

at the edge of his pond, pretending to be quite irresolute, not eating even the fish within his reach.

Now among the fish lived a crab. He drew near and said: "Uncle, why do you neglect today your usual meals and amusements?" And the heron replied: "So long as I kept fat and flourishing by eating fish, I spent my time pleasantly, enjoying the taste of you. But a great disaster will soon befall you. And as I am old, this will cut short the pleasant course of my life. For this reason I feel depressed."

"Uncle," said the crab, "of what nature is the disaster?" And the heron continued: "Today I overheard the talk of a number of fishermen as they passed near the pond. 'This is a big pond,' they were saying, 'full of fish. We will try a cast of the net tomorrow or the day after. But today we will go to the lake near the city.' This being so, you are lost, my food supply is cut off, I too am lost, and in grief at the thought, I am indifferent to food today."

Now when the water-dwellers heard the trickster's report, they all feared for their lives and implored the heron, saying: "Uncle! Father! Brother! Friend! Thinker! Since you are informed of the calamity, you also know the remedy. Pray save us from the jaws of this death."

Then the heron said: "I am a bird, not competent to contend with men. This, however, I can do. I can transfer you from this pond to another, a bottomless one." By this artful speech they were so led astray

good fellow, what you wish to imply." And Victor answered: "Well, you are my friend. I cannot help telling you what is to your profit. Here goes. The master, Rusty, is filled with wrath against you. And he said today: 'I will kill Lively and provide a feast for all who eat meat.' Of course, I fell into deep dejection on hearing this. Now you must do what the crisis demands."

To Lively this report was like the fall of a thunderbolt, and he fell into deep dejection. Yet as Victor's words were always plausible, he grew more and more troubled, fell into a panic, and said: "Yes, the proverb is right:

Women oft are tricked by scamps;  
Kings with rascals oft agree;  
Toward the skinflints money drifts;  
Rain on mountains falls and sea.

Ah, me! Ah, me! What is this that has befallen me?

You serve your king most heedfully.  
Of course. Who could complain?  
But enmity as your reward  
Is unexpected pain.

And again:

If one is angry, giving cause,  
Remove it, and the wrath will pause:  
But how may man propitiate  
A mind that harbors causeless hate?

Who does not fear the scoundrel's art,  
The causeless hate, the flinty heart?  
For ever ready venom drips  
Resistless from his serpent-lips.



The stupid king-swan pecks by night  
At starshine, in the water bright,  
Believing it a lotus white;

Then, fearing stars when shines the sun,  
Avoids the lotus. Everyone  
Who dreads a trap, will blessings shun.

Alas! What wrong have I done our master Rusty?"  
"Comrade," said Victor, "kings love to injure  
without reason, and they seek out the vulnerable spot  
in an adversary." "True, too true," said Lively.  
"There is wisdom in the verse:

The serpent sandal-trees defiles;  
In lotus-ponds lurk crocodiles;  
The slanderer makes virtue vain:  
No blessing lacks attendant pain.

No lotus decks the mountain height;  
From scoundrels issues nothing right;  
To saints no change of heart is known;  
Rice never sprouts from barley sown.

Nobility's constraints  
Are felt by gracious saints,  
Who bear good deeds in mind  
Forget the other kind.

"Yet, after all, the fault is mine, because I made  
advances to a false friend. As the story goes:

Harsh talk, untimely action,  
False friends—are worse than vain:  
The swan in lilies sleeping,  
Was by the arrow slain."

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about the horizon to learn where they might be, and discovered them ahead. Now they had avoided a snare by means of the Jump-Up; they stood in a body ahead of me, and waited, all looking at me. But I, ignorant of the Jump-Up, was caught in the hunter's snare.

While I was trying to drag it toward the herd, the hunter bound all my limbs and I fell to the ground, head foremost. And the herd of deer vanished, seeing no hope of saving me.

When the hunter came up, he did not put me to death, for pity softened his heart at the thought: "He is a fawn, fit only for a pet." Instead, he carefully took me home and gave me as a plaything to a prince, who showed his delight at seeing me by giving the hunter a generous reward.

The prince treated me kindly, providing ointments, massage, baths, food, perfumes, and salves, while my meals were appropriate and palatable. But as I was passed from hand to hand by the curious women and princes at court, I was seriously inconvenienced by petting and scratching, which did not spare neck, eye, front hoof, hind hoof, or ear. Finally, one day in the rainy season, as the prince reclined on a couch, I observed the lightning, listened to the thunder, and, my heart wistful for my fondly remembered herd, I recited:

When shall I follow on the herd  
Of coursing deer again?



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When brace myself against the wind  
That whistles by? Ah, when?

"Who said that?" cried the prince, and looked about him, terrified. When he saw me, he thought: "No man said it, but a deer. It is a prodigy. I am undone," and like one possessed by a devil, he tottered from the house, his garments in disarray.

Thinking himself ridden by a demon, he tempted the sorcerers and magicians with a great reward, saying: "If any free me from this torment, I will pay him no small honor."

Meanwhile, overhasty individuals were striking me with sticks, bricks, and cudgels, but—further life being predestined—I was rescued by a certain holy man who said: "Why kill the poor beast?" Furthermore, he penetrated the cause of my malady, and respectfully said to the prince: "Dear sir, in the rainy season he wistfully remembered his native herd, and therefore recited:

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Of coursing deer again?  
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On hearing this, the prince was cured of his feverish malady, returned to his normal state, and said to his men: "Douse the poor deer's head in plenty of water, and set him free in the forest he came from." And they did so.



The folk who wish to keep alive  
Had better move away.

"For quarrels end a happy home;  
And slander, friendship's story;  
While evil kings their kingdoms end;  
And meanness, manly glory.

"Therefore let us leave the house and take to the woods before we are all dead."

But the conceited monkeys laughed at his warning and said: "Oho! You are old and your mind is slipping. Your words prove it. We have no intention of foregoing the heavenly dainties which the princes give us with their own hands, in order to eat fruits peppery, puckery, bitter, and sour from the trees out there in the forest."

Having listened to this, the monkey chief made a wry face and said: "Come, come! You are fools. You do not consider the outcome of this pleasant life. Just at present it is sweet, at the last it will turn to poison. At any rate, I will not behold the death of my household. I am off for that very forest. As the proverb says:

Blest are they who do not see  
Death upon the family,  
Friend in trouble, stolen wife,  
Ruin of the nation's life."

With these words the chief left them all behind, and went to the forest.

One day after he had gone, the ram entered the



kitchen. And the cook, finding nothing else, picked up a firebrand, half-consumed and still blazing, and struck him. Whereat, with half his body blazing, he plunged bleating into the stable near by. There he rolled until flames started up on all sides—for the stable was mostly thatch—and of the horses tethered there some died, their eyes popping, while some, half-burned to death and whinnying with pain, snapped their halters, so that nobody knew what to do.

In this state of affairs, the saddened king assembled the veterinary surgeons and said: "Prescribe some method of giving these horses relief from the pain of their burns." And they, recalling the teachings of their science, said: "O King, the blessed master of our craft prescribed for this emergency as follows:

Let monkey-fat be freely used;  
Like dark before the dawn,  
The pain that horses feel from burns,  
Will very soon be gone.

Pray adopt this remedy before they perish miserably."

When the king heard this, he ordered the slaughter of the monkeys. And, not to waste words, every one was killed.

Now the monkey chief did not with his own eyes see this outrage perpetrated on his household. But he heard the story as it passed from one to another, and did not take it tamely. As the proverb says:



## THE PANCHATANTRA

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After this consultation, the blind man went and touched the drum, saying: "I will marry the girl." Thereupon the king's men went and reported: "O King, a certain blind man has touched the drum. Decision rests with the king."

And the king said: "Listen.

Blind or deaf, of meanest birth,  
Leprous may he be;  
Let him take the girl and gold  
To a far country."

So the king's men, following their lord's command, took the three-breasted princess to the river-bank, married her to the blind man, and gave him the hundred thousand gold-pieces. Then putting them all in a fishing-boat, they said to the fishermen: "Men, take this blind man, with his wife and the hunchback, to a foreign land, and settle them in some town or other."

So they came to a foreign country, all three of them. There in a certain town they purchased a house and lived comfortably. The blind man, however, spent all his time dozing on a couch. The hunchback did the housework.

In course of time the princess had an intrigue with the hunchback, and she said: "My beloved, if this blind man happened to be killed, we should live happily together. Please find some poison. I will administer it, will kill him, and will become happy."

Now one day the hunchback picked up a dead



black snake, and joyfully returning home with it, he said to her: "Belovèd, I found this black snake. Please cut it up, season it with delicious tidbits, and give it to that eyeless fellow, telling him it is fish. Then he will die in a hurry." And with this Slow started off for the market.

But she cut up the snake, put it in a kettle with buttermilk, placed it over the fire, and as she was herself occupied with chores about the house, she civilly said to the blind man: "My dear, I got your favorite fish today, and I am cooking them. So while I am busy with other chores, please take the spoon and stir them." And he was delighted to hear it, stood up at once, licking his chops, took the spoon, and started to stir.

But as he did so, the poisoned steam reached his eyes, and the film began to peel off. And he, perceiving its healthful action, intercepted all he could. So his vision cleared, and looking into the kettle, he saw nothing but chopped black snake. And he thought: "Well, what is the meaning of this? She called it fish to my face. But this is chopped snake. I must learn, for certain, whether this is the work of the three-breasted woman or a move to kill me on the part of Slow, or of somebody else."

With this in mind, he concealed his feelings and behaved like a blind man. Presently Slow returned and without hesitation began to hug the wife, to kiss her, and so on. And the blind man saw it all.



Not finding a knife, he went up to Slow in the old way, wrathfully seized him by the feet, whirled him about his head with every bit of strength he could muster, and dashed him against the chest of the three-breasted woman. And the blow from the hunchback's body forced the third breast in, while the hunchback, when his hump smashed against her bosom, became straight.

"And that is why I say:

Blind man, hunchback, . . . .

and the rest of it."

Then the gold-finder said: "Yes, you are quite right in saying that good fortune always comes through the favor of fate. Yet, after all, a man should make fate his own, and not desert prudence, as you did in rejecting my advice."

With this the gold-finder bade him farewell and started home.

Here ends Book V, called "Ill-considered Deeds."  
The first verse runs:

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Ill-accomplished, ill-devised—  
Thought of these let no man harbor;  
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