

AN 4.113: Patoda Sutta

The Whip

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

“Monks, there are four kinds of high-quality horses found in the world. What four?”

“Here, monks, this is one kind of high-quality horse: it is roused when it sees the shadow of the whip, thinking ‘What will the horse-trainer make me do today? How should I react?’ Monks, this is how it is for this kind of high-quality horse. Monks, this is the first kind of high-quality horse found in the world.

“Monks, this is another kind of high-quality horse: it is not roused when it sees the shadow of the whip, but it is roused when it feels the whip strike its hair, thinking ‘What will the horse-trainer make me do today? How should I react?’ Monks, this is how it is for this kind of high-quality horse. Monks, this is the second kind of high-quality horse found in the world.

“Monks, this is another kind of high-quality horse: it is not roused when it sees the shadow of the whip or when it feels the whip strike its hair, but it is roused when it feels the whip pierce its skin, thinking ‘What will the horse-trainer make me do today? How should I react?’ Monks, this is how it is for this kind of high-quality horse. Monks, this is the third kind of high-quality horse found in the world.

“Monks, this is another kind of high-quality horse: it is not roused when it sees the shadow of the whip or when it feels the whip strike its hair or when it feels the whip pierce its skin, but it is roused when it feels the whip pierce through to its bones, thinking ‘What will the horse-trainer make me do today? How should I react?’ Monks, this is how it is for this kind of high-quality horse. Monks, this is the fourth kind of high-quality horse found in the world.

“In the same way, monks, there are four kinds of high-quality people found in the world. What four?”

“Here, monks, this is one kind of high-quality person: they hear ‘In that village or town, a woman or man is in pain or has died,’ and because of that they are roused. Roused, they strive prudently. Self-striving, they personally realize the highest truth, wisely piercing through to it and seeing it. Monks, this kind of high-quality person is just like the high-quality horse that is roused when it sees the shadow of the whip. Monks, this is how it is for this kind of high-quality person. Monks, this is the first kind of high-quality person found in the world.

“Monks, this is another kind of high-quality person: it is not when they hear ‘In that village or town, a woman or man is in pain or has died,’ but rather when they themselves see a woman or man who is in pain or has died, that they are roused. Roused, they strive prudently. Self-striving, they personally realize the highest truth, wisely piercing through to it and seeing it. Monks, this kind of high-quality person is just like the high-quality horse that is roused when it feels the whip strike its hair. Monks, this is how it is for this

kind of high-quality person. Monks, this is the second kind of high-quality person found in the world.

“Monks, this is another kind of high-quality person: it is not when they hear ‘In that village or town, a woman or man is in pain or has died’ or when they themselves see a woman or man who is in pain or has died, but rather when a relative is in pain or has died, that they are roused. Roused, they strive prudently. Self-striving, they personally realize the highest truth, wisely piercing through to it and seeing it. Monks, this kind of high-quality person is just like the high-quality horse that is roused when it feels the whip pierce its skin. Monks, this is how it is for this kind of high-quality person. Monks, this is the third kind of high-quality person found in the world.

“Monks, this is another kind of high-quality person: it is not when they hear ‘In that village or town, a woman or man is in pain or has died’ or when they themselves see a woman or man who is in pain or has died or when a relative is in pain or has died, but rather when they themselves are afflicted with physical sensations that are painful, sharp, rough, bitter, unpleasant, disagreeable, and life-threatening, that they are roused. Roused, they strive prudently. Self-striving, they personally realize the highest truth, wisely piercing through to it and seeing it. Monks, this kind of high-quality person is just like the high-quality horse that is roused when it feels the whip pierce through to its bones. Monks, this is how it is for this kind of high-quality person. Monks, this is the fourth kind of high-quality person found in the world.

“Monks, these are the four kinds of high-quality people found in the world.”