

Buddha and the Injured Swan



The Buddha was a well-known religious teacher who lived many years ago in India. His real name was Prince Siddhartha and he grew up in a magnificent palace. He was always kind to animals from an early age.



One sunny day, as a young Prince Siddhartha watched a flock of beautiful wild swans flying past, he saw one fall from the sky.



Siddhartha rushed over to the fallen bird to discover it had been shot as there was an arrow sticking out of its body. Siddhartha carefully removed the arrow and bathed the wound, gently stroking the swan.



Suddenly, Siddhartha's cousin, Devadatta, came running over. He was carrying a bow. "That swan is mine. I shot it and will kill it." "No, Devadatta," replied Siddhartha, "I have saved the life of the swan, and will look after it until it can fly again."



As the boys could not agree, they went back to the wise people in the palace. A wise old man spoke, "Siddhartha will take care of the swan, for it is better to save a life than to take it away."



So Siddhartha nursed the swan back to health, and then when it was ready to fly again, the flock of swans returned and the recovered swan flew away with them. Siddhartha was delighted when the swan flew away, but his cousin, Devadatta, became angry and hate grew in his heart.

