blood of the king when he is fast asleep. You are impatient. You have to wait till I finish my job. After me, you can have your fill." The flea agreed.

Meanwhile, the king entered his bedroom to sleep. But the impatient flea began feasting on the king's blood even before he went to sleep. Stung by his bite, the king rose from his bed and asked his servants to look for what was in the bed that caused him discomfort. The king's men pulled the linen off the bed and examined it closely. Before they could him, the flea sneaked into a recess of the bed. The servants found the poor bug and killed him at once.

Damanaka told Pingalaka, "This is why you should kill Sanjeevaka before he could kill you. He who abandons a trusted confidant and trusts an outsider will die like [sage Kakudruma](#)."



"How did he die?" Pinagalaka asked him.

The Story of The Blue Jackal



Chandaraka was a jackal living in a forest. One day, driven by hunger, he came to a nearby town in search of food. Seeing him, a group of mongrels began chasing and attacking him whenever possible. The jackal fled in panic and entering the house of a washer man hid in a vat full of blue used for bleaching clothes. When he came out, he became a blue animal. Thinking that he was not the jackal they chased, the mongrels dispersed.

The jackal came back to the forest with his body dyed in blue. When the lions, tigers, panthers, wolves and other animals in the forest saw him, they took fright and ran in all directions. They thought to themselves, "We do not know his power and strength. It is better we keep a distance from him. Haven't the elders warned not to trust him whose conduct, caste and courage are not known."



Seeing them scared, the dyed jackal said, "Why do you run away like that. There is no need to fear. I am a special creation of God. He told me that the animals in the jungle here had no ruler and that he was nominating me as your king. He named me as Kakudruma and told me to rule all of you. Therefore all of you can live safely under the umbrella of my protection."

All the animals in the jungle accepted him as the king. He in turn appointed the lion as his minister, the tiger as his chamberlain and the wolf as the gatekeeper. After distributing office to the animals, the new king Kakudruma banished all the jackals in the forest. The lions, tigers and the wolves killed other animals and brought them as food for the king. Taking his share, Kakudruma would distribute the rest of the kill among his subjects.



One day when the blue jackal was holding court, he heard a gang of jackals howling. Thrilled by the sound of his own ilk, Kakudruma began loudly responding in his natural voice. The lions and other animals immediately recognized that their king was after all a jackal and not a Godsend. They at once pounced on the blue jackal and killed him.

"The moral is," Damanaka said, "he who abandons his own folk will perish."

"But how do I believe that Sanjeevaka has evil intentions," asked Pingalaka.

"He told me today that he would kill you tomorrow. If you notice him carefully tomorrow, you will find him red-eyed and occupying a seat he does not deserve. He would stare at you angrily. If what I say comes true, it is for you what to do with Pingalaka," said Damanaka.

After this meeting with the lion king, Damanaka went to meet Pingalaka. The bullock received him with courtesy and said, "We are meeting after a long time. What can I do for you? They are the blessed who are visited by friends."

"You are right, sir. But where is rest for servants. They have lost their freedom for the sake of money. They know no sleep, no interest in food nor can they speak without fear. Yet they live. Somebody has rightly compared service to a dog's life," said Damanaka.

"Come to the point, my friend" The bullock was now impatient.

Damanaka said, "Sir, a minister is not supposed to give bad advice. He cannot also disclose state secrets. If he does, he will go to hell after his death. But in the cause of your friendship, I have revealed a secret. It is on my suggestion that you have taken up service in the royal household. Pingalaka has evil designs against you. When we were alone, he told me he would kill you and bring happiness to everyone in the palace.

"I told the king that this was stabbing a friend in the back," Damanaka continued. "The king was angry and said that you were a vegetarian and he lived on a diet of meat and so there was natural discord between you and him. He said that this was enough reason for him to kill you. This is a secret I have kept to myself for a long time. It is now for you to do what is necessary."

Sanjeevaka fainted on hearing these words. Recovering after some time, he said, "It is truly said that a person who serves the king is like a bullock without horns. It is difficult to know the mind of a king who has different ideas. It is not easy to serve a king. Even sages could not read the minds of kings. I think some servants who were jealous of my friendship with the king must have poisoned his mind."

"Don't worry," Damanaka said. "Forget what tales the servants carried to the king. You can still win his favour by your sweet words."

"That is not true. It is impossible to live with wicked people, however small they are. They can always think of a hundred ways to get you in the same manner the jackal and crow trapped the camel."

"Sounds interesting. Let me know what happened to the camel," asked Damanaka.

Sanjeevaka began to tell him the story.

The Camel, The Jackal And The Crow



In a far off forest, there lived a lion named Madotkata served by a leopard, a jackal and a crow. One day they sighted Kradanaka, a camel who lost his way. Thinking the camel they saw was an unusual animal, the lion asked his assistants to find out if he was a wild animal or domestic animal.

The crow said that the camel was a domestic animal fit to be killed and eaten. Refusing to eat Kradanaka, the lion said:

"I shall not kill someone who came seeking hospitality. According to our elders, you cannot kill even an enemy who came trusting you. He who kills so commits the sin of killing hundred Brahmins. Assure him of safety and bring him to me."

The three assistants brought the camel to the presence of the lion. On the lion asking the camel to relate his story, Kradanaka told him how he was part of a trade caravan and how he had lost his way. The lion told the camel, "Kradanaka, why do you go back to your village and become once again a beast of burden? Remain with us without any hesitation and feast on this tender grass." Thereafter, the camel stayed on to live happily with the lion and his three assistants.



One day, the lion was locked in a battle with an elephant. The tusker gored Madotkata and badly injured him. He became too weak to hunt. Without food he was in no position to do anything. Then, the lion asked the assistants to go out and look for some animal for his meal. "Bring the animal here. I will kill him somehow and provide food for you all," said the lion.

The leopard, the jackal, and the camel looked everywhere for an animal but could not find anyone. The jackal told the crow aside:

"Friend, what is the use of wasting time like this? We have Kradanaka, our lord's loyal friend. Let us kill him and survive." "That is fine. Yet we cannot kill him because our lord has assured him protection," said the crow."

"Leave it to me. I shall convince Madotkata to kill the camel. Wait here. I will meet the lord and get his permission," said the jackal and left to meet the lion.

The jackal told his lord, "Oh, lord, we went to every nook and corner of the forest. We could not find a single animal. We are tired, weak and hungry. Since my lord is also in the same condition, I humbly suggest that we make a meal of this camel."

Highly annoyed, the lion said, "You sinner, if you repeat these words, I shall first kill you. I have given him my word. How can I kill him? Haven't our elders said that no gift of land or cow or food is greater than the gift of an assurance?"

"You are right my lord. It is a sin to kill him who has your word. But if the camel voluntarily offers himself as food it is no sin to accept the offer. If he does not volunteer, you can kill anyone of us. You are hungry and close to your end. If we are not of use to you at this time what value have our lives? If anything undesirable happens to our lord, we will immolate ourselves."

The jackal told the other two assistants, "Friends, our lord is in a pitiable condition. There is now no one to protect us from others. Instead of aimlessly searching the forest for food, let us offer our bodies to him. That will deliver us from the burden of debt. The servant who is witness to the helpless death of his master will go to hell."

After the jackal's plea, all of them called on the lion with tears in their eyes. "What's the matter? Did you find an animal?" asked the lion.

"No, my lord. We searched every place, every inch of the forest. We are not lucky. We found nothing. But I request the lord to have me for his meal. That will mean two birds with one shot. The lord will survive and I will go to heaven. He who lays down his life to save his lord will have no rebirth," said the crow.

It was now the turn of the jackal to show his loyalty. He said, "My friend, crow. Your body is too small to slake the hunger of my lord. It amounts to starving him and that is a sin. Get out of my way. I have to submit a plea to my lord."

Addressing the lion, the jackal said, "Lord, I request you to have me for your meal and ensure me a place in heaven. The lord has rights of life and death over his servants. Therefore, it is no sin in exercising his rights."

The leopard intervened and said, "You jackal, you are no great personality. Let me plead with the lord." Addressing Madotkata, the leopard said, "Oh lord, let me give away my life to save your life. Please permit me to earn a permanent berth in heaven. My sacrifice will win fame for me on earth."

All this set Kradanaka thinking, "All these servants of the lord have said what they wanted to say. Still, the lion did not kill anyone of them. Let me also offer to be the lord's food today. I am sure my friends will support me.' He then turned to the leopard and said, "What you have said is right and proper. But you are a carnivorous animal and belong to the same species as the master does. How can he kill you? Let me offer myself."



The camel then came forward and requested the lion to have him for that day's meal. At once, the jackal and the leopard pounced on him tore him to pieces and all of them had a sumptuous feast.

As the story ended Sanjeevaka told Damanaka, "Wicked people surround the king. Good men should not serve such masters. I will need your advice to get out of this problem."

"The best course is to leave the country," said Damanaka.

"It is not wise to leave when the king is still angry. He can reach me anywhere I go. The only alternative I have is to go to war with the king."

Damanaka was afraid that if Sanjeevaka chose to fight Pingalaka the lion might die and that would be a disaster. Let me persuade the bullock to leave the forest, he thought.

"Going to war is all right. But how can there be a war between a servant and a king? If you underestimate the strength of your enemy you will meet the same fate as the Sea met at the hands of the bird pair."

Curious, Sanjeeva asked, "What happened to the birds?"

The Bird Pair and The Sea

Once upon a time, a pair of pheasants lived close to the Sea. They spent their time happily singing and dancing on the branches of the trees by the Sea. One day the female pheasant told her husband that she was expecting their baby and he must look for a safe place to lay the eggs. The husband said, "My dear, this Seaside is enchanting and it is better you lay eggs here only."

The wife said, "When it is full moon, the Sea tide can wash away even wild elephants. Let us go elsewhere."

Amused, the husband said, "What you say is true. But the Sea has no power to harm us. Haven't you heard that there is no fool who could stop the flight of a bird or a fool who would enter fire recklessly. Will anyone be brash enough to challenge Yama (the Lord of Death) to take his life if he can? You can lay your eggs here only."

Listening to this dialogue, the Sea thought, "How vain is this bird which is as small as a worm! Let me drown these eggs and see what he can do."



After laying eggs, the female bird went in search of food. In her absence, the Sea sent a wave that sucked the eggs into the waters. The female returned to the nest and, not finding the eggs there, told the husband, "You are a fool. I told you that the waves would wash away the eggs. Those who do not heed the good words of a friend will perish like the turtle who fell off the stick."

"What's that turtle and what is that stick?" asked the husband.

Once upon a time a turtle called Kambugriva lived in a pond. He had two swans, Sankat and Vikat, as good friends. Every day they would meet on the rim of the pond and discuss legends of yore. They would disperse with sunset. That year there were no rains and the water in the pond began slowly disappearing.

Worried, the swans told the turtle, "Friend, What will happen to you? We are concerned."

"I appreciate your interest in me. There is trouble ahead. Please find a way out of this crisis. But it is important that we should not give in to despair. According to Manu, all good men should come to the rescue of friends and relatives in times of need. Look for a stick or a rope. I will hang on to it as both of you hold the two sides of the stick or rope and ferry me to safety."

"We shall do as you say," the swans said. "But you have to shut your mouth. Otherwise, you will crash to the ground."

On Kambugriva agreeing to the plan, the swans brought a stick and asked the turtle to hold it with his teeth. When everything was ready, the swans flew off with the turtle hanging from it. On the way people saw this sight and exclaimed, "see, how clever the birds are." In trying to respond to the people, the turtle opened his mouth and fell to the ground and the people at once killed him.

"The lesson is that those who do not heed the advice of their well-wishers meet their end like the turtle. Any day, the survivors are those who foresee a danger in time and those who deal with it when it comes. Those who leave things to fate and believe in luck will destroy themselves like Yadbhavishya," said the female pheasant.

"What happened to Yadbhavishya?" asked the male bird.

Tale of The Three Fish

Three fish lived in a pond. Their names were Anagatavidhata, Pratyutpannamati and Yadbhavishya. Some fishermen passing by the pond wondered, "Hey, we have never seen this pond. It seems to be full of fish. It is now evening. Let us come at dawn tomorrow and bag as many fish as we can."

Hearing the fisherman, Anagatavidhata (the one who foresees a danger in time) called a meeting of all the fish and told them, "Haven't you heard what the fishermen were saying? We must move out of this pond tonight itself. As the wise men have said weak men should flee when a strong man invades or seek refuge in a fort. There is no alternative."

"The fisherman will come tomorrow. I think we should not be here for even a moment more," said Anagatavidhata.

"That's true. I endorse your suggestion," said Pratyutpannamati. "Let's go elsewhere. Those who are afraid of foreign lands and those who are bound to their soil will die in their own country. He who can prosper anywhere does not die in his own land

clinging to sentiment."



Loudly laughing, Yadbhavishya said, "Your plans are not good. Why should we leave this pond, ancient home of our forefathers, because the fishermen have evil intentions. If it is destined, we cannot escape death even if we go elsewhere. Everything is in the hands of God. You cannot dispose what he proposes. Without his blessings people will die even if they have protection. With his blessings nobody can kill them even if they do not have protection."

Unable to convince him, the other two fish left the pond. Coming the next day, the fishermen took a big catch of fish in the pond. Yadbhavishya was one among them.

The female pheasant resumed, "That is why I told you that those who foresee the problem and those who deal with the problem when it arises are always victors and those who trust their luck are the losers."

Her husband asked, "In that case do you think I am as stupid as that Yadbhavishya? Wait and see what I can do. I will siphon off all the water in the Sea and leave him dry."

"Don't try to settle scores with the Sea. It will do no good to you. A weak man's anger will hurt him in the end."

"Don't discourage me. Those who have confidence can confront stronger men. Doesn't the lion who is small in size slash the crown of the mighty elephant? Doesn't a small wick repel darkness? He who has courage is the stronger person. See how I will siphon off all the water in the Sea and make him dry," said the male."

"But hundreds of rivers flow into the sea. Your beak is just as big as a drop of the sea. How can you consume all the water in the Sea? Stop this tall talk," advised the female.

"Not to despair is to win the Goddess of Wealth. I have an iron beak. I will toil day and night to siphon of all the water."

The wife said, "Okay, if you want to engage the Sea, call all of your friends and try to do the job together. When they are united, it is difficult to defeat even a band of weak men. Even blades of slender grass can bind an elephant if they are woven into a rope. Haven't you heard the story of how a sparrow, a woodpecker, a fly and a frog killed an elephant?"

"Let me know how they did it," asked the male pheasant.

The wife began telling the story.

The Elephant and The Sparrow



Two sparrows, husband and wife, built a nest on a banyan tree where the female sparrow laid eggs. One afternoon a wild elephant came to the tree seeking shelter from the sun. Unable to bear the heat, the tusker suddenly went berserk and snapped a big branch of the tree, crushing the sparrow's eggs in the nest. The sparrow pair somehow escaped the fury of the elephant but the wife began crying for her eggs.

A woodpecker, a close friend of the sparrow, heard her crying and moved by her grief asked her, "Why are you crying, my friend? Wise men do not grieve what is lost or what is dead or what is past. That is the difference between a learned person and an unlettered man."

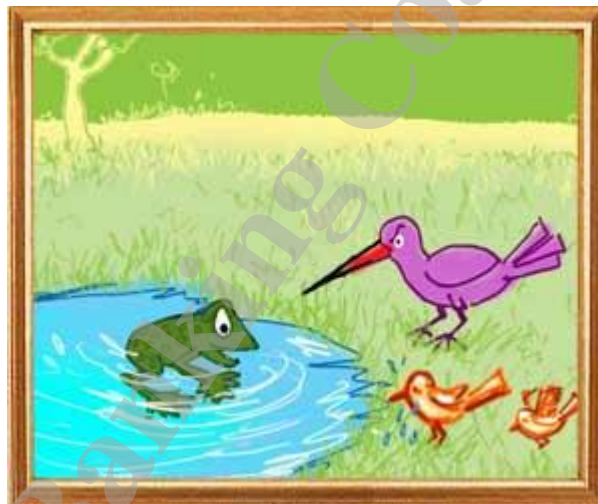
The female sparrow said, "The wicked elephant has destroyed my off spring. If you are a true friend of mine suggest a way to kill him. In my view, he who harms a person in trouble or he who ridicules a person in sorrow deserves to be punished and he who punishes such a person has no rebirth."



“What you say is right,” said the woodpecker. “He is a friend who comes to your aid when you are in need. Everyone tries to be friendly when you are prospering. You will see how resourceful I am. I have a friend who is a fly. With his help we can kill the elephant.”

Taking the female sparrow with him, the woodpecker called on the fly and told him, “This is my dearest friend. A wild elephant has squashed her eggs. You must somehow find a way to kill that elephant. We need your help.”

The fly said, “I have a friend who is a frog. Let us go to him and seek his help also.” The female sparrow, the woodpecker and the fly went to the frog and narrated the entire story of the sparrow's grief.



The frog said, “What is an elephant before a united crowd like us? Do as I tell you. O' fly, go to the elephant when the sun is high in the sky and hum a sweet tune into his ears. When he closes his eyes in ecstasy, the woodpecker will scoop his eyes out. He becomes blind and thirsty and will look for water. I will go to a quicksand and begin croaking there. Thinking that there is water, the elephant will come there and sink into the quicksand and die.”

All the four played out their roles according to the frog's plan and caused the death of the elephant.”

At the end of the story, the female pheasant told her husband, “That is how together the four friends killed the elephant.”



Impressed by his wife's wisdom, the husband said, "Okay, we will call our friends and with their help crush the Sea." As their friends, the cranes, the peacocks, the cuckoos and other birds, gathered, the male pheasant told them the story of how the Sea had killed their offspring and how necessary it was to drain him out. At the end, he said, "We cannot do this job. Let us go to Garuda, Lord Vishnu's vehicle, and tell him all that has happened. He will be angry over what the Sea has done to his species. He will surely take revenge on the Sea."

Wailing and weeping, all the birds went to meet Garuda and told him, "O lord, we need your help. The Sea has destroyed the eggs of the pheasant pair. This is a blow to all the bird community. If you do not intervene, he will destroy our entire tribe. Wise men have always said that one wicked person will be an inspiration to all others with evil intentions."

Moved by their story of grief, Garuda thought to himself, "These birds have a legitimate grievance. I will go and punish the Sea." Meanwhile, an envoy from Lord Vishnu came and told Garuda that the Lord had sent him as He wanted to travel to Amaravathi on a divine mission. The envoy asked Garuda to accompany him at once.

Garuda told the envoy, "No, I cannot come. I am not a useful servant. Let him take someone else. Please convey my regards to the Lord."

Surprised at Garuda's words, the envoy said, "O Garuda, you have never uttered such words about the Lord. Did the Lord slight you in any manner? Let me know."

"See, this Sea, the Lord's habitat, has swallowed the eggs of the pheasant pair. If the Lord does not punish the Sea for this, I shall not serve Him. This is my decision and you may convey this to the Lord," said Garuda.

Informed of Garuda's pique, Vishnu told himself, "Garuda has reason to be annoyed with me. I shall go myself and receive him with respect. If the king is satisfied he can give only money. But when the master honours his servant, the servant is ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of the master. Therefore, it is wise that I should visit and appease him."

When Vishnu arrived to meet him, Garuda felt guilty that he had said harsh words about the Lord and said, "O Lord, the Sea who enjoys your protection has stolen the eggs of my servants and thus insulted me. Because of respect for you, I delayed taking action against him."

"True, learned men say that a master is responsible for the misdeeds of his servants. Such misdeeds hurt the master more than the servant. Come with me. I shall recover those eggs from the Sea and make the pheasant pair happy again. Later we will go to Amaravathi," said Lord Vishnu.

The Lord then took out his thunderbolt and aiming it at the Sea warned him, "You wicked man, return the eggs to the bird pair. Otherwise, I will turn the sea into a desert."

Frightened, the Sea returned the eggs to the pheasants. The male bird handed them to his wife.

"From this story," Damanaka told Sanjeevaka, "it is evident that he who challenges an enemy without knowing his strength perishes in the end."

“True, but how do I know that Pingalaka has evil designs against me? We have been very friendly. That makes it difficult for me think of killing him,” said Sanjeevaka.

Damanaka said, “He stares at you in anger if he has evil thoughts in his mind. Otherwise, you may safely think he is the same old affectionate friend. But if you decide to leave the place do it after sunset. Our elders have said that one must sacrifice an individual for the good of the community, give up caste for the good of the village and surrender a village for the good of the country. It is desirable to save money so that one can spend it in a crisis, spend money to save his wife and give up both his wealth and wife to save himself.”

After he gave this advice to Sanjeevaka, Damanaka went to see Karataka. Hailing him, Karataka said, “What happened to your mission?”

“I have just finished sowing the seeds of discord among the two friends. The rest is in the hands of God,” said Damanaka.

“Let me know how you did it.”

“I have carried tales from one to the other and succeeded in dividing the friends. You will not see them again together.”

“Oh, you have not done anything good. You have separated two good friends. You have made them hate each other. A wicked person knows only to harm but not mend.”

“You do not know political science. However strong you are, unless you kill the enemy or the disease at the very outset, your enemy or the disease will kill you in the end. Sanjeevaka stole the minister ship from us and so he is our enemy. I won the king's assurance for him and brought him to the court of the king. Today, he has ousted us from our office. That is why I have plans to kill him. If he wants to save himself, he should leave this place. Wise men, like Chaturaka, do not hesitate to torment others to achieve their goal. Fools like the lion cannot enjoy even what they have won.”

On Karataka's request, Damanaka began telling that story.

The Lion and The Jackal



Two sparrows, husband and wife, built a nest on a banyan tree where the female sparrow laid eggs. One afternoon a wild elephant came to the tree seeking shelter from the sun. Unable to bear the heat, the tusker suddenly went berserk and snapped a big branch of the tree, crushing the sparrow's eggs in the nest. The sparrow pair somehow escaped the fury of the elephant but the wife began crying for her eggs.

A woodpecker, a close friend of the sparrow, heard her crying and moved by her grief asked her, “Why are you crying, my friend? Wise men do not grieve what is lost or what is dead or what is past. That is the difference between a learned person and an unlettered man.”

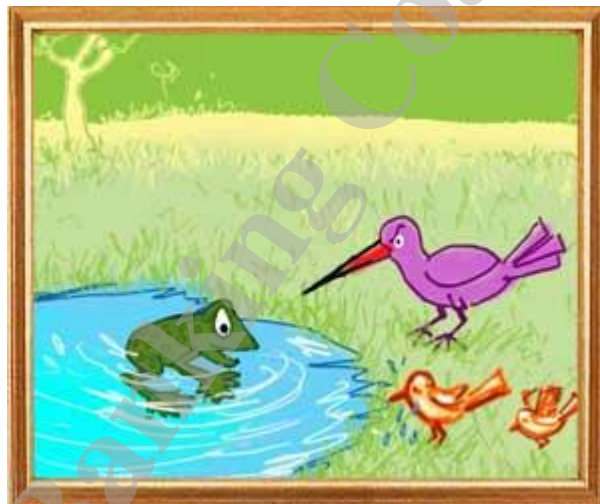
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“What you say is right,” said the woodpecker. “He is a friend who comes to your aid when you are in need. Everyone tries to be friendly when you are prospering. You will see how resourceful I am. I have a friend who is a fly. With his help we can kill the elephant.”

Taking the female sparrow with him, the woodpecker called on the fly and told him, “This is my dearest friend. A wild elephant has squashed her eggs. You must somehow find a way to kill that elephant. We need your help.”

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Wailing and weeping, all the birds went to meet Garuda and told him, "O lord, we need your help. The Sea has destroyed the eggs of the pheasant pair. This is a blow to all the bird community. If you do not intervene, he will destroy our entire tribe. Wise men have always said that one wicked person will be an inspiration to all others with evil intentions."



The wolf then looked at the jackal suggesting that the jackal should convince the lion of his innocence. But the cunning jackal said, "You did not heed my warning and ate the meat. Why do you now expect me to help you?" Realizing the danger, the wolf fled the scene to save his life.

Meanwhile, a caravan of camels passing by stopped where the lion and the jackal were planning the next move. The lead camel had a big bell tied to his neck. Frightened by the sound of the bell, the lion asked the jackal to find out what the sound was all about. He had not heard such sounds in his life. Pretending to find out, the jackal went out of the lion's sight and shouted from there, "O lord, run for your life."

"What's the matter," the lion asked him. "Why are you frightening me? Let me know clearly what's happening."



The jackal said, "My lord, the Lord of Death is angry that you have killed the camel before its death was due. He is upset and vowed that he would get from you one thousand times more than the value of the camel we have killed. It is the Lord of Death who hung a bell in the lead camel's neck. He also brought with him all the ancestors of the camel."

The jackal thus tricked the lion into hurriedly fleeing the place, leaving the camel's body all to himself to feast upon.

Damanaka continued, "That is why I told you that a wise man protects his interest even if it is to torment others and never shares his secrets with others as Chaturaka, the jackal did in the above story."

Sanjeevaka began pondering, "Why did I do like this. A vegetarian serving a meat eater! What shall I do and where shall I go? Perhaps, Pingalaka may spare me because he had given me assurance. Trouble may sometimes come to people who walk the path of ethical conduct. Every living being does good and sometimes bad deeds. He will reap the consequences in the next birth. So, we cannot escape what fate has in store for us."

With these thoughts on his mind Sanjeevaka went to see Pingalaka, the lion, and sat down without greeting him. The lion also was surprised at the bullock's arrogance and, believing what Damanaka had told him about Sanjeevaka, pounced on him tearing him with his claws. Sanjeevaka too began goring the lion with his horns.

Seeing that the jackal and the lion were determined to fight to the end, Karataka admonished Damanaka, "You fool! You have created a rift between the two friends. If the lord dies, how can you be a minister? How do you aspire to be a minister when you do not know the principles of diplomacy? War mongers like you can never reach their goals. You should not use force where there is still room for peace. One of the two is bound to die. Save the situation if you can. No, it is my folly to tell you what is good and what is bad. Elders have said that one should not preach to one who is not a disciple. You have the example of the [bird Suchimukha](#)."

"I am eager to know what it is," said Damanaka.

Suchimukha and The Monkey

A gang of monkeys made their home in a mountain slope. When winter came, it brought not only severe cold but also heavy rains. Unable to stand the cold, the monkeys collected red berries wildly growing in the mountain slope. They gathered around the berries and began blowing air at them thinking they were embers.

Watching their vain effort in amusement, Suchimukha, a bird, told them, "You fools, they are not embers but red berries. Why do you waste your energy on them? This will not save you from cold. Go and look for a shelter in a cave or a place free from



wind. The clouds are thick and there will be no immediate relief from rain.”



An old member of the monkey gang angrily told the bird, “Why do you poke your nose in our affairs? Go away. Haven't the elders said that he who cherishes his welfare should not talk to a gambler or an inefficient workman. So is the person a fool who talks to an idiot or a pleasure seeker.”

Disregarding the old monkey's anger and not giving room to any other monkey to talk, Suchimukha went on repeating his advice to them to seek shelter elsewhere. Tired with the bird's unwanted advice, one of the monkeys sprang at the bird and bashed him against a rock till he was dead.

Karataka said at the end of the story, “If you counsel a fool it will only provoke him and not pacify. If you feed milk to a snake it will increase its store of poison. That's why you should not offer advice to everyone. Look, how two good sparrows

lost their home, all due to a foolish monkey.”

At Damanaka's request, Karataka began telling [the story of the evil monkey](#).

How a Sparrow Came to Grief



A pair of sparrows made their home on a branch of a big tree and lived happily there. Soon it was winter and it began to rain heavily. Frequent gusts of wind made the cold unbearable. At this time, a monkey completely drenched in the rain and shivering from cold, came scurrying to the tree for cover.

Seeing the condition of the monkey, the female sparrow said, “Gentleman, with your feet and hands you seem to be a human being. Why didn't you build a house for yourself?” Angered by this uncalled for advice, the monkey said, “you stupid, why do not you shut up and mind your business?” The monkey told himself, “My, what impudence! This bit of a creature has the cheek to offer me advice. Makes fun of me. Unnecessary prattle. I must teach her a lesson. Why shouldn't I kill her?”

Turning to the female, the monkey said, “How does it help you to worry about my plight? Haven't you heard this saying of the elders that you should offer advice to those who seek it and cherish it? Advice to him who is indifferent is like a cry in the wilderness. Don't try to do that.”

When the female persisted, the monkey climbed up the tree and broke up the nest of the sparrow pair.

“That's why,” said Karataka to Damanaka, “you should be careful in offering advice. You are a fool who does not understand the essence of my advice. That is not your mistake. Fools ignore advice and wise men follow it

and benefit by it. It is clear that you haven't heard the story of Dharmabuddhi and his son Papabuddhi, the story of how the father was killed by smoke due to the son's thoughtlessness."

"Why don't you tell me that story," asked Damanaka.

In a city in the north, lived two friends named Dharmabuddhi and Papabuddhi. One day, Papa thought, "I am a man without worldly wisdom and added to that I am also poor. Let me persuade Dharma to take me to far off lands and earn lots of money through his business skills. Later I will deprive him of all his wealth and live happily ever after."

With these plans on his mind, Papa told Dharma, "My friend, you are growing old and cannot manage your business. Unless you go out into the wide world how can you tell your children about the wonders of the world? Elders have said that he is born in vain who does not see the countries in the world, learn several languages and know the dress styles of other people. You cannot earn wealth and knowledge without wide travel."

Dharma liked this advice and taking the blessings of his teachers set out on overseas travel, taking Papa with him. Both of them earned a lot of money abroad due to the business talent of Dharma. It was time for them to return home because it is natural for people who go abroad in search of wealth and learning to think of home when they have achieved both.

As they were entering their native place, Papa told Dharma, "It is not safe to take home all this wealth because relatives and friends in need will seek help if they know about our riches. We shall bury most of our money in some secret place in this forest. Whenever we need money, we can come here and take whatever we need. You know that money tempts even saints."

Dharma agreed to Papa's plan and went home after both of them dug a pit and covered it after burying most of their earnings in it. One midnight Papa went to the secret place in the forest and stole all the money and brought it home. Next morning, he went to Dharma and suggested that they should go to the forest because he was in need of money.

When both of them arrived at the secret spot in the forest and dug there, they found the pit empty. At once Papa began shouting loudly, "Dharma, you stole the money and nobody else. The pit was carefully covered. You must give me half of what we have buried here.' Though Dharma denied it, Papa insisted that they should take the dispute to a court of law.

When the case came before the court, the judge asked them to take oath in the name of God. But Papa quoted experts as saying that relevant documents should be produced first as proof, then witnesses would be summoned to give evidence and oath in the name of God is taken when neither documents nor witnesses are available.

"I can produce the gods of the forest as witnesses. They will determine who is guilty and who is innocent," said Papa. Impressed by this plan, the judges asked both the parties to be present next morning at the forest for a hearing. Happy at the judges' order, Papa went home and told his father, "Father, I have stolen all Dharma's money. There is a case in the court that I can win only with your help. Otherwise, my life will be in danger."

"What have I to do to get that money, son," asked his father.

"There is a big tree there. You have to go now and hide in the hollow of that tree. Tomorrow morning when the judges and others assemble there, I will ask you to tell the truth. Then it is your turn to declare that Dharma is the thief," said the son.

The father left at once for the forest to hide in the hollow of the tree. The morning of the next day, the son took a bath and went to the tree taking Dharma and the judges with him. Papa went near the tree and shouted, "O sun, moon, air, fire, earth, water, the God of Death, day and night, you are all witnesses to the history of humanity. O Goddess of the Forest, declare who among us is guilty."

The father shouted back from inside the hollow of the tree, "Listen all of you, it is Dharma who stole the money." The judges and the king's men heard the verdict and sat down to decide what punishment they should give Dharma. Meanwhile, Dharma filled the hollow with rags and hay, poured oil on them and threw a matchstick into it. The fire forced the half-burnt father to come out of the tree.

“All this is the work of Papa's evil mind,” said the father and soon collapsed and died. The king's men at once bound Papa hand and foot and hung him to a tree. They said, “Our elders have always said that wise men should not only be resourceful but also know the consequences of being resourceful. You have the story of how a mongoose killed all the offspring of the crane before his own eyes.”

When Dharma asked them to tell the story, the king's men began relating the story.

The Foolish Crane and The Mongoose



A big banyan tree was home to a number of cranes in a forest. In the hollow of that tree lived a cobra, which used to feed on the young cranes which did not yet learn to fly. When the mother crane saw the cobra killing her offspring, she began crying. Seeing the sorrowing crane, a crab asked her what made her cry.

The crane told the crab, “Every day, the cobra living in this tree is killing my children. I am not able to contain my grief. Please show me some way to get rid of this cobra.”



The crab then thought, “These cranes are our born enemies. I shall give her advice that is misleading and suicidal. That will see the end of all these cranes. Elders have always said that if you want to wipe out your enemy your words should be soft like butter and your heart like a stone.

Then the crab told the crane, “Uncle, strew pieces of meat from the mongoose's burrow to the hollow of the cobra. The mongoose will follow the trail of meat to the cobra burrow and will kill it.”



The crane did as the crab advised her. The mongoose came following the meat trail and killed not only the cobra but also all the cranes on the tree. "That is why," the king's men said, "if you have a strategy, you must also know what the strategy would lead to. Papabuddhi considered only the crooked plan but not what would follow. He reaped the consequences."

Karataka told Damanaka, "That's why like Papabuddhi you haven't foreseen what will happen if you went ahead with your plans. You have an evil mind. I knew it from your plans to endanger the life of our lord. Your place is not with us. If a rat had a 1000-pound scale for its lunch, is it any wonder that a kite carried away a child?"

"What about it," asked Damanaka. Karataka told him the following story.

Jeernadhana was the son of a rich merchant. But he had lost all his wealth. He thought he should go abroad, for, he told himself that he who had once prospered should not live in the same place as a poor man. People who respected him once would now look down upon him and shun him. Deciding to go abroad to seek his fortune, he mortgaged with a local merchant the 1000-pound balance his ancestors had left behind.

He went abroad with the money the merchant gave him and after several years came home and asked the merchant to return him the balance.

The merchant said, "O my, where is the balance? The rats have gnawed at it for food."

Jeernadhana replied without emotion, "I cannot blame you for what the rats have done. The world is like that. Nothing really is permanent. Any way, I am going to the river to take the purification bath. Please send with me your son Dhanadeva to look after my needs."

Afraid that Jeernadeva would accuse him of theft, the merchant called his son and told him, "Son, your uncle is going to the river for a bath. You accompany him taking with you all the things he needs to take his bath. Men offer help not only out of kindness but also out of fear, greed etc. If one offers help for reasons other than this, you have to be wary of such a person."

The merchant's son followed Jeernadeva to the river. After taking bath, he led the boy into a nearby cave and, pushing the boy inside, closed it with a huge boulder. When Jeernadeva returned from the river, the merchant asked him, "O honoured guest, didn't you bring back my son? Where is he? Please tell me."

Jeernadeva told him, "A kite has carried away your boy. There was nothing I could do."

"You cheat, is this possible? How can a kite carry away a boy? Bring my boy back. Otherwise, I will go to the king and complain."

"Yes, just as a kite cannot carry away a boy, rats also cannot eat away heavy iron balance. If you want your boy, give me back my balance," said Jeernadeva.

Both of them took the dispute to the king's court. The merchant complained to the judges that Jeernadeva had kidnapped his child. The judges ordered him to return the boy to the merchant. Jeernadeva told the judges the entire story. Thereupon, the judges ordered Jeernadeva to return the boy and the merchant to give back the balance to Jeernadeva.

Karataka then told Damanaka, "You have done this foul deed because you were jealous of the king's friendship with Sanjeevaka. It is not without reason that our elders have said:

"Fools hate the learned
The poor blame the rich
The miser riles the giver
The wicked abhor the virtuous"

"You have tried to help us. But you have hurt us. It is like the well-meaning monkey killing the king," said Karataka.

"What did the monkey do?" asked Damanaka.

The King and The Foolish Monkey



Once upon a time, there was a king who kept a monkey as a pet. The monkey served the king in whatever way he could. He had a free run of the royal household because he was the king's pet. One hot day the monkey sat fanning by the side of the king who was sleeping. He noticed a fly on the chest of the king and tried to swish it away. The fly would go away for the moment and come back again to sit on the king's chest.

The monkey could take it no longer and decided to teach the fly a lesson. He looked for a dagger to kill it and when he found it brought it down with all force on the fly. The fly flew away but the king died as result of the dagger blow delivered by the monkey.



Karataka said, "Therefore, the lesson is that a king who cares for his life should not have a fool as his servant." He went on to relate a second story to show how shrewd people save the lives of others.

Once upon a time a Brahmin lived in a big city and as a result of his misdeeds in his previous birth he became a thief. He saw four other Brahmins from another city selling a variety of goods in his city. He thought he should somehow deprive the four Brahmins of their money and through sweet words become their good friend. He was useful to them in whatever way he could. True, it comes naturally for women of vice to act coy and for charlatans to pretend to be learned.

The four visitors sold all their goods and with the money from the sales bought pearls and precious jewels. The Brahmin thief was keeping an eye on what they were doing even as he pretended to serve them faithfully. One day, in the presence of the Brahmin, the traders cut open their thighs and storing the jewels and pearls inside the thighs sewed them back.

The Brahmin was disappointed that they did not give him even a small part of their wealth. He immediately decided to follow them and kill them in the middle of their journey back home and take all that wealth from them.

He told the traders with tears in his eyes, "Friends, you seem to be ready to leave me behind. My heart is broken because it is difficult for me to snap the bonds of friendship with you. If you will be so kind as to take me with you, I will be very grateful to you."

Moved by his request, the traders started their homeward journey accompanied by the Brahmin thief. They passed through several villages, towns and cities before they reached a village inhabited by thugs. Suddenly, they heard a group of crows loudly shouting, "You thugs, very rich people are coming. Come, kill them and become rich."

The thugs at once attacked the Brahmin traders with sticks and began examining their bags. But they found nothing. They were surprised because this was the first time that the words of the crows turned out to be false. They told the traders, "O traders, the crows always tell the truth. You have the money with you somewhere. Take it out or we will cut every limb of yours and bring it out."

The Brahmin thief pondered, "These thugs will certainly pierce the body of the traders to grab the jewels. My turn also will come. It is better I offer myself to these thugs and save the lives of the Brahmins. There is no point in fearing death because it will come today or after hundred years. One cannot escape it."

With these thoughts on his mind, the Brahmin thief asked the thugs to first kill him and see if there was anything valuable on his body. The thugs accepted the offer and found nothing on him after they pierced his body. They let go the other four Brahmins thinking that they also did not have anything precious on their bodies.

As Karataka and Damanaka were discussing the ways of the world, Sanjeevaka engaged Pingalaka in a short battle in which Pingalaka clawed him to death. But the lion was immediately struck by remorse and, recalling the good days he had spent with the bullock, began repenting:

“O I have committed a great sin by killing my friend. There cannot be a greater sin than killing a trusted friend. They who forget a favour or breach a trust or let down a friend will all go to hell as long as the sun and the moon shine in the sky. A king will perish whether what he loses is his kingdom or a faithful servant. A servant and a kingdom are not the same because you can always win back the kingdom but not a trusted servant. In the court, I have always praised Pingalaka. How can I explain his death to the courtiers?”

Damanaka approached the grief-stricken king and told him, “O lord, ruing the death of a grass eater is cowardice. It is not good for a king like you. The learned have always said that it is not a sin to kill a person for treason even if that person is a father, brother, son, wife or a friend. Similarly, one must abandon a tender-hearted king, a Brahmin who eats all kinds of food, an immodest woman, a wicked assistant, a disobedient servant and an ungrateful person.”

Damanaka continued, “You are mourning the death of someone who does not deserve sympathy. Though you are talking like a learned man, you forget that learned men do not think of the past or the dead.”

These words of Damanaka worked like a tonic providing relief to Pingalaka's troubled mind. Pleased with this advice, the lion king reappointed Damanaka as his minister and continued to rule the forest.