



more jātakā tales
The Cunning Wolf



Once upon a time the people in a certain town went out into the woods for a holiday. They took baskets full of good things to eat. But when noontime came they ate all the meat they had brought with them, not leaving any for supper.

“I will get some fresh meat. We will make a fire here and roast it,” said one of the men.

So taking a club, he went to the lake where the animals came to drink. He lay down, club in hand, pretending to be dead. When the animals came down to the lake they saw the man lying there and they watched him for some time.

“That man is playing a trick on us, I believe,” said the King of the Wolves. “The rest of you stay here while I will see whether he is really dead, or whether he is pretending to be dead.” Then the cunning King of the Wolves crept up to the man and slyly pulled at his club.

At once the man pulled back on his club.

Then the King of the Wolves ran off saying: “If you had been dead, you would not have pulled back on your club when I tried to pull it away. I see your trick. You pretend you

are dead so that you may kill one of us for your supper.”

The man jumped up and threw his club at the King of the Wolves. But he missed his aim. He looked for the other animals but there was not one in sight. They had all run away.

Then the man went back to his friends, saying: “I tried to get fresh meat by playing a trick on the animals, but the cunning Wolf played a better trick on me, and I could not get one of them.”

