

pecially lately. Why, he actually turned his back on my darling Pushkarika who was right beside him in the garden, and picked flowers with his own hand from the little sandal tree that I have tended like a baby, to adorn that girl Ramayantika, the girl who has fastened a jealous rivalry on me, who doesn't know her place, who always grabs the center of the stage. And just after I had left it, he amused himself with her on the jeweled bench in the enclosure on the pretty little hill. The man is impossible; he begins to neglect me. Why should I wait? Pain in this life clogs fear for the next. When a woman's heart has become a quiver for the arrows of the love-god, it is unendurable suffering to be forced to live with someone she doesn't want. So you must bring me together with that man today in the jasmine bower in the garden. Just merely from hearing about him I am terribly in love. And here is a pile of money. With its help I will set him in the rascal's place and give him my deep devotion. Then I shall begin to live." I promised and have returned. My prince must dictate the next step.'

"Then, when I had absorbed from her the details that concerned the terrain of the women's quarters, the disposition of the chamberlains, and the plan of the garden; when the sun's disc grew crimson as if blood were shed in the fall from Sunset Peak; when the sky spread dark and wide as if choked by smoke from the sun's coal dying as it sank in the waves of the

western sea; when the planet-heralded moon, proud of invading an elder's bed, rose up to enlighten me in my design against another's wife; when the god of the blossom-bow, ambitious to subdue the world, kindled his majesty with the smiling circle of the moon, eagerly moving (like the flower-face of Kalpasundari) to behold me, I duly sought my couch. There I fell into meditation: 'This business is as good as done. Yet there may be loss of virtue if I approach another's wife, though this is permitted by theologians in cases where both money and love are won. Furthermore, I commit this transgression while combining a design for the release of my parents from bondage; that should outweigh even this obliquity and leave me a balance, however slender, to virtue's account. And yet—and yet—when they learn it, what will Prince Rajavahana, what will my comrades say?' So I sank into troubled slumber.

"In dream I beheld the blessed god with the elephant's head, who said to me: 'Beloved Upaharavaman, feel no crippling indecision. In you dwells a spark of my spirit, and in that sweet lady the spirit of the goddess of the sacred river, wont to rumple Shiva's matted locks. In an earlier life, when vexed by my advances, she laid on me the curse of mortality; and I in turn cursed her, saying: 'As here in heaven you bring delight to many, so—having become a mortal—be shared by more than one.' Yet I added in answer to her plea: 'I will myself give you a life's

devotion, yet I shall have one predecessor." Therefore do not shrink from this enterprise. It is destined.' I woke with calm joy, and spent the day in the thought of an adventurous meeting with my love, and of what should follow.

"On the next day the love-god, with no change in tactics, showered his shafts upon me. At last the lake of the sun's splendor dried, and muddy darkness grew. Black as that darkness was my cloak, and stout my mail, as, with sword in hand and other trusty appurtenances, recalling the landmarks mentioned by my old mother, I drew near the palace moat brimming with water. Beside the trench I found a bamboo pole which Pushkarika had providently deposited at the door of her mother's lodge; I laid it flat and crossed the moat; I stood it straight and scaled the wall. I reached the ground within by way of a brick stairway that climbed the height of the entrance gate. Once down, I skirted the row of dilly trees, followed the sandal-tree alley for a little distance, and heard to the north the plaintive cry of pairs of sheldrake birds. So to the north by the trumpet-flower path I felt my way for an estimated arrow's flight along the massive, bulging stucco wall; turned east by the sanded path with double border of clumps of *ashokas* and figs; and after a little faced south to enter the mango corridor.

"Then I touched the slide of my dark lantern and by its winking light inspected a thick-set bower of jas-mine vines, sheltering a jeweled bench. On one side of

it I found an inner recess, walled about with rows of young yellow amaranths crowded with bloom, and a door made of red *ashoka* branches that had fallen to earth, dotted with the fresh glory of blossoming buds, pink with masses of gay flower clusters. I opened and entered. There was a couch thickly strewn with blossoms, lotus-leaf and dhak-wood receptacles filled with aphrodisiac delights, an ivory-handled fan, a vase holding scented water. I sat down and rested a moment, sniffing the heavy perfume.

"I heard the sound of gentlest feet. At once I left the rendezvous to stand outside, leaning on a red *ashoka* trunk. The lovely maid crept near—slowly, as if love were cooling—and not finding me there, was dreadfully shaken. Like a frantic swan she loosed a quivering cry, sweet with the passion that choked her throat: 'Too plain! I am deceived. I cannot live. O my heart, why deem the impossible possible; then suffer such disquiet that it cannot be? O blessed archer-god, how have I sinned against you, that you burn me so, yet do not reduce me to ashes?'

"At this I opened the lantern and stood revealed. And I said: 'My jealous love, you have surely sinned deeply against the love-god, since you mock his very life, his goddess-bride with your beauty, his bow with the curve of your brows, his bee-strung bow-string with the luster of your dark curls, his shafts with your darting glances, his saffron-tinted banner of victory with the light of your lips, his foremost friend (the

southern breeze) with the breath of your perfumed sigh, his cuckoo with your sweeter song, his staff of flowers with your slender arms, his two bowls filled for the rite of universal conquest with your breasts, his lake of delight with your navel, his victorious chariot with your hips, the twin pillars of his temple's jeweled archway with your thighs, the flowers that deck his hair with the grace of your feet. The love-god has cause to torment you. But I am unoffending, and he earns blame by torturing me. Be kind, my sweet, give me life with your life-giving glances, for I am stung by the serpent of love.' And I embraced her. I clasped her close, while her eyes grew wide and soft in a passion of love.

"When she had yielded and when I perceived that her eyes were a little reddened and rolling, that her cheek was overspread with a gentle moisture, that her sweet murmurs were without restraint or coherence, that she bore blushing traces of teeth and nails, that her limbs grew limp as in despair, I relaxed the tension of mind and body, sinking into a state like hers. So severed yet united, we performed love's final ritual, abiding for a time in utter mutual trust, like two who long have known each other's thoughts. Then, with a long and burning sigh, with a somewhat wistful glance, I timidly stretched out my arms, embraced her gently, and touched her face with a tender kiss.

"Her tears started as she lifted lovely hands to her brow and said: 'Remember, my lord, if you go, my

life goes too. Take me with you. Else, I am nothing. I have no use save in your service.'

"And I replied: 'My sweet, what man of mind does not exult in a woman's love? If your heart is set on kindness to me, you must follow my instructions with no delay. Secretly show my likeness to the king and say: "Does this figure attain the limit of masculine charm, or does it not?"' And he is certain to say: "It most assuredly does." Then continue: "Well, there is a certain hermit woman who has gained assurance by foreign travel, a true mother to me. She displayed to me this pictured form and said: 'I know a magic spell by use of which you may assume this form, if first you fast, then on a day of new or full moon, in a sequestered spot, at night, alone, you offer in a sacrificial fire abandoned by chaplains a hundred twigs of sandal wood, a hundred twigs of fragrant aloe, handfuls of camphor, and many silk garments. Then you must ring a bell. Now if your husband, summoned by the tinkle of the bell, shall confess to you his every secret, then close his eyes and embrace you, this form shall pass to him, while you regain your former figure. If this plan pleases you and your husband, there must be no deviation from the ritual prescribed.'

"If this refiguration commends itself to you, sir, come to a decision with friends, counselors, younger brothers, and citizens, and attend the ceremony approved by them." To this he will doubtless assent.

Then, when with due ritual the priest has pacified the sacrificial victim where the paths cross in this very garden, and when the fire is abandoned, I will enter under cover of the smoke and take my stand in this same bower. But when twilight darkens, you will whisper with a humorous smile to Vikatavarman: "You are a deceiver, and ungrateful. In the very figure gained by my favor, a figure that makes holiday for the eyes of the world, you plan to entertain my jealous rivals. For my part, I would not raise a vampire to my own destruction." Then you must seek me secretly, reporting what answer he makes. Thereafter, I shall know what to do. And see that Pushkarika obliterates my footprints in the garden.' She agreed, reverencing my words like a lesson in Scripture; still athirst with desire, she crept to her chamber. And I went as I had come, and sought my own dwelling.

"So the adorable lady played her part, and the rogue followed her leading. And the news of a miracle to be went buzzing among the citizens: 'Have you heard? By virtue of a magic spell of the queen's, King Vikatavarman is going to get a figure fit for a god. I don't think this trickery is exactly religious. And how about a possible miscalculation? They say the queen herself will do the job in the garden outside her own chamber. Yes, even the counselors have discussed and approved, and they are wise as the professor in heaven. If it works, it is the biggest miracle ever.

Well, you can't reckon the power of gems and spells and drugs.' While such gossip went the rounds, when the day of new moon came, when darkness deepened in the advancing hour of twilight, there rose from the garden outside the queen's chambers a column of smoke, empurpled like Shiva's neck. And the smell of sacrifices—milk, ghee, curds, sesame, yellow mustard, suet, flesh, blood—floated down the breeze and filled the air. And when the smoke suddenly thinned, I had entered there.

"Then the stately lady came to the summer-house, embraced me, and said with a smile: 'Rogue, your plan is successful, and that animal is finished. I tempted him in the fashion you taught me, saying: 'Deceiver, I will not give you perfect beauty. For with that beauty you will be sought after by heavenly nymphs, not to mention women. And you are giddy as a bee. There is no telling where one so heartless would alight.' He fell at my feet and said: 'Belovèd, forgive my knaveries. Hereafter I would not notice another woman, even mentally. Hasten to fulfil your promise.'

"So I have come to you in this wedding dress. At first, this wife was given you by love as priest, with passion's flame for witness; with this holy fire as witness, she is given again by her own heart.' And tiptoe on my instep, she clasped my neck with two arms like graceful vines while the tender intertwining fingers figured interlacing leaves, sweetly lifted her face—

a flower-face willingly lifted—and with wild, wide glances kissed me again and again.

"Then I said: 'Stay right here among the amaranth clusters, while I go forth to finish what must be finished.' So I left her, approached the sacrificial fire, and rang the bell which hung from an *ashoka* bough, while she warbled, enticing our enemy like a minister of fate. And I proceeded to offer in the fire the aloe, the sandal, and the rest.

"The king drew near the appointed spot; and when I perceived that a measure of doubt and amazement laid hold on him as he stood, I said: 'Tell me the truth once more, calling this sacred fire to witness. I will dower you with this beauty, if you will not use it to make love to my rivals.' Then a clear confidence arose in him that this was no chicanery, but the queen herself; and he prepared to swear an oath.

"But I smiled and said: 'Why swear? What mortal woman can supplant me? And if you can win the love of nymphs, then do so. But tell me your secrets. When they are fully told, the old, accustomed form will drop from you.'

"And he confessed: 'I hold in bondage my father's younger brother Praharavarman. With my counselors I have resolved to poison him and proclaim his death by indigestion. To my younger brother Vishalavarman I have planned to give an army division for an assault on the Pundra country. A leading citizen from Panchala and a trader in my protection have

quietly advised me that a certain diamond worth the wide world, can be had for next to nothing from a Greek named Khanati. And a householder of my intimate acquaintance, a leader in his district, one Shatahali, has come to employ—for my advantage—certain army generals in an expedition to destroy by popular rioting that liar, that boaster, that rascally partisan Anantasira. Such are my secret plans for the moment.'

"Having listened, I said to him: 'Your life is done. Receive the reward that fits your conduct,' and bisected him with my knife. I flung the divided body into the handy fire that was blazing high with sacrificial butter, and there it was consumed. Then I comforted my heart's dearest, who showed some womanish distress; went, holding her flower-hand, to her chambers; with her permission summoned all the ladies, and straightway paid them my respects. After brief and pleasant conversation with these astonished ladies, I dismissed them all; then, clasping close my bride, spent a night that seemed too short. And from her lips I learned the character of the court.

"At dawn I bathed, repeated my prayers, and met my counselors, to whom I said: 'Gentlemen, my nature has changed with my form. The father whom I thought to poison, must be released and reinstated in this kingdom, which is his. We must show him filial obedience. There is no guilt like parricide.'

"I also summoned my brother Vishalavarman and

said: 'My dear, the Pundras are at present impecunious. If smitten by the blind madness of resentment, they might so forget themselves as to assail our realm, which is prosperous. Therefore postpone your campaign until failure of seed grain or ripened crops. For the moment a military movement is ill-advised.'

"To the two prominent citizens I said: 'I should lose virtue if I acquired a great treasure for no true equivalent, so pay its just price.'

"Next I summoned the district leader Shatahali and explained: 'It was planned to destroy Anantasira as being a partisan of Praharavarman. Why kill him now that my father is reinstated? Make no further move in this affair.' So they, recognizing every detail as squaring with their secret knowledge, were convinced of my identity; bestowed astonished praise upon me and the queen; released my parents from confinement; and restored their kingdom. And after I had secretly conveyed a complete account of my procedure through the old nurse, my parents climbed the climax of delight when I fell at their feet, and graciously invested me with the dignity of crown prince.

"With my spirit thus at rest, I had experience of pleasures embittered by the pain of separation from my prince, when presently I learned from a dispatch of my father's friend Simhavarman that Chandavarman was assaulting Champa; and realizing that aid to friends is no less incumbent than slaughter of enemies, I started with a considerable force stripped for

quick service. In so doing, I was heaped with cumulative holiday rejoicing, for I perceived the glory of my revered prince."

When he had heard this story, Prince Rajavahana smiled and said: "See now! The invasion of another's bed, effected by chicane at that, yet undertaken to release parents from the pains of bondage, enacted by annihilation of a wicked enemy, resulting in the acquisition of a kingdom, has brought the happiest consequences, both in money and virtue. What enterprise, indeed, of the intelligent fails to show a fair issue?" Then, fixing a long and loving glance on Arthapala's face, he bade him relate his adventure. The latter bowed and began.

## CHAPTER IX

### ARTHAPALA'S ADVENTURE

"I too, Your Majesty, intent on the same purpose as these friends, wandered the circle of the lands bounded by the billow-garlanded sea and came one day to the city of Kashi, to Benares. When I had bathed in the sacred pool whose waters are limpid as a fractured gem, when I had reverently worshiped Benares' lord, the ever-blessèd Shiva, I wandered still until I met an elongated fellow with sturdy arms like bars of iron, with loin cloth tightly girt, with eyes swollen and red from ceaseless weeping. And I reflected: 'This is a rough specimen, yet his eye shines dim through showers of misery and his habitude betokens desperation. The poor man is clearly careless of life and is about to meet some calamity rooted in the suffering of one he loves. I will ask him whether friendly service is possible, even from me.'

"So I approached and said: 'My dear sir, these regiments hint despair. If it is no secret, I could wish to learn the source of your sorrow.' He inspected me respectfully, then said: 'What harm? Listen'; and seated with me beneath an oleander, he told his tale.

" 'My good sir, my name is Purnabhadra. I am a householder's son, but hung loose on society in the East. Though carefully reared by my father, I obeyed

the call of fate and made a profession of thievery. Now in this city of Kashi, while stealing in the house of an eminent business man, I was caught with the coin and fettered. I was condemned to die and the signal was given by the chief counselor, Kamapala, who looked on from the height of the palace entrance-gate; whereupon a must elephant called Death-winner, to whom murder was sport, lumbered toward me with monstrous trunk curled back, while the jangling of his bells was reinforced by throaty yells from the crowd.

"As he charged, I scolded him defiantly; as he aimed a glancing blow with his tusk, I thrust two stout arms into a perforated stick of wood and scrubbed his mouth; he seemed dismayed and turned. The infuriated driver headed him back with blistering words and kicks of unrestrained ferocity. Again with double rage I scolded and thumped until he turned and trotted off. Then, when I followed with boisterous abuse, the rabid driver screamed: "I'll kill you, you damned dummy of an elephant!" pounded the creature time and again with a sharp goad at the corner of the eye, and contrived to make him face me.

"Take away this wormy animal!" I shouted. "Bring on a real elephant. I should like a moment's sport before I go my destined way." And when the beast saw me bellowing like mad, he disregarded the driver's stern persuasions and bolted. Then the counselor summoned me and said: "My good man, this

beast is death in the flesh; Death-winner is his name; murder is his sport. In spite of all, you have mastered him. Now if you abandoned your degrading profession, could you earn an honest living in our service?" "Yes, sir," I said; and he became a friend.

"One day I made quiet inquiries, and he confided his history to me: "In Blossom City lived Dharmapala, counselor of a victorious monarch, famed for prudence and sacred learning. His son Sumitra emulated the father in the prudential virtues. I am Sumitra's younger brother, but by another mother. My father, being conventional, tried to curb my dalliance with the gay girls, but my naughtiness was ineradicable. So I left home and wandered to the ends of the earth. In this city of Benares I visited a garden in order to worship Love's chastiser, Shiva, and there I chanced to behold Kantimati, daughter of King Chandasimha of Benares, playing ball with girl friends. I loved her, contrived to become acquainted, and secretly enjoyed her society in the palace. She became pregnant by me and bore a son.

"The child seemed stillborn; lest the secret be let slip, a servant laid the body on a mound in the garden, whence a Bhil woman conveyed it to the graveyard. But as she returned by the highway at night, she was seized by policemen, was menaced with tortures, and in her fright she half revealed the secret. By order of the king she pointed me out as I slept securely at night in a recess beneath the mound in the

garden; I was tied with adequate cords, was taken to the graveyard, and was on the point of perishing beneath a sword held aloft by a headsman. But through fate's power I burst my bonds, seized the sword, killed that proletarian and a few others, and made my escape.

" " "As I wandered helpless in the forest, I was approached one day by a maiden with her maid-servant. Her beauty was heavenly, but she was weeping. Her lifted flower-hands sweetly framed her face, her curls played gaily round her cheeks as she bowed and sat with me in the cool shade of a mighty forest banyan tree; and when I eagerly inquired: 'Who are you, my soul? Whence come you? For what cause do you show favor to my poor person?' her answer was unstinted honey: 'Sir, I am the daughter of Manibhadra, a lord of the Yaksha demigods, and my name is Taravali. On one occasion, as I returned from Malabar, where I had paid homage to Lopamudra, the sage Agastya's wife, I found a crying baby boy in a Benares graveyard. I took him and loved him so that I carried him to my parents, and my father carried him to the palace hall of our god and king, Kubera, who summoned me and asked: "Maiden, what is your feeling toward this boy?" "Such tender love for this tender love," I replied, "as if he were a child of my body." "The poor girl is right," said he and related a terrific tale that related to the baby.'

" " "Of the complicated detail I grasped only this

—that you are Shaunaka and Shudraka and Kamapala, the same man in diverse incarnations; that Bandhumati and Vinayavati and Kantimati are the same woman; that Vedimati, Aryadasi, Somadevi are one and the same; that Hansavali, Shurasena, and Sulochana are not different persons; that Nandini, Rangapataka, and Indrasena are identical.

" " "Now the herdsman's daughter whom you married when you were Shaunaka, was Aryadasi then, but today myself, Taravali. And the boy, when you were Shudraka, was born to me (Aryadasi in that incarnation) but reared by Vinayavati out of love persisting subliminally. To her, in her present life as Kantimati, the same child has been born. Thus fate snatched him from the jaws of many deaths and let me have him; and I, obeying the god's command, gave him to Vasumati, queen of Rajahansa who was then enduring hardships in the jungle, that he might serve her son Rajavahana, world-emperor to be. Thereafter, graciously dismissed by those whose word I honor, I came, by destiny's devious device, to bow low at the lotus-feet of one whom death has mouthed and dropped.'

" " "On hearing this, I repeatedly embraced my love of many lives, consoling her over and over while happy tears rolled down my cheeks; then in a great palace which her divine power revealed, I reveled day and night in such delights as earth can hardly know.

" " "After two or three days I said to my adorable

lady: 'My dear, I wish to repay a wrong: I wish to enjoy the pleasure of vengeance upon Chandasimha, who threatened my life.' And she replied with a smile: 'Come, dear. I will take you—to see Kantimati.' So at midnight I was taken to the king's palace. There I held a naked sword at his throat, awakened him, and while he shuddered, said: 'I am your son-in-law. Without permission from you I approached your daughter. I have come to wipe out that transgression by showing an interest in you.' Fearfully frightened, he groveled, saying: 'The transgression is mine. I was a fool. When you did me the honor of meeting my daughter, I broke all bounds like a lunatic and decreed your death. From this moment,' said he, 'Kantimati is at your disposal, and this kingdom, and my life, of course.' The next day he assembled all his counselors and gave me his daughter's hand with due ceremony. So Taravali told Kantimati the story of her son, and the tale of their former lives to Somadevi, Sulochana, and Indrasena. In this fashion I pass, indeed, as counselor, but am in fact crown prince, and spend gay days with gayest ladies."

"So he lived, the one sure friend of everybody, constant in kindness even to a creature like me. And when an intestinal disorder took his father-in-law to heaven—the queen's eldest brother Chandaghosha having previously tapered to annihilation in consequence of excessive attachment to women—the

worthy man anointed Prince Simhaghosha, a lad of some five years, and gave him fitting education. But the boy has the quick passions of youth; and certain cronies of slander-loving Chandaghosha have trapped him, saying: "That snake violated your sister. Afterward, while the king slept, he lifted a sword to kill him. The king, scarcely awake, was frightened into compliance and gave his daughter. Then he poisoned the king's eldest heir Chandaghosha, and at this moment is using you, whom he thinks a helpless boy, as a figurehead to lull suspicion in the people; but presently he will make way with you—he is quite callous. So strive to send him to the death-god's city." Though thus corrupted, the boy was unable, from fear of the fairy Taravali, to do him an injury.

"In these same days the queen dowager Sulakshana, observing an alteration in the bearing of Kantimati, made affectionate inquiry. "Your Majesty," she said, "you cannot play fast and loose with me. Give me the true explanation of the recent alteration in your flower-face." And she replied: "Madam, can you recall that I ever played fast and loose with you? My friend and fellow-wife Taravali is grumpy because our husband, when alone with her, blunderingly used my name to her; she disdained my fondness, she scorned my submissive courtesy, she flounced away in a huff. And our husband is depressed. Hence my melancholy." The pith of this Sulakshana whispered to her beloved boy, who now forgets his fear. While

Kamapala betrayed the pain of separation in features jaundiced by longing for his love, in eyes dimmed by tears that manhood would not shed, in somewhat saps less speech turned arid (as it seemed) by burning sighs, while he could hardly perform his functions at court, the boy had him seized and fettered by conspirators. His imputed crimes are trumpeted from place to place, and his eyes are to be torn out with such savagery that death may ensue. This is why I stand alone and weep my fill; this is why I gird my loins and long to die in that most generous presence.'

"Now when I learned my father's perilous plight, I said in a rush of tears: 'My honest friend, why hide the truth from you? I am that son of his whom the Yaksha lady gave in pledge to Queen Vasumati, that he might humbly serve Prince Rajavahana. I feel in me the power to kill a thousand hirelings with uplifted weapons in order to rescue my father. Yet if one man, during the scuffle, should sink a knife in his body, then all my effort would be but an offering in dead ashes.'

"Before the words were out, a great snake raised his head through a hole in the wall. I charmed him and drugged him and caught him, then said to Purナabhadra: 'Dear friend, our end is gained. Unnoticed in the scuffle, I will let this fellow drop and will make him bite Father, but will arrest the poisoning process just at the point where he will be left for dead. Meanwhile, you must fearlessly enlighten my mother, say-

ing: "Your son whom the Yaksha lady entrusted to Queen Vasumati in the forest, has returned, has learned his father's plight from me, and will use his wit to do thus and so. Now you must overcome your diffidence and send this petition to the king: 'It is doubtless a warrior's duty to chastise a scoundrel, whether relative or not, without compunction; but it is a woman's duty to follow the fate of her husband, whether scoundrel or not. Therefore I shall mount the pyre with him. Pray authorize the final rite that befits a young woman.' And he will certainly grant this request. Then you must convey your husband to his own dwelling and lay him on a bed of sacred grass in an unrefrequented corner screened by a curtain, while you wait near by in the costume of a wife who follows her husband in death. Presently I will arrive in the outer court and will be admitted by you. I will resuscitate Father, and we will follow his recommendation as to subsequent action.'" The fellow agreed and joyfully bustled off.

"At the place of proclamation I climbed a tamarind tree with thick, spreading branches, and lay hidden, while the crowd sought the highest spots they could find; and high and low their chattering buzz began. Then my father was brought forth, his arms bound like a thief's behind his back, the center of a gabbling throng. Just below me they halted him while the headsman thrice made this proclamation: 'This is Kamapala, the counselor. Coveting the king-

dom, he clandestinely poisoned his sovereign Chandasimha and the heir apparent, Chandaghosha. Further, he plotted evil against our present monarch Simhaghosha, who now comes to years of discretion. He confidentially summoned to a secret interview the counselor Shivanaga, likewise Sthuna and Angaravarsa, and babbled of royal murder. These loyal men reported the plot, and the judge decreed deprivation of vision as the legal penalty for this kingdom-coveting Brahman. He is now on his way to have his eyes torn out. And if any second criminal be detected, His Majesty will in like manner visit upon him the appropriate penalty.'

"While the crowd cheered this announcement, I dropped the snake—whose hood swelled wickedly—on my father. Then I jumped down as if terrified; escaped identification in the throng; and when the vicious serpent stung my father, I quickly checked the venom's effect, saving his life, though he seemed dead as he sank to the ground. 'It is a fact,' I cried, 'that chastisement from heaven falls on him who scorns his king. The sovereign planned to take his sight—fate takes his life.' Some approved my dictum, but others carped; while the snake bit the headsman too and left the scene; for the frightened crowd dispersed and made way for him.

"Then my mother, learning the facts from Purnabhadra, displayed peculiar self-possession even in face of such an exigency: accompanied by servants of

the family, she boldly came on foot, sat holding my father's head in her lap, and made this request of the king: 'This is my husband; whether guilty or not guilty toward you, heaven only knows. That speculation is profitless to me. But he held my hand in marriage; I should bring dishonor on your family, should I abandon him. Pray permit me to mount the pyre with my dear lord.' This proposal delighted the sovereign, who decreed: 'Let there be rites consonant with family dignity. After their celebration, let my sister's husband experience the ultimate sacrament.'

"Now the headsman departed this life because I prevented every application of medical magic; and when I pointed out that Kamapala had been bitten by the same cobra, the king permitted transference to his own dwelling for a funeral eulogy. So my father was brought home and laid on a bed of sacred grass in an unfrequented corner. Then my mother donned her death-vestments, bade her friends a pathetic adieu, paid lingering worship to the house divinities, earnestly repressed the servants' lamentations, and entered alone where stood my father's bed. There she beheld her husband sound and well, for I had previously been admitted by Purnabhadra and had neutralized the poison.

"With the gushing tears of supreme delight she fell at her husband's feet; then hugged me again and again, while her breasts grew moist and joyful sobbing struggled with stammering speech: 'My son, I wickedly

deserted you the moment you were born. I was heartless to you; how can you be so kind to me? Ah, but your father did no wrong; you were right to snatch him from the jaws of death. Still, Taravali has no feeling; she really received you from the god Kubera and gave you to Queen Vasumati, did not give you to me. No, it was quite natural. I was not good enough. Such a heap of luck it would be if a wretch like me could drink in the nectar of your baby-talk. Come, embrace me!" And again and again she stroked my head, drew me to her lap, scolded Taravali, hugged me, drenched me with tears; her slender body quivered, and for a time she seemed another woman.

"My father also, lifted from hell to heaven, from woe so bitter to happiness so complete, extracted every detail of the story from Purnabhadra, and counted himself more blest than heaven's blessed king. But when I had given a brief account of myself, I said—for my parents were lost in joy and wonder: 'You must give orders for our future course of action.' 'My dear son,' said my father, 'this house of ours is walled in an extensive circuit, it is an inexhaustible repository of weapons, and its defenses are unassailable. Moreover, many feudatories are under obligation to me, and a majority of the citizens do not approve my degradation. Besides, I have some thousands of soldiers, with friends, sons, and wives. So let us hold our ground for a few days, stirring passions foreign and domestic. We will direct these passions; will instigate

to effort subjects, enemies, and hereditary foes; and will extirpate this intractable king.' 'So be it. I see no objection,' said I, approving Father's plan.

"While we stood thus on the defensive, the king learned the story with qualms of self-reproach and applied various offensive maneuvres, which we countered day by day. In this posture of affairs I discovered through Purnabhadra the location of the king's sleeping quarters and at once dug a tunnel with a snake's-head spade, starting from the corner of the wall of our own dwelling and debouching in a girls' dormitory, a regular heaven on earth, where the womenfolk were flustered on beholding me. One maiden among them seemed the crescent moon, disconcerting with her loveliness the dark of the underworld; or the earth-goddess in living flesh and blood; or Shiva's bride descending to vanquish demons; or the blessed love-god's love sojourning in the world below; or kingly glory hiding in a hole to escape the sight of so many unworthy kings; or an image of burnished gold, dazzling in splendor. She trembled before me like a sandal sapling before the southern breeze.

"In this company of ladies, constituted as described, there was a silver-haired chaperon—she seemed a stalk of the white-blooming grass—who fell at my feet and said with timid dejection: 'Pray grant us a guaranty of safety, for we are women, and have no other recourse. Are you a prince, athirst for com-

bat with devils, eager to enter hell? Pray tell us your name and the cause of your coming.'

"And I replied: 'Ladies, feel no fear. I am Arthapala, son of the distinguished Brahman Kamapala and of Queen Kantimati. For good and sufficient reasons I was threading a tunnel connecting my house with the palace and, in so doing, encountered you. Tell me,' said I, 'who you are and how you come to dwell here.'

"The old lady lifted her hands and spoke: 'Blest are we, my prince, that these eyes see you safe. Listen. To Chandasimha, your mother's father, Queen Lilavati bore two children, Chandaghosha and Kantimati. Now Chandaghosha, the heir apparent, was excessively attached to women; consequently he faded away and went to heaven during the pregnancy of his queen Acharavati, who later gave birth to a daughter, the maiden here present, Manikarnika. But the pangs of labor slew her, and she followed her husband. Then King Chandasimha summoned me secretly and issued orders, thus: 'Riddhimati, this maiden shows the signs of future fortune. Hence I plan to educate her properly and give her to Darapsara, heir of the monarch of Malwa. Yet I feel some fear, derived from the doings of Kantimati, as to the public acknowledgment of nubile maidens. You therefore (with generous assistance) are to rear her in a great subterranean dwelling, which I have constructed, to baffle my enemies, in the recesses of an

artificial hill, providing it with numerous rooms for social and theatrical use. It contains supplies that you could not exhaust in a hundred years.' Hereupon in the double thickness of the wall of his own apartment he shot back a panel for a cubit's breadth and through the opening compelled us to enter this place, where we have seen the passing of twelve years and where this girl has grown from child to woman. Meanwhile, the king has quite forgotten. By her grandfather, it is true, this maiden was destined to Darapsara; but before her birth, your mother Kantimati won her in a game of chance, so that her own mother promised her as wife to you. Hence you alone, my prince, should plan what is proper.'

"And I rejoined: 'I must first finish a small job in the palace; then I will return and do what is right by you.' So I followed a passage which they lighted, shot the panel, entered the chamber where Simhaghosha slept securely at dead of night, and captured him alive. Like the king of birds with a snake, I clutched and bore my wriggling prey through that same hole in the wall into the presence of the ladies. I took him home, fastened his feet with fetters of iron, and privately exhibited him to my parents, his face dirty from measuring the dwelling, his eyes reddened by copious tears; and I told the story of the secret passage.

"My parents, overjoyed, multiplied his fetters—for they were alert to his evil disposition—and with

all due ceremony bestowed the damsel's hand upon me. The kingdom lacked a lord and fell to us. My mother suggested the liberation of Simhaghosha, but we dreaded sedition and kept him a prisoner. Such was our situation when the Anga king, Simhavarman, was assailed by enemies; and we, aware of his devoted loyalty to you, sir, marched to his relief. Thus I was honored by sprinklings of dust from your lotus-feet. And now let Simhaghosha, though all unworthy, cleanse himself of all his trespasses by propitiatory prostration at your feet." And Arthapala raised his hands and bowed.

Then Prince Rajavahana spoke: "Great valor, and great ingenuity of design! Let your kinsman be liberated and brought before me." He turned to Pramati, saying with an affectionate smile: "We now await your adventure."

## CHAPTER X

## PRAMATI'S ADVENTURE

He bowed and told this tale. "Your Majesty, when widely wandering in search of you, I once came to a halt beneath a lordly, sky-scraping tree that grew on Vindhya's side. Since still the declining sun, like a spray of blossoms, adorned the brow of the West, I bathed in the waters of a pool; then paid homage to the twilight, while darkness slowly leveled gulch and hill. To make a bed, I strewed the ground with flowering twigs; then lifted my hands and prayed: 'May the resident divinity of this tree be my refuge as I sleep unguarded in this wild wood, fierce with its hosts of murderous prowlers, with its deep caves puffed with floods of nocturnal darkness black as Shiva's neck.' And I lay down, pillowing my head on my left arm.

"A moment later, my limbs were strangely thrilling to such felicity as earth can hardly show, my senses were steeped in ecstasy, my soul was filled with life and joy, my hair was rapturously erect, my right arm throbbing auspiciously. I slowly opened wondering eyes to behold above me an awning of dazzling silk, that seemed a beam of the spotless moon. Glancing toward the left, I observed gay couches along a mortared wall, where women most securely slept.

Turning to the right, I perceived a single maiden, who lay on a bed white as a mass of nectar foam. The finely woven shift slipped from her bosom; to her person clung clustered light like the tusk of the primal boar; loose on her shoulder hung a silken robe that recalled the sea of milk: she seemed the earth-goddess, fainting with fear. With the breath of sighs that caused red rays of light to ripple gaily round her blossom-lip, sighs that were laden with fragrance from her flower-face, she seemed to fan the dying spark of love slain by the deadly fire of Shiva's eye; the lovely eyes were closed, the face asleep, as when imprisoned bees lie slumbering in the folded lily's cup. She seemed a jeweled vine from the wishing-tree in Paradise, plucked by the arrogant elephant of heaven, and tossed to earth.

"And I reflected: 'What has become of the wild forest? And how is it replaced by this massive palace that towers like the war-god's sharp-pronged lance, and grazes the empyrean vault? What has become of the flowery bed strewn on the forest floor? And how is it replaced by this couch of swan's-down and silk, brilliant as moon-rays massed? Who are these lovely sleepers, calm as a bevy of nymphs that have swooned on falling from swings whose cords are made of moon-beams? And who is she of the lotus-hands, who lies like a goddess on a bed of silk spotless as the full moon of autumn? No goddess can she be, for she shrinks like a lotus-cluster at the soft caress of moonlight; for

her cheek, dotted with pearls of weariness, seems a mango fruit, white and ripe, dappled with drops of sap that dripped from the broken stem; for her breath comes panting, fired by her new-won womanhood; the pigment pales on her breast; her garments show the soil of use. She must be mortal woman. Yet—heaven be praised!—her youth is virgin: for her limbs are supple, though rich in feminine grace; her complexion, though winsome exceedingly, is interwoven with pallor; her face has nothing florid, a stranger to the pressure of remorse; her lip is a jewel, clear as coral; her firmly modeled cheek is not too rounded nor too red, but like the petal of a champak bud; she sleeps in sweet security, free from fear of shafts of love; her breast is innocent of passion's pitiless deformation; and I, whose heart respects the bounds of righteousness—I love her. But if my love is fully shown in an embrace, she will surely wake with a scream. Yet, not embracing her, I shall never sleep again. Well, come what may, I will put fortune to the test.' So I touched her gently, but myself feigned sleep, in a strange commingling of passion and timidity.

"A curious tremor shook her. Though her left side thrilled with pleasure, the slow beginnings of a yawn left her limbs languid. The lifting lashes quivered over half-opened eyes still dimmed by weariness, the perfect charm of her girlish glance subdued by uncompleted sleep. Stirred by miracle-working love, her shy states of feeling shifted (but description is vain)

being compounded of fright and wonder and joy and passion and apprehension and gayety and woman's wish to charm. The voice that strove to wake her maidens, the heart that was yielding to assaulting love, the limbs on which her agitation issued as pearls of moisture—these with a mighty effort she held to their service. Sweetly peeping, her eager eyes marched to slow reconnaissance of my person. She raised her head and shoulders, yet still lay timidly upon the bed.

"For all my depth of love, a drowsiness overcame me; I know not how. My body suffered sensations of discomfort, and I awoke. Awake, I saw before me the same wild forest, the same great tree, the same couch of leaves. And night, grew light with dawn. And in my mind was fixed this mystery and purpose: 'Was it dream? Hallucination? Illusion sent by devils or by gods? Come what may, I will not leave this bed of earth until I know the truth. While life persists, I will lie down beside this goddess.'

"A woman appeared before me. Her slender figure drooped like a chaplet of lilies scorched by the rays of the sun; her robe was travel stained. Her lips, strangers to rouge and showing pale, their luster fading under burning sighs, seemed to be spouting dusky smoke from the gloomy fire of separated love; her eyes were reddened, as if unceasing streams of weeping had drained them, leaving only blood behind. With her abundant hair plaited in a single braid and fluttering

only within the bonds of chaste decorum, with her black hood of a fabric finely woven but tattered, she seemed the animate banner of wifely fidelity. Though sadly wasted, she retained, through heavenly intervention, some freshness of color.

"I fell at her feet. Two graceful arms that quivered with joy helped me to rise. She embraced me as a son, stroked my head; and the milk of tender affection flowed from her breasts; tears less scalding choked her utterance as she lovingly stammered: 'My dear, my dear! Did Vasumati, queen of Magadha's monarch, tell you how Manibhadra's daughter, Taravali, delivered to her hand the baby Arthapala and disappeared after narrating a strange tale learned from the god Kubera and relating to herself, her husband, her son, and her friends? Well, I am Taravali, the mother of you boys. Vexed with unreasoning pique, I flounced away from the protecting care of your father Kamapala, son of Dharmapala and younger brother of Sumantra. Penitent and lonely, I was visited in a vision by a goblin-like creature who laid a curse on me, saying: 'You are jealous. That you may suffer a full year of loneliness, I will possess you.' And even as he spoke, I awoke, imp-ridden. That year is gone, long as a thousand years. Last night, having learned of a festive assembly summoned in Shravasti by Shiva, god of gods, and seeing my kinsfolk convoked from every quarter, I started, curse-free, to seek my husband's side; at that moment

you arrived and fell asleep with the prayer: "May the resident divinity be my refuge." Still clogged by the cruel curse, I did not at the moment fully recognize you, yet realized that I could not abandon a suppliant to the unending hazards of this wild wood; I therefore took you with me as you slept.

"But when I drew near the hall where gods were gathered, I reflected that I could not attend the divine assembly in company of a mortal youth. Just then I chanced to perceive Navamalika, daughter of Shravasti's sovereign who is deservedly named Dharmavardhana, Virtue's Extender. She lay, for relief from summer heat, on a soft and spacious couch upon the palace balcony, and I thought: 'Thank heaven! She slumbers, and her maidens are deep in sleep. This princely Brahman may rest here a mere moment until I return, my duty done'; and I laid you there to rest while I sought my destination.

"When I had inspected the splendid festival, had felt the comfort of converse with my own people, and had shown veneration for the lord of the triple universe with a diffidence enhanced by consciousness of my own transgression, I paid homage to the blessed mother, the mountain's daughter, Shiva's devoted goddess-bride, who favored me with the smiling words: 'No more fear, my dear. Now abide at your husband's side. The curse is overpast.'

"At once my self-possession was restored. I returned, and seeing you, knew you for what you are.

"See," I said, "this is the friend and very life of darling Arthapala: this is my son Pramati, to whom, in ignorance indeed, I have been heartlessly indifferent. For now his love is fixed upon her, and the maiden loves the youth. Yet both feign sleep and—whether from shyness or alarm—do not communicate their feeling. And I must go, while still this maiden, breathed upon by love, preserves her secret unimparted to friend or waiting-maid. For the moment I remove the prince, that he may later create his opportunity, find fit means, and gain his goal." So I used my power to plunge you into slumber, and returned you to this leafy bed. Such is the truth. Now I would seek your father's kindness.' And as I bowed, she embraced me time and again, stroked my head, kissed me on both cheeks, and departed, faint with affection. Then I, a slave to love, turned my face to Shravasti.

"On the journey I came to a large market town, where business men were raising a tremendous bobilation over a cockfight, so that I could not repress a snicker as I joined them. And a certain Brahman who sat near me, a gay old gentleman, quietly asked an explanation of my merriment. 'How in the world,' said I, 'can men be such fatheads as to match Crane, that cock in the western pen, against Cocoanut, the rooster in the eastern pen? Cocoanut outclasses him.' 'Be still,' said the wise old boy. 'Don't give these ninnies a tip,' and he handed me some betel gum (cam-

phor flavor) from his little box, filling in the intermission with spicy anecdotes. Then the two birds went at each other full tilt, stab and counterstab, with wing-flapping and defiant cock-a-doodling. And the poor cock from the western pen was beaten. The old gentleman, delighted at backing a winner, made a friend of me in spite of the disparity in age; gave me a bath, food, and other comforts in his own house that day; and when I started next morning for Shravasti, he set me on my road, turning back with the friendly farewell: 'Don't forget me when your business is done.'

"I continued to Shravasti, where, weary with travel, I lay down to rest among vines in a park outside the city. Awakened by the cry of swans, I rose to see a maiden drawing near, whose feet were eloquent with tinkling anklets. She approached, alternating her attention between me and the figure of a man resembling me, drawn on a tablet which she held in her hand; she stood for a time in wonder, speculation, and joy.

"So, seeing my own likeness there on the tablet and assuming that the play of her glances was not accidental, I said: 'Surely this pleasant spot, this dedicated garden, is common property. Why weary yourself with irksome standing? Will you not be seated?' And she sat down with the smiling reply: 'You are very thoughtful of me.' Our desultory conversation developed some personal detail, on which she relied to

remark: 'You are a guest in my country and seem somewhat fatigued by travel. If it is not wrong, you would confer a favor by resting today in my house.' 'My dear young lady,' said I, 'it is not wrong at all, quite the reverse, rather'; and I followed her home, where I was served with a bath, food, and entertainment fit for a king. When I was comfortably seated, she secretly inquired: 'In your devious journeyings, dear sir, did you anywhere by any chance encounter anything in the nature of a miracle?'

"Then this flashed through my mind: 'There is genuine ground for hope. This girl may be a friend of the princess, who may have been unriddled by the whole obtrusive throng of waiting-women. Why, on this tablet appears the palace balcony, with its orient awning shading her; the sweetly tumbled couch, shimmering like clustered clouds of autumn; and the likeness of myself, at rest against its edge, my eyes lapped in slumber. Oh, surely the princess too has been laid so low by love that she, frantic with feverish torment of unendurable feeling, persistently pestered by solicitous friends, gave them an adequate answer by this creation of careless artistry. This maiden questions me because her suspicion is roused by the correspondence of feature; I will resolve her suspicion by telling the plain truth.'

"With this purpose I said: 'Dear maiden, give me the picture.' And she put it in my hand. I took it and added my darling, counterfeiting slumber, faint with

the flickering passion of love; then observed: 'When asleep in a vast, wild wood, I encountered a maid like that, resting beside a man like this. Was it a dream, do you think?' She gleefully demanded details; and I told the whole story, while she described her friend's varying moods toward me. Then I said: 'If your friend's heart inclines to show me kindness, wait a few days. I will return when I have devised some plan for dwelling in the maidens' quarters without awakening suspicion.' I won her reluctant assent, returned to the market town, and sought out my gay old gentleman.

"He gave me his bustling attention; provided a bath, food, and the like as before; then inquired privately: 'Sir, why have you returned so promptly?' 'You have reason to ask. Listen, sir,' I said. 'There is a city called Shravasti, whose sovereign is King Dharmavardhana, an epigonus son of Virtue. He has a daughter Navamalika, the refutation of Beauty, the life of Love, the denial of daintiness to the jasmine bud. When I chanced to behold her, she pierced my mortal part with a shower of sidelong glances that seemed a flight of the shafts of Love. Impotent to draw those darts, I return to you, a physician rivaled only by the divine authority on medical science. Will you generously play a part in my plan? I wish to shift to woman's costume and to become your daughter. You will take me to court and will say to Dharmavardhana as he sits on his judgment-seat: "This is

my child, my only daughter. At her very birth, her mother found final rest. I have reared her, a mother and a father too. Now a certain Brahman youth, matrimonially eligible, has gone to the Avanti capital, Ujjain, planning for her sake to earn his marriage-portion of education. The girl has a fondness for him and should not be bestowed on any other. But she is a young woman, and he is dilatory. I wish to fetch him, marry him fast, delegate responsibility to him, and retire to religious meditation. In view of the difficulty of protecting daughters who have left childhood's years behind, more particularly motherless daughters, I appear before Your Majesty, the refuge of the afflicted, standing toward your subjects *in loco parentis utriusque*. If Your Majesty, the model of antique royal virtue, can regard as worthy of your gracious favor an aged Brahman of some scholarship, no resources, and postulant humility, permit this maiden (whose character is irreproachable) to repose in the shadow of your arm until I fetch her predetermined bridegroom."

"To this he will certainly give joyful assent and will ask me to live with his daughter. Now on the twelfth day of the proximate month, when you are gone, there will be a festive bathing pilgrimage of the court ladies. You will then be waiting, with a bridegroom's trousseau, in a temple of the war-god, lying in the midst of a clump of ratan about three miles east of the bathing-pool. I will spend the intervening

time, with no questions asked, in the pleasant society of the princess; then in the course of this festival I will playfully enter the stream of Ganges; and while all the girls are giddy with gayety, I will dive and swim under water, coming to the surface in your vicinity. I will next don the costume you have brought, discard my feminine apparel, and follow you, nominally as your son-in-law to be.

"Now when the princess fails to find me after searching everywhere, she will weep and mope in her chamber, saying: "I will not taste food without that girl." When a great caterwauling results, when servants bawl and girl friends whimper and citizens mourn and king and counselors are at their wits' end, you will seek an audience, exhibit me, and say: "Your Majesty, I introduce my son-in-law, a deserving servant of your might. He is erudite in the four bodies of Scripture; grounded in the six ancillary disciplines; a master of formal logic; *au courant* both as to theory and practice in the sixty-four social accomplishments; a specialist in literature relating to elephants, chariots, and horses; a champion archer and club-fighter; versed in mythology and traditional lore; a creative artist in poetry, drama, and sophisticated fiction; a scholarly economist and mystical theologian; never envious of another's talent; a candid friend; capable; generous; blest with a retentive memory; unassuming. I do not discover in him the most minute positive blemish, or deficiency in virtue. Hence he should

not enter the family of a mere Brahman like me. Let me bestow your daughter upon him, then—so please Your Gracious Majesty—proceed to that final self-examination that befits my declining years."

"When he hears this, a pallor will invade his countenance, an extreme dubitancy will oppress his mind; and with his counselors he will endeavor to pacify you by preachments on the impermanence of mortal things. You will turn a deaf ear, strain your lungs in lamentation, choke your throat with ceaseless weeping, bring logs of wood, kindle a fire at the palace entrance-gate, and prepare to mount the pyre. Then king and counselors will fall at your feet, the king will bribe you with unstinted gifts, and will give me his daughter. Presently, appeased by my competence, he will devolve on me the whole burden of royal administration. This seems the plan to pursue, if it meets your approval."

"Then that wisest of wise old gentlemen (Panchalasharman was his name) rehearsed the points in the plot, and entered on its execution, adding ingenious details of his own. The fruition of my wishes followed according to schedule; and, like a bee, I tasted the flower of my virgin jasmine. Thereafter, with the double purpose of succoring King Simhavarman and of keeping the rendezvous with my friends, I mobilized all my troops and marched hither to Champa, where heaven grants me a blissful meeting with my prince."

Having heard the adventure of Pramati, the prince observed, while a smile bloomed slowly on his face: "Energy disguised as grace, vigorous action masked by gentle manners—it is the wise man's way. Now," and he turned to Mitragupta, "you have your entrance cue."

## CHAPTER XI

## MITRAGUPTA'S ADVENTURE

He told this tale. "I too, Your Majesty, having the same inducement as my friends for wandering, chanced upon a great festive gathering in a park outside the city Damalipta in the Suhma country. There in a sequestered bower of creeping vines I beheld a pensive youth, diverting his thoughts by playing a lute. 'Dear sir,' I asked, 'what is this festival, and for what purpose celebrated? For what cause do you, sir, disregard it and sit apart in seeming pensiveness, with a seven-stringed lute as sole companion?'

"And he replied: 'My kindly friend, Tungadhanvan, the childless king of the Suhma country, prayed for two children at the feet of Shiva's bride, who now, forgetting her love for her Vindhya home, dwells in yonder shrine. As he fasted and slept, she spoke to him in a dream: "One son shall be yours, and a single daughter shall be born. The son shall live a servant of the daughter's husband. The daughter, on the third day of every month from her seventh year until her marriage, must honor me by a dance in which she plays with a ball, that she may acquire a virtuous husband. She must be given to the man whom she loves. And this festival must be called the festival of the ball."

"With no long interval, the king's dear queen, Medini, gave birth to one son, and a single daughter was born. Today the princess Kandukavati—the girl with the ball—will honor the moon-browed goddess with her ball play. But her friend Chandrasena has been my foster-sister, and dear to me; and she, in recent days, has been the object of impetuous advances from Prince Bhimadhanvan. Hence I sit pensive apart, stabbed by the darting pain of Love's arrows, seeking a trifling consolation in the plaintive strain of the lute."

"At this moment a tinkle of anklets drew near, and a maiden appeared. His eye bloomed wide when he saw her; he rose, and when he sat down in the same place, her arms were round his neck. 'This is my life,' he chirped, 'whose loss burns like fire. The prince is Death, taking my life and leaving me cold. Yet prince he is; I cannot injure him. So I will give her one last, lingering look at my person, then cease to draw breath that has no recompense.'

"Her face swam in tears as she clung closer, saying: 'My dear lord, you must not for my sake dare any desperate deed. You are the son of Arthadasa, a most respectable merchant, and your elders named you Koshadasa; but because you were so devoted to me, your enemies gave you the nickname Veshadasa—the gay girl's slave; so if you should die and I should live, I should prove the proverb that gay girls are heartless. Take me today to some nice country.'

"He turned to me and said: 'My dear sir, among the kingdoms visited by you, which one is wealthy, fertile, and prevailingly populated by the virtuous?' 'My dear sir,' I replied with a slight smile, 'the sea-clad earth is wide. There is no end of pleasant populations in one region and another. Further, if unable to devise a plan for your happiness and union here, I will myself serve as guide.'

"At this point the jingling of jeweled anklets was heard. The girl jumped up, saying: 'She has come. Princess Kandukavati is about to honor the Vindhya-dwelling goddess by playing ball. At this festival of the ball the exhibition is public. Satisfy your eyes; come and see. I must wait upon her.' She went, and we followed her.

"The red-lipped princess stood on a great, jeweled dancing platform when I first beheld her. So straightway was she in my heart that neither I nor any other saw her pass. I gazed amazed and thought, distraught: 'Is this the goddess Beauty? No, no. In Beauty's hand a lily lies; her hand is the lily's self. Beauty was sought by primal man and antique kings; her virgin virtue is unstaled by custom's history.'

"Even as I meditated, with wholly faultless grace she crossed her hands and touched the earth with blossom finger tips; her black curls rippled as she paid a fluttering curtsy to the blessed goddess; she held the ball as if she held the love-god in her hand, his eyes flaring with impatient passion. With playful grace

she dropped it on the ground. As it rose sluggishly, she struck it with her flower-hand—the thumb a little bent, the tender fingers extended—bounced it from the back of her hand, and caught it falling in mid-air, while her flashing glances flickered round it like bees about a blossom cluster. Then she let it fall. Patting or pounding, *andante* or *allegro*, she kept its motion timed with her forward or backward steps. Inert, she made it hop with heartless blows; frisky, she soothed it. Sidewise and straight she struck, with the left hand and the right in turn, making it fly like a bird. If it soared too high, she caught it, taught it moderation; she tossed it wide from side to side, then brought it home.

"Such was her sweet, surprising sport, bringing each moment the cry or the sigh of applause from the fascinated spectators round the platform. While I stood gazing, leaning on Koshadasa's shoulder, with tingling cheek and widened eye and momently mounting emotion, she learned the peeping glance of coquetry from love, till then a stranger, her graceful, curving eyebrows swerving sweetly as she followed the flight of the ball. The greedy bees that sought to seize the fragrance of her flower-face she seemed to pelt with blooming, rippling rays of light reflected from her lips, rays made wavy by her quick-drawn breath. In her swift pursuit of whirling circles traced by the ball, she seemed to inclose herself within a cage of flowers, in shy avoidance of me. She struck in

five directions, as if fearfully baffling the love-god's five arrows, flying simultaneously. In flexuous dash she mocked the lightning flash, with its eager gleam against the dark. Her twinkling feet kept time to the tinkling jewels that decked her; her red lip was washed with light as she smiled at the part she played; she tossed to its place the wealth of hair that sought her shoulder. With the jingle of stricken gems on her girdle string, with the gleam of rustling silk that swung from her swaying hips, she gave graceful life to the ball with blows from lovely arms now bent, now straightened. Then she would fold her arms; then her curls would flutter to rest on her back as she stooped. The rapid readjusting of the fallen earring's golden plate hardly hindered the timing of her steps, and the ball whirled out or in with each quick lift of hand or foot. As she rose and sank, her central necklace string was seen and lost by fleeting moments; as she bowed and stood erect, her pearls had no repose. The breeze from the blossom over her ear served as fan to dry her cheek's cosmetic moistened by starting drops; one blossom-hand was busy in patting the gown that slipped from her bosom's slope. She crouched and rose; she closed and opened her eyes; she paused and began again: and wonder awoke as the princess gaily played.

"Whether bouncing the ball from the ground or keeping it in the air, whether playing with one or with more than one, she showed us many sightly tricks.

Then at the end of her friendly diversion with Chandrasena and other girls, having worshiped the goddess, attended by my heart as devoted companion, flashing at me a sidelong look like a lotus arrow of blossom-arrowed Love, with a slyly repeated backward turn of a face as sweet as the full moon's disc and a glance that left me in doubt whether or no her heart had darted to meet me and been recalled, she went with her friends to the palace.

"Faint with love, I went to Koshadasa's dwelling, where he assiduously entertained me with a most superior bath, food, and other comforts. In the evening came Chandrasena, who showed quiet respect for me, then with tender gentleness rubbed shoulders with her lover and sat down. Koshadasa was delighted. 'All my life, my sweet-eyed love,' he caroled, 'may I thus receive your kindness.' 'Why make a mere prayer of it, my friend?' said I with a smile. 'There is a magic lotion with which she may anoint her eyes. Then when she approaches the prince, she will seem a she-monkey to him; he will forget his love, and abandon her.'

"But she smiled as she replied: 'Oh, sir, you are much too kind to your very humble servant, with your readiness to strip her of human form (without rebirth) and make a monkey of her. Enough of this! There is another way to gain our end. The princess, when playing ball today, was smitten, sir, by your beauty that makes a mock of the love-god, who, as if

angered, tortures her terribly. Having penetrated her secret, I shall tell my mother, who will tell the princess' mother, the queen, who will tell the king. And when the king learns the situation, he will bestow his daughter's hand on you. Then the prince must live as your servant: such is the decree of the goddess. And when the kingdom is subject to you, Bhimadhanvan will be in no position to flout you and pester me. So let our friend be patient for three or four days.' With this she bowed to me, embraced her lover, and withdrew. The night dragged away while Koshadasa and I made endless arrangements to conform to her plan.

"When morning dawned, I did my devoirs; then visited the garden blest by the remembered vision of my love. There the prince met me, spoke without insolence, and engaged me for a time in agreeable conversation. Conducting me to the palace, he provided a bath, food, and a couch as luxurious as his own. While I slept, enjoying in dream the bliss of beholding and clasping my darling, he ordered many stout-armed menials to bind me most securely with fetters of iron. And when I awoke, he pitched into me roughly: 'You sneak! Chandrasena's chatter—damn her! —drifted through the lattice and was overheard by a hunchback woman that I employ to follow her and spy on her. So you love that hussy Kandukavati! And I am to live as your servant! And I mustn't flout you! And I am to give Chandrasena to Koshadasa!'

With this he turned to a fellow beside him, shouting: 'Throw him into the ocean!'

"'Yes, yes, Your Majesty,' cried the fellow, as jollily as if a kingdom had been given him, and he did it. With nothing to cling to, I tossed my arms wildly and clasped to my bosom a stick of wood that fate provided; so I floated while the day passed and a long, long night. At daybreak I spied a kind of boat, manned by Greeks. They pulled me in and reported to their captain Rameshu: 'Here is a man wearing fetters of iron. We found him in the water. We could use him to sprinkle a thousand bunches of grapes at a time.'

"Just then a galley, attended by numerous smaller craft, bore down on us, terrifying the Greeks. The swift boats were about us in a moment, like dogs around a boar. A fight followed, in which the Greeks were worsted. But when they were demoralized and disheartened, I encouraged them by saying: 'Strike off my fetters, and I will destroy your enemies single-handed.' They did so; and I, with a horn-bow that shot showers of shafts with a terrible twang, made mincemeat of all those hostile hirelings.

"I leaped on a boat lashed alongside, and on its death-strewn deck engaged in single combat with the captain, whom I captured alive. He proved to be Bhimadhanvan. He showed embarrassment when I introduced myself, and said: 'My son, have you observed how oddly fate can hop?' But the crew of the merchantman bound him fast with my discarded fet-

ters, trolled out their joyous chanties, and paid me something like worship.

"However, the ship got out of hand when buffeted by contrary winds; she fell far off her course and fetched up at a tight little island. Being in need of fresh water, fuel, bulbs, roots, and fruit, we landed on a compact pile of rocks. Before us rose a great mountain. 'Ah,' said I, 'this is a charming mountain side, a most lovely lower slope where the very rocks are fragrant, cool mountain water rich with moonlike drops of honey from lilies blue and white, an entrancing grove of trees laden with blossom clusters in varied hues'; so I gazed and gazed with eyes that would not be satisfied. I climbed unaware to the summit and came to a pool tinged red by the flashing rocks of a ruby stairway and dusted with lotus pollen.

"After I had bathed, chewed a few nectar-sweet lotus stalks, and pinned a white lily on my shoulder, a hideous ghost rose from the bank and plunged toward me, crying 'Who are you? Where do you come from?' in a tone of scolding disapproval. 'My dear sir,' I replied without alarm, 'I am a Brahman, as you can see. I have been traveling—from an enemy's hand into the sea, from the sea into a Greek ship, from the Greek ship to this admirable mountain with its complex geology, and I chanced to rest beside this pool. Greetings!' 'If you don't answer my questions,' said he, 'I'll eat you.' 'Very well,' said I. 'Ask them.' So our interview continued with a single quatrain:

Can a woman's heart be callous?  
 How do good wives please the soul?  
 Can true love mistake its object?  
 Smartness gain a distant goal?

"As to that, you must consult Dhumini, Gomini, Nimbavati, and Nitambavati," I answered. And when he said: "Tell me. What sort of women were they?" I related this story.

"There is a country called Trigarta. In it lived three householders with much accumulated capital; <sup>money</sup> they were brothers, and their names were Dhanaka, Dhanyaka, and Dhunyaka. During their lifetime Indra sent no rain for twelve years: the grain drooped; plants failed to seed; trees bore no fruit; the clouds were barren; rivers dwindled; swamps were mere mudholes; many springs went dry; bulbs, roots, and fruit grew scarce; story-telling declined; social pleasures fell into disuse; robber bands multiplied; anthropophagy appeared; human skulls, white as cranes, rolled underfoot; thirsty crows migrated in clouds; cities, villages, towns, and other settlements decayed.

"When these householders had exhausted their store of grain, and had eaten in turn the goats and sheep, the drove of buffalo, the herd of cows, the maid-servants, the man-servants, the children, the eldest and the middle wife, they agreed to eat next day the youngest wife, Dhumini. But Dhunyaka, the youngest brother, unable to eat his darling, fled with

her that same night. Carrying her when she grew weary, he plunged into a forest. Relieving her hunger and thirst with his own flesh and blood, he carried her, until in mid-journey he encountered a man writhing on the forest floor, with hands and feet and ears and nose cut off. This man too he charitably took on his shoulder, and in a forest nook abounding in bulbs, roots, and deer he laboriously thatched a hut of leaves, where he lived a long time. He treated the pitiful mutilations with oil of almonds and sesame, and shared his own meat and vegetables equally.

"One day, when the wounds were healed and vigor had returned, when Dhunyaka had gone to hunt deer, Dhumini approached the man with sexual desire, and for all his upbraiding, forced him to satisfy her. When her husband returned and asked for water, she tossed him the bucket and rope, saying: "Draw your own drink; my head aches." Then, as he drew water from the well, she gave him a quick push from behind.

"She put the cripple on her shoulder and wandered from land to land, winning the name of a devoted wife and a variety of honors. Finally she settled down in immense affluence through the favor of His Majesty of Avanti. Presently she learned that her husband, accidentally discovered and rescued by thirsty merchants, was roaming Avanti, begging his bread. So Dhumini deposed that he was the wretch who had mutilated her lord, and had that saintly

character condemned by the unwitting king to torture and death.

"But when Dhunyaka was being led to execution, his arms bound behind his back—since a prolongation of life was predestined, he cheerfully said to the functionary: "If the beggar whom I am supposed to have mutilated is prepared to speak ill of me, my punishment is deserved." "No harm in trying," said the officer, summoned the cripple, and presented him. That upright fellow wept profusely, fell at the saintly feet, and gave a true relation of the man's charity and the woman's vile behavior. The king, enraged, disfigured the trollop's face and appointed her cook for the dogs, while Dhunyaka became the recipient of his favor. And that is why I say that woman's heart may be callous."

"Then, at the ghost's request, I told the story of Gomini: 'In the Dravidian country is a city called Kanchi, where lived Shaktikumara, the multimillionaire son of a merchant. As he approached the age of eighteen, he anxiously reflected: "There is no true happiness for a man without a wife, or with a wife who lacks the appropriate virtues. Now how could I find a virtuous wife?"'

"So, diffident of the problematical satisfaction in a wife recommended by others, he became a fortuneteller, tucked a measure of rice in his garment's hem, and roamed the earth. Now those who had daughters

exhibited their daughters to him as a man who could interpret stigmata. But whatever the stigmata, he would say whenever he saw a girl of his own caste: "My good girl, can you feed me properly with this measure of rice?" As a result, he wandered from house to house, ridiculed and rejected.

"In a city on the right bank of the Kaveri in the Shibi country, he one day inspected a maiden presented by her nurse. She was meagerly begemmed, for she with her parents had run through a great property, though still possessing a dilapidated mansion. When he set eyes on her, he thought: "In the case of this girl, not a single member is too fat or too thin, too short or too long, lacking in symmetry or purity of outline. The fingers have a tinge of pink; the hands are marked with many stigmata of fortune—the barley-corn, the fish, the lotus, the bowl, and others. The ankle joints are even; the feet plump, not stringy. The calves have a classic curve; and the knees slip almost unobserved into the swell of the thighs. The hips are balanced, regular, weetly set, and shaped like chariot wheels. The navel has elegance, flatness, and depth; the lower body is adorned with three plicatures. The breasts, with emergent nipples, give a broad-based beauty to the entire chest. The graceful arms are marked with the lines that promise money, grain, and numerous sons; the nails have a glossy polish like a jewel; the fingers are straight, tapering, pink; there is daintiness in the slope of the shoulder, and an absence

of knobbiness at the joints. The slender neck shows the conch-shell's curve. The lip has a slight pout and an even color; the charming chin does not retreat; the cheek is full and firm; the brows unite to form a black, soft, wavy line; the nose resembles a half-blown sesamum blossom; the great, gentle eyes have a sweet and modest glance, yet flashing with three colors—pure black, white, and the pigmented part; the brow charms like the crescent moon; the curls are bewitching as a mine of sapphires; each lovely ear has double decoration, its ring and the winsome line of a drooping lotus stem: the whole face is like a lily. Her hair is abundant, long, curly (not kinky), not fading even at the end, of a smooth, glossy black throughout, and fragrant.

" "Such is her person; the character must correspond. Besides, I love her. So I will apply my test and marry her. For endless regrets are the certain portion of the heedless." So, with an affectionate glance, he said to her: "My dear young lady, are you by any chance competent to convert this measure of rice into an adequate meal for me?"

" Hereupon the girl signaled with her eyes to the old serving-woman, who took the measure of grain from his hand, washed the girl's feet, and seated her in a spot, carefully sprinkled and swept, before the house door. The girl trampled the fragrant rice, dried it a little at a time, turned it repeatedly in the sun, put it on a hard, level spot, struck it very gently with

a hollow stalk, and extracted the kernels without crushing the husks. "Mother," she said to the nurse, "jewelers find a use for these husks, which serve to polish gems. Take them these, and with the pennies earned buy firewood—solid sticks, neither too moist nor too dry—a modest kettle, and two saucers."

" When this had been done, in a shallow, wide-mouthed, pot-bellied mortar of *urjoon* wood, with a long, heavy acacia pestle, plated with iron at the head, smooth in the body, and with a perceptible tenuity in the waist, she caused the grains to rise and fall with the busy grace and skill of her arm; repeatedly made them hop and sink with her fingers; stripped them of awns in the winnowing sieve; rinsed them a number of times; then—having paid honor to the fireplace—dropped them into quintessential boiled water. As the grains softened, hopped, and swelled, she collected the fire, fitted the lid to the kettle, and strained off the scum. Then she patted with the ladle; stirred a little at a time; and making sure that the clots were cooking evenly, set the kettle upside down. Next, she sprinkled with water such fagots as were only scorched and sent the charred, but no longer burning, sticks to the retailers with the command: "For the pennies you get for these, buy as much as you can in vegetables, butter, curds, oil, emblic, and tamarind."

" When the nurse had done this, she provided a couple of hors d'oeuvres; then, remarking that the scummy broth should be set in a new saucer planted

in moist sand, she cooled it with a gentle breeze from a palm-leaf fan, added sufficient salt, and let the smoke from the wood fire scent it; she also ground the emblic fine to bring out its odor, sweet as a lotus; next, by the lips of the nurse, she invited him to take a bath. This he did thoroughly, receiving oil and emblic from her after she too had bathed.

"After his bath, he seated himself on a plank set on the pavement (sprinkled and swept), and fingered the two saucers of liquid served on the quarter of a greenish white plantain leaf clipped from a tree in the courtyard. Then she set the rice gruel before him. He drank, relaxed, felt happy; and satisfaction pervaded his frame. Next, she served him two ladlefuls of rice, and brought a little butter, soup, and a relish. The following course was the rest of the rice, with curds, powdered spices, and fragrant, refreshing buttermilk and clotted cheese.

"The man enjoyed his meal to the last morsel, then asked for water. She let it spout a continuous stream from a new pitcher; it was rich with the odor of incense, perfumed with fresh trumpet flowers, fragrant with full-blown lotuses. He set the saucer to his lips. His eyelashes were tinged and granulated by clinging drops, cool as snow; his ears took delight in the trickling sound of the stream; his cheek tingled and thrilled at the delicious contact; his nostrils expanded to the rushing gush of fragrance; his sense of taste was entranced by the exquisite flavor: he drank

the pure water in great gulps. Then, in obedience to a nod, the maiden gave him a gargle from another vessel. Finally, the old nurse cleared the table; and on the pavement, freshly cleansed with cow dung, he dozed for a time, wrapped in his ragged cloak. Greatly pleased, he married the girl with all due ceremony and took her home.

"After marriage, however, he neglected her and kept a mistress, whom the wife also treated as a dear friend. Her husband she served as a god, indefatigable in personal attention, indomitable in household duty, winning the devotion of domestics by inexhaustible considerateness. Subjugated by her merits, the husband subordinated the entire household to her, made her sole mistress of life and person, and thus enjoyed virtue, money, and love. And that, I may say, is how good wives please the soul.'

"Then, at the ghost's request, I told the tale of Nimbavati: 'In Surat was a city called Valabhi. In it lived Grihagupta, a ship captain, rich as the god of wealth. He had a daughter Ratnavati, whom a merchant's son, Balabhadra, came from Madhumati to marry. The bliss of secret love with his young bride was, however, impetuously overdone, so that in a flash he conceived no small hatred for her. He did not wish to see her again. He disregarded hundreds of admonitions from friends, feeling such embarrassment that he actually avoided the house. From that mo-

ment, relatives and strangers mortified the unhappy woman by saying: "This is not Ratnavati, the Jewel Girl; this is Nimbavati, the Bitter-fruit Girl."

"After a certain interval of humiliation and of wondering what to do, she saw an aged hermit woman, her foster-mother, approaching with flowers from a sacrificial service; and alone with her, she wept piteously. The old woman tearfully tried every means to soothe her and asked the cause of her weeping; whereupon, for all her shame, the matter being so important, she forced herself to stammer: "Oh, Mother! What can I say? Unhappy love is a living death for women, for honest wives especially. My case is an illustration. All my relatives, my mother more than any, look at me with contempt. Oh, give me a kindly glance. If you won't, this very day I shall lose my useless life. But do not repeat my secret until it is all over." And she fell at the old woman's feet.

"The latter helped her to rise and said with a rush of tears: "My dear child, you must dare no desperate deed. Here am I, awaiting your commands. Just in so far as I have value, I am wholly at your service. If you are quite despondent, then practice penance (I will show you how) with the aim of other-worldly blessings. Surely this is a consequence of sin in a past existence that you, with such a figure, such character, and such social position, have become, without visible reason, an object of hatred to your husband. If there is any possible remedy for your

husband's alienation, point it out; for your intelligence is keen."

"So the wife painfully pondered for a time with downcast face, drew a long, burning sigh, and said: "Holy mother, her husband is the sole divinity for a woman, at least for the good kind. Therefore I must contrive something that will result in doing what he wishes. Now next door lives a merchant, our most prominent citizen by reason of gentle birth, property, and intimacy with the king. His daughter Kanakavati has much my bearing and figure, and is a very dear friend of mine.

" "I will play with her, and being on the balcony of her mansion, will double the number of my jewels. Meanwhile you, by piteous petition to her mother, must somehow manage to bring my husband to her house. When you are just below, I will go giddy with gayety and drop a ball, which you will catch and put in his hand, saying: 'My son, that is your wife's friend Kanakavati, daughter of Nidhipatidatta, our most prominent business man. She is quite scandalized with you on Ratnavati's account, thinking you frivolous and heartless. So you must restore this ball; it is enemy property.'

" "Hereupon he will certainly look up and will mistake me for my friend; then when I bow and beg for the ball, while you nudge him again, he will return it with eagerness. From this initial weakness you will cause him to fall in love, grow warmer and warmer,

appoint a rendezvous, and elope with me to another country." The old woman joyfully assented and carried out the plan.

"So Balabhadra, deluded by the old hermit woman, took her for Kanakavati, made sure of her treasure of jewels, and eloped in the interstitial darkness of night. The old woman then spread this gossip: "Balabhadra told me yesterday that he had behaved like a fool in neglecting Ratnavati without valid reason, in insulting her parents, and in disregarding his friends; and that, having thus involved himself, he was ashamed to live here. I presume it will soon appear that he has taken her away." On hearing this, her relatives made only perfunctory search.

"Now on the journey Ratnavati procured a slave woman, had her carry the provisions and other baggage, and so came to a hamlet. Even in that small place Balabhadra, a shrewd business man, multiplied his modest capital into a great fortune. He was accounted the leading citizen and had a corps of servants in proportion to his wealth. On one occasion he beat the housekeeper severely, saying roughly: "You neglect your work, you steal everything in sight, you are impudent." The servant was furious and betrayed the critical point in his secret history, which he had told her in a moment of confidence.

"Upon this information, the avaricious police captain convoked the town council and took him to task, saying: "This scoundrel Balabhadra is living in

our city with Kanakavati, whom he stole from her father Nidhipatidatta. You gentlemen will not object to the entire confiscation of his property."

"This alarmed Balabhadra, but Ratnavati said to him: "Do not be alarmed. Tell them that this is not Nidhipatidatta's daughter Kanakavati, but Grihagupta's daughter Ratnavati, given you by her parents in Valabhi and decently married. If they do not believe, let them send a messenger to her relatives." Balabhadra consented and remained on bail from his guild until Grihagupta, informed by letter, visited the hamlet and returned most joyfully with daughter and son-in-law. In view of this, Balabhadra became very devoted to Ratnavati, still imagining her to be Kanakavati. Hence I say that love may mistake its object.'

"Finally, when questioned by the ghost, I told the story of Nitambavati: 'In Shurasena is a city called Mathura. In it lived a youth of good family, a devotee of social elegancies and gay girls. In his friends' behalf he brought many disagreements to a happy termination by sheer strength of arm, so that rough customers gave him the nickname Thorny.'

"One day he met a foreign artist, carrying a picture of a young woman, the mere sight of which made Thorny lovesick. "My dear sir," he said, "this seems incongruous. The figure is almost too beautiful for virtue, yet the modest pose indicates lofty breeding, the complexion is clear, the person charms by a cer-

tain measure of innocence, the glance shows self-esteem. Yet her husband is not traveling: she lacks the single braid and other tokens of separation. Further, the beauty-spot is set on the right side. I believe that you have represented, with exquisite address, the wife of a dilapidated old business man, miserable from the lack of normal satisfaction."

" 'You are quite right,' said the painter, with admiration. "This is Nitambavati—attractive as her name—wife of the merchant Anantakirti in the Avanti capital, Ujjain. Entranced by her loveliness, I painted her thus." And Thorny, his mind in a whirl, started that moment for Ujjain to see her. He assumed the name Bhargava, disguised himself as a beggar, entered her house, and beheld her.

" His passion mounted at the sight; on leaving the house, he asked and received from the aldermen the position of policeman in the cemetery. There he procured shrouds from corpses and other garments, with which he paid court to a Buddhist nun named Arhantika. Through her he sounded Nitambavati, who scolded the nun and refused.

" Informed by the nun that she was an honest woman, difficult to seduce, he gave his go-between secret instructions: "Approach the merchant's wife once more and whisper this: 'You know me as a seeker after salvation, sunk in religious meditation upon clear perception of the vanity of unregenerate life; could such as I desire to deprave honest wives? The

notion is preposterous. No, I tested you to discover whether such levity, common with the other sort of woman, made any appeal to you, blest with a noble fortune, superhuman beauty, and early youth. I am delighted to find such incorruptibility. Now I wish to see you a mother. But your husband is the subject of demoniac possession, is debilitated by jaundice, and incapable of functioning. You cannot have a child by him without remedial measures. Now please pay attention. You are to enter the orchard alone and, with all secrecy, put your foot in the hand of a necromancer whom I shall conduct thither; when he has spoken a spell over it, you are to feign a lovers' quarrel and kick your husband in the chest. Thereafter he will be successful in making you the mother of a bouncing baby and will treat you like a queen. Pray feel no hesitation.' That she will consent, is obvious. At night you will introduce me into the orchard, and her too. I need ask no further favors from you."

" To his great pleasure, the nun approved. That same night he entered the orchard; and when Nitambavati was produced by the zealous holy woman, in pretending to touch her foot he snatched a golden anklet, lightly scratched her thigh with a knife, and scurried off. In dreadful agitation she rated her own frivolity and was ready to kill the nun; she bathed the wound in the garden pond, and bandaged it; then, with a view to symmetry, she removed the other anklet, and lay alone in her bed for three or four days.

"The rogue meanwhile approached Anantakirti, offering the anklet for sale. "This is my wife's anklet," cried he. "How did you come by it?" But he pressed in vain for an answer, the fellow insisting that he would speak in the presence of the merchant guild. At last he ordered his wife to send him both her anklets; and she, in shame and alarm, sent the other one, with this message: "Last night I went to rest in the orchard and lost an anklet when the fastening slipped. I hunted for it today, and did not find it. But here is its mate."

"Upon this information, the merchant took the fellow before the merchants' guild. There the rogue, when questioned, modestly reported: "It is known to you of course that by your appointment I guard the graveyard, making my living thereby. I even spend my nights in the cemetery, thinking that grave-robbers who would seek to avoid me, might occasionally burn the bodies. The other night I saw a woman, a brunette, clawing a half-burned corpse from its pyre. Her greed was greater than her timidity, so that I caught her; and I chanced to scratch her thigh slightly with my knife. I also snatched this anklet from her foot. At this point she made off in a hurry. I have told you how I came by it; further action rests with you."

"So the citizens, after deliberation, unanimously voted that she was a witch. Her husband cast her off, and the rogue encountered her at night in that same

graveyard; she was lamenting piteously, knotting a noose, and preparing to die. He soothed her, saying: "My sweet, maddened by your beauty, I suggested through the nun many means of winning you; and when they failed, I adopted this means to give you undivided, lifelong love. Forgive your slave who has no other hope." He fell repeatedly at her feet, wheedled her hundreds of times, and won her consent—for she had no other recourse. So it may be said that cleverness gains a difficult goal.'

"Having listened to this, the ghost paid me honor. At this moment pearls, big as half-developed iron-wood buds, and drops of water began falling from the sky. I glanced up in considerable surprise, to see a giant dragging a struggling woman with him. 'Look at that ill-bred ogre, abducting a woman against her will!' I cried, grieved at my limitations in celestial locomotion and my lack of a sword. But my friend the ghost rose with a scolding cry: 'Stop, scoundrel! Stop, kidnaper!' and took issue with the giant. The maiden, dropped in heedless fury, came falling from the sky like a blossom cluster from the tree of Paradise, and I caught her with upstretched arms. She trembled, kept her eyes closed, and tingled with pleasure at touching my person, so that I held her just so, not setting her down.

"Meanwhile the other two were destroying each other with mountain crags, vehemently uprooted

trees, and blows from fists and feet. But her I laid on the softest sand of the lake's petal-dotted margin, made a rapturous inspection, and discerned my life's sole darling, Princess Kandukavati. As I soothed her back to calmness, she examined me with peeping glances, recognized me, and piteously weeping, said: 'Oh, my dear lord, at the festival of the ball I fell deeply in love at first sight and was encouraged by my friend Chandrasena with tales of you. So when I heard that you were drowned in the middle of the sea by my wicked brother Bhimadhanvan, I eluded my friends and servants and went alone into the garden, longing to leave life behind. There that nasty giant—who can change his form at will—made love to me. I rejected his proposal with quivering terror, but he seized me and made off. And here he came to his end, you saw how. And I, by happy chance, fell into the hand of the lord of my life. Bless you!'

"On hearing this, I descended the mountain with her and embarked. We cast off the moorings; and the ship, flying before the return wind, sailed back to Damalipta, where we disembarked in a hurry. We were met by the wailing of weeping citizens, lamenting: 'Tungadhanvan, king of Suhma, childless through the loss of son and daughter, and stricken in years, sets forth with his consort-queen to seek slow peace by starvation on stainless Ganges' shore. The loyal Board of Aldermen, knowing no other lord, plan to die beside him.'

"At once I reported the facts to the king and restored both his children. In his delight the lord of Damalipta made me his son-in-law, and the prince became my servant. At my command, the creature, for dear life's sake, dropped Chandrasena, who gave her love to Koshadasa. Thereupon, I marched hither to succor Simhavarman, and now experience a blissful holiday in beholding you, my lord."

"A strange evolution of fate!" cried Prince Rajavhana, "and manliness happy in seizing opportunities!" Then, while a smile sparkled on his lip, he fixed on Mantragupta a glance that flowered with joy. The latter's lifted hands half hid his face, and as his lovely lip twitched with the soreness left by a charming mistress' kisses, he told his tale without the use of labial letters.

## CHAPTER XII

### MANTRAGUPTA'S ADVENTURE

"I too, O joy of the king of kings, longing to learn the fate that followed you into the mountain cave, came in my wandering to Kalinga. At a little distance from the Kalinga city, I sat on the fragrant, flower-strewn slope of a hill, in a wild wood adjoining a cremating cemetery; sleep licked my eyes, and I reclined.

"While darkness drifted from black night's spreading tresses, at the hour when fiends are free, fog falls, cold chills, and the whole world snugly hugs its home—as I fought the slumber that softly stroked my eyes with rustling bustle from densely interlacing branches—there came to my ear this strident whining of two giants, male and female: 'Why does that villainous magician—damn him!—choose to give orders at the hour when love is longing, and so abuse poor people distressed by excess of passion? May some omnipotence confound our vile king's magic!'

"A curiosity assailed my heart to see who this magician was, and what this magic, and what this menial giant had in hand. So, moving a little distance toward him, I beheld a creature with body-decorations formed from grimly gleaming bits of dead men's bones, with smears of ashy dust from half-charred coals of fire-scorched wood, with matted hair tawny

as the lightning flash; his left hand sprinkled sesame, mustard, and other substances with constant crepitation upon a fire that spouted flame-sheets as it clutched each moment and devoured its diverse fuel—an ogreish fire that gulped the blackness of encircling forests. Before him cringed the menial, crying: 'What must I do? Grant a command.' From that bestial being he received this order: 'Go to the palace of Kardana, Kalinga's king; bring hither his daughter Kanakalekha.' And the giant did it.

"With frightful fear, with tear-choked throat, with torment-tortured heart, she screamed for father and mother, while the sorcerer scattered the drooping blossoms of her chaplet, tore the ribbon, and clutched her flowing hair, quivering with zeal to sever her head with the knife he had whetted on a rock. In a flash I snatched the knife from his hand, severing his own head with its matted mass of unkempt hair and thrusting it into the hollow trunk of a handy rotten tree. On seeing this, the compliant giant's anguish languished, and he said: 'Oh, sir, sleep never visits my eyes for the badgering gripe of this beast. He menaces, he terrifies, he issues immoral orders. Oh, you have done a happy, holy deed in sending that human crow to taste the flavor of hell's torments in the son of Lucifer's city. You are a treasure of mercy, an infinity of glory; and your humble servant longs to do your bidding. Quick! Issue orders.' And he bowed low.

"So I instructed him: 'My friend, this is the path trodden by the righteous, for petty cause to show no petty gratitude. If then your purpose holds, restore to her home this maiden whose lissom form, impatient of abuse, has been most roughly abused by that immoral creature. Thus you would completely satisfy my heart.'

"On hearing this, she darted a somewhat sidelong, bravely gleaming glance, that seemed a dark-hued lily clinging to her ear; with languid charm she made graceful play with eyebrows curved like Cupid's bow, dancing on the stage of her forehead; her cheek tingled with a blush; she hovered midway between desire and shrinking; with toenails curled and flashing light from their nails, she nervously marked the ground, while she turned aside the flower of her face; her breath that, issuing from her mouth, burdened her blossom-lip, that dried the sandal powder on her bosom's slope (wet with intercrossing beads of spray from streams of joyful tears), slow-drawn yet swift as Love's skilled shaft in piercing its target of the heart—that breath framed in the tremulous gleam of a smile these few words, soft and sweet as a cuckoo's song: 'Oh, sir, for what cause do you snatch your handmaid from the clutch of death, only to fling her straight into the sea of love, tossed by tempests of passion, restless with billows of longing? I would be considered but a grain of dust on your fair foot; if you feel pity for such, let me linger, clinging still. And if

you dread to dwell in a princess' palace, lest the secret be calamitously betrayed, dismiss the fear; for my friends and my attendants are devoted and will strive that none may know.'

"Then the love-god drew his bowstring to his ear and pitilessly pierced my heart; her peeping glances, like ferreous fetters, bound me fast; I fixed my gaze on the giant's face, and spoke: 'Should I disobey this winsome lady, love would lead me straightway to nothingness. Take me with this fawn-eyed maiden to the maidens' mansion.' And that night-flier took me to the maidens' wing of the palace, dazzling as massed clouds of autumn.

"There for a certain space of time, at my moon-faced maiden's behest, I stood on the moon-balcony, my desire for independence oozing at sight of her. But she roused certain girls, her friends, from heedless slumber by gentle clapping of her hands and gave them knowledge of our situation. These then approached, and prostrate at my feet, their eyes filled with starting tears, spoke in soft, singing tones blurred by the buzz of numerous bees drawn to the filaments of flowers in their hair: 'Sir, your glory vanquishes the sun. This friend of ours failed to be plucked by death only because she became the target of your glance. She has now been given you by Love, her guardian, with passion's flame as witness. Then let your soft eyes behold this passion-quivering gem of wonder adorning a bosom unshaken as a rock on the

Mount of Jewels; and let her breast be blest with the close embraces of a most fitting mate.' Thus the fetters of my love were riveted by her most courteous friends, and I was beatified in union with my lissom lady.

"Then came a season when the hearts of absent husbands languished, when the crowding iron-woods drooped at the assaults of greedy bees, when the sesamum trees dotted with beauty the face of flashing forests, when playful King Love stole the waking wingseed blossoms to serve him as golden umbrella, when the rush of southern breezes blew bees and blossoms from the mangoes, when warbling cuckoos' passion offered impassioned fairies their initial weapon for campaigns of love, when shyness fought with eager longing in the minds of modest maidens, when breezes cooled by contact with sandal on southern mountain slopes gave graceful dancing lessons to various classes of vines. At this season Kalinga's king, with the women of his court, his daughter, and all the city's population, for thirteen days gave way to the taste for playful holidays in a forest by the sea—a forest that assaulting sunbeams could not enter, with sand-banks stroked by blossom clusters on vine twigs bending to the rush of buzzing bees, and cooled by clouds of spray from breaking billows.

"There women gathered by the thousand for continuous song and concert and for amorous dalliance. And while the king delighted in coquetry's endless

crisscross, quite subdued to love of love, a numerous sea-borne army startled him; and Jayasimha, king of Andhra, took him captive with his queen. My darling also, Kanakalekha, was led captive away with her friends, her eyes dancing with fright.

"Then the flame of love devoured me, all thought of food subdued by anxious longing; grace left my person as I pondered: 'Gone! The daughter of Kalinga's king, with father and mother, in hostile hands! That king will of a certainty lose self-control and strive to seize her. This she will not endure, and will find a way—poison perhaps—of sudden death. When she is in that state, love will loose my hold on life. What rescue may there be?'

"At this point appeared a Brahman, journeying from the Andhra capital, who told this story: 'Jayasimha has striven to slay Kardana from rancor roused by numerous reproaches, yet spared him for love fed by the sight of Kanakalekha. But the princess, possessed by a certain Yaksha, despairs to stand before the monarch. The latter, calling numerous necromancers to his aid, struggles to expel the spirit, but vainly.'

"Then I saw hope. From that old hollow tree that had set the stage for Shiva's dance I drew a mass of matted hair, becoming so an unkempt sorcerer, and concealed all my person with a begging-wallet and abundant rags. I also enlisted certain disciples, whom I kept in constant good humor by gifts of food, gar-

ments, and the like, acquired from people fooled by a pack of juggling tricks.

"After some days I came to the Andhra capital, at a distance from which I dwelt in a forest beside a lake that stretched away like the ocean, was dotted with bits of petals dropped from countless lilies clipped by swarming swans, was made beautiful by flocking cranes. I displayed dexterity in bamboozling all the citizens, attracting them by artful dodges that my disciples advertised, until this report of me was universal: 'You know that hermit who sleeps on the bare ground at the edge of the lake in the wilderness? He has all the Scriptures—all their mysteries and the six ancillary disciplines, too—at the tip of his tongue. And all the other books that nobody understands—he will explain you their meaning from the meaning of those. Nothing falls from his lips that isn't so. Besides, he is benevolence personified. That is why his ceremonies always succeed. Just by sprinkling on their heads a few grains of dust from his feet, lots of people have been cured of lots of diseases that no doctor could touch. Purify your head with water that has washed his feet, and that moment disappear the fiercest seizures that follow all the machinations of necromancers. You cannot imagine any limit to his power. And he hasn't the least grain of conceit.'

"This gossip, being in everybody's mouth, sufficed to entice the king, whose mind was concentrated on the expulsion of the Yaksha that possessed Kanaka-

lekhā. He visited me daily; manifested the most worshipful consideration; bribed my disciples; and at last, picking his moment, bashfully besought my services. I plunged into meditation, received illumination at the proper moment, fixed him with a stare, and spoke: 'My son, your effort is worthy. For the acquisition of this jewel among maidens, sole repository of all stigma-ta of fortune, will lead to domination of the earth, shining in her girdle of the milky sea, radiant with a thousand strings of pearls in the Ganges and other streams. Yet the Yaksha who possesses her permits no necromancer to behold those eyes, graceful and dark-hued as lilies; therefore be patient for three days, while I endeavor to attain your object.'

"Thus instructed, the king departed happily. And I went forth, night after moonless night, when the whole horizon was engulfed by multitudinous, clinging grains of darkness and sleep held all eyes of men in its fetters, to hollow out with a spade, at a distance from the landing steps, a spot on the shore of the lake, water-tight, with a hardly discernible aperture, yet possible to enter from water-level. When I had closed the entrance with thick-set stone and brick until I deemed the appearance of the shore unsuspicious, I cleansed my person with my morning bath, took red lilies in my hands, and adored the sun—the central gem in heaven's pearl necklace of countless constellations; the sole lion for the slaying of night's dark, wild elephant; the graceful dancer on the stage of Golden

Mountain's peak; the only crocodile to breast the gathered, billowing clouds of heaven's sea; the witness of right and wrong; the possessor of a thousand beams to streak with beauty the body of the East. Thereafter I sought my dwelling.

"When the three days were gone, when the lord of day showed a glory equaling the splendor of the golden slope of Sunset Peak and was yet more beautiful beside the swelling, sandal-scented breast of twilight (who clothed herself in impalpable air for fear of insult from Shiva's jealous bride), the king drew near, so lowly bowing that his diadem flashed reflected light from the nails of my feet on the ground. And I discoursed thus: 'I felicitate you on seeing the happy issue of your wishes. For in this world success visits no soul that does not strive, while all blessings are ever ready to the hand of those not indolent. Thus my spirit has been induced by your lofty, pure-minded piety, by your worshipful deference, to so consecrate this lake that here and now success may come to you. At midnight you are to plunge in throat-high, then straightway float as quiet as may be on the water's surface, holding motionless the breath in your body. After a moment, for one who gives ear to the raucous cries of frightened swans scratched by the prickly stalks of swaying lotus clusters hidden in the waves that lap the shore, there will become audible the rumbling roar of mighty waters. When that rumbling ceases, you will emerge, dripping, with slightly red-

dened eyes, but endued with beauty charming all beholders, before which that Yaksha will not dare to stand. And the maiden's heart, fettered by love's unbreakable bonds, will find unendurable a moment's intermission of your society; while the wide expanse of earth (your second bride), not overmuch regarding your disdained rivals, may undoubtedly be considered safe in your hand. If this approves itself, let functionaries soundly based in varied specialties, with numerous other well-wishers, provide and produce a hundred fishermen; let them post hundreds of confidential agents at determined intervals along the lake; and let them institute an alert service of sentinel soldiers at a distance of thirty fathoms from the bank. Who knows, in such a case, what enemies may plot, if a loophole be left?"

"This captivated his fancy, while his functionaries raised no objection, since they could detect no defect in the plan and realized that the king's design, born of deep desire for the maiden, was irrevocably fixed. As he stood there, absorbed in his purpose, I addressed him: 'O King, I have lingered long among your people, yet such long lingering is not recommended to such as I. When your object is attained, you will see me here no more. So long I have lingered, feeling that my departure would be reprehensible if I rendered you no service after receiving some mouthfuls of food in your kingdom. I have now rendered such service. Go then to the palace, bathe in pure,

pleasantly scented water, assume white garlands and cosmetics, propitiate with gifts appropriate to your power all the divinities of earth; then return, dispelling night's deep darkness with thousands of flames on torch-tips dipped in oil of sesame, and strive toward success.'

"And he, to manifest his gratitude, replied: 'This success is no success if you, sir, are absent. Such lofty indifference is a melancholy thing, depriving your unoffending servant of your presence. Yet the words of the worthy may not be frustrate.' And he departed for his bath.

"So I went forth in the lonely night and hid in the hole in the shore, pressing my ear to a tiny crack. At midnight came the king, having completed the ceremonies enjoined; posted guards from spot to spot; and brought his fisherfolk. Since the inner prickings of apprehension had been banished, he plunged with abandon into the water of the lake. And when, with flying hair and stopped ears and nose, he reached an elephant's depth, I caught him as he floated by a crocodile's trick, myself not emerging, and wrapped my begging-wallet round his throat. In my pitiless grip, under blows from fists and feet relentless as the ruthless death-god's gripe, he soon became motionless. Then I dragged the body to the hole, hid it, and issued from the water.

"Among the gathered soldiers that change of form awakened amazement. But I mounted an elephant,

laid claim to the white umbrella and all other shining insignia of royalty, and traveled by the king's highway, the throng falling back in fear of a beating from the truncheons of grim policemen. That night emotion drove desire of sleep from my eyes. And when the sun's circle swung in sight, seeming the red-streaked head of a heavenly elephant or a jeweled mirror for the face of the East, I did my devoirs; seated myself on the royal throne brilliant with thick-set gems that bristled with rays of light; and addressed my retinue seated near, whose attitudes were constrained by respectful timidity as they observed my conformance to convention: 'Behold the power of holiness, since through that unconquerable hermit's sinless self-discipline I acquired this changed and most sightly body, lustrous as a lotus petal, in that lake whose lilies draw the happy bees. Today let every heretic head be bowed in shame. Now let the temples of the most high gods—Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma, and the rest—witness pious services of dance and song. And let all applicants receive from this palace sufficient wealth to banish misery.'

"And they, their eyes wide with a sense of the miraculous, cried: 'Subdue, O lord of the world, the whole wide world; hide beneath your glory the glories of the primal king.' Repeating such blessings, they performed the ceremonies enjoined.

"Now when a maiden named Shashankasena, a dearly loved friend of my belovèd, chanced to come

before me on some mission, I quietly inquired: 'Have you by any chance at any time seen such a person as I am?' After a brief glance, her heart climbed the climax of joy; she made pretty play with the gleaming grace of a smile; she covered her blossom-lip with the swaying branch of her hand; the moisture of joy loosened the rouge around her eyes; bowing low, she stammered slow words of affection: 'Indeed I know well, if this be no web of magic. Tell me what it means.' I told her all, and taught her lips a message to produce perfect bliss in her friend's heart. Thereafter I freed the king of Kalinga and paid him honor; he gave me my darling in lawful wedlock; and happy with her, I ruled the realms of Andhra and Kalinga. Then I led hither a sizable army to succor the Anga monarch assailed by his foe, and chancing to meet you in the midst of my friends, felt my soul overflow with delight."

While all the friends greeted with congratulations this tale of clever craft, Prince Rajavahana, his lip bathed in the light of a smile, declared: "A marvelous feat of holiness! In this case also religious self-denial bears noble fruit! But joking aside, we witness here the quintessence of adroitness and resolution, culminating in joy." Hereupon he cast on scholarly Vshruta a glance that seemed a blooming lily, and said: "Will you descend into our mortal world?"

## CHAPTER XIII

### VISHRUTA'S ADVENTURE

He told this tale. "Your Majesty, I wandered too; and in the Vindhya forest I met beside a well a lad of some eight years, unfit to suffer, yet suffering from hunger and thirst. He stammered with fright: 'O noble sir, help me in my suffering. An aged man, my sole support, fell into this well while drawing water to quench my devouring thirst, and I cannot pull him out.' I approached, extracted the old gentleman by means of a vine-stem, reinvigorated the boy with water drawn through a hollow bamboo and five or six fruits which I knocked with stones from the top of a bread-fruit tree that rose an arrow's flight above us. Then I sat in the shade and questioned the ancient: 'Father, who is this boy? Who, indeed, are you? And how did this mishap befall?'

"He choked with tears as he replied: 'Listen, noble sir. In the Vidarbha country lived one Punyavarman, the gem of Bhoja's royal line, who seemed a partial incarnation of Virtue. He was powerful, truthful, bountiful; self-disciplined, he disciplined his people and attached his dependents; he was glorious, lofty, vigorous in mind and body; he made masterpieces his model, and undertook what was feasible yet ideal; he caressed the wise, impressed his servants, blessed his

kinsfolk, distressed his foes; he was deaf to illogical discourse, insatiable in his thirst for virtue, discriminating in the social arts, a penetrating critic of ethical and economic compendia; he recompensed the slightest favor munificently, supervised treasury and stables heedfully, controlled all functionaries watchfully; encouraging the conscientious by gifts and honors, he had a ready remedy for calamities brought by gods or men; he was deft in applying the six expedients and regulated the four castes with traditional wisdom; his glory was pure. He filled the life of a man with worthy deeds, yet for the unworthiness of his subjects was translated into divinity.

"His successor as ruler of the land was his son Anantavarman who, though rich in every virtue, happened to be somewhat inattentive to administrative duty. One day he was privately admonished by an aged counselor, Vasurakshita, a favorite of his father's and an outspoken man: "My son, you possess in full measure every personal advantage, beginning with noble birth. Your intelligence is naturally keen, and distinguished beyond others by large attainments in dance, vocal music, and similar arts, as well as in the subtle minutiae of poetry. Yet that intelligence, undisciplined in political science, appears dull, like gold not purified by fire. For even an exalted king, if devoid of trained intelligence, does not perceive when enemies are getting the better of him. Nor can he properly discriminate effect and cause. Acting im-

prudently, he is baffled in his enterprises, is exploited by subjects and foreigners. He is despised, and his commands no longer conduce to security or prosperity of his people. His people, disobeying his edicts, say what they like, behave as they like, confound all the proprieties. And people who disregard decorum exile their master and themselves both from this world and the next. Surely, the common man travels contentedly only on the road lighted by the lamp of tested knowledge. Nay, the divine eye of demonstrated fact ranges unimpeded over objects recondite or remote, over past, present, and future. Without it, though boasting two large, wide-opened eyes, a man is blind, unable to discern the nature of things. Therefore abandon your passion for decorative studies and master political science, necessary in your station. Fortify your power by this acquisition; establish an enduring and unquestioned rule over the sea-girdled earth."

"On hearing this, the king said: "My teacher gives me opportune instruction. It shall be done." And he entered the women's part of the palace. When he took occasion to mention the matter to the ladies, he was overheard by a fellow, Viharabhadra, who was sitting there—a skilful mind-reader, a privileged person, an adept in song, dance, instrumental music, and related arts, a connoisseur of unconventional women, shrewd, talkative, suggestive, critical, a buffoon, a scoundrel, a detractor, ready to take bribes even from ministers of state, an instructor in all naughti-

ness, a pilot in amorous intrigue, a corruptor of youth.

"This fellow smiled and said: "Your Majesty, whenever a man becomes the lucky recipient of power, rascals find means to abuse his mind with manifold inducements, thus serving their own purposes. Some, for example, holding out the hope of exquisite rewards to be enjoyed actually after death, shave his head, tie him with cords of sacred grass, wrap him in a fuzzy skin, smear him with butter, send him starving to bed—meanwhile abstracting all his property. Even more terrible are the hypocrites who rob him of son, wife, body, and life itself. And if a fellow of the more sensible sort refuses to part with his possessions for this mirage, yet others crowd around him, saying: 'We know how to convert a single penny into a fortune, how to kill all your enemies without a sword, how to make an unaided mortal emperor, if you follow the path we point out.'

"And when he asks: 'What path is that?' they continue: 'Well, there are four royal studies—theology, agriculture, metaphysics, political science. Three of them—theology, agriculture, metaphysics—are big and slow to show results. Leave them alone. Just study political science. Now Professor Vishnugupta has made a little epitome of this for the king—twenty-four thousand lines of poetry. Learn it by heart, apply it in detail; and it does what it promises.' 'Good,' says he, and starts to study. He learns it (meanwhile

growing old) and finds that book leading to other books. It can't be truly understood until the whole wordy mass is mastered. Well, suppose he does master it, later or sooner. The first result is that he no longer trusts anyone, even son or wife. Even for his own belly he must have just so much porridge, made of just so many grains of rice. For the cooking of just so much porridge, he must be given just so much firewood, correctly weighed and measured.

"Having risen from table, after absorbing a fistful (or half a fistful) with his mouth rinsed (or un-rinsed), he must spend the first eighth of the day in listening to a complete statement of receipts and disbursements. While he is listening, a double amount is stolen by the knavish bureaucrats who have the wit to multiply a thousandfold the forty tricks of peculation taught by Chanakya. In the second eighth, his ears tingle with the vociferation of litigious subjects—a tough life! And even so, the legal officers determine victory and defeat according to their own notions, making the king responsible for injustice and shame and for their own interests. In the third eighth, he gets a chance to bathe and eat, but he is always afraid of poison until the food is quite digested. In the fourth eighth, he stands stretching out his hand to receive gold.

"In the fifth, he has great bother with counsels of state. Here too, the counselors make private combinations as if they were neutrals, and juggle at their

own sweet will the inexpedient and the expedient, the possible and the impossible, the reports of envoys and spies, places, times, enterprises, situations, so picking a living from their adherents, opponents, and friends. By secretly stirring foreign and domestic passions, then seeming to pacify them publicly, they hold their monarch in subjection. In the sixth, recreation or more counsels of state; you see, his maximum time for recreation is ninety minutes. In the seventh, a tiresome military review. In the eighth, worry about the competence of his friend, the general.

“ ‘ “When at last he greets the twilight, in the first eighth of the night he must interview secret agents and, in accordance with their reports, set desperadoes at work—murderers, incendiaries, poisoners. In the second eighth, after snatching a bite, he says his prayers like a priest. In the third, he lies down to a musical accompaniment and can sleep (perhaps) through the fourth and fifth. Let him rest as best he can, poor duffer, with his mind dizzy with everlasting fretting. Then in the sixth begins bother with books and bother with business; in the seventh, more counsel and despatch of messengers. Of course the messengers exaggerate both pleasant reports and accounts of misfortune, to increase their trade on roads where they pay no tolls; by manufacturing business out of next to nothing, they keep forever on the go. In the eighth, the chaplain and others come and say: ‘A bad dream last night! The planets are adverse, and the

omens evil. Let us have expiatory services, and let all the sacrificial equipment be of solid gold—only so is the ceremony efficacious. These Brahmans are almost like the god Brahma; a benediction pronounced by them brings a double blessing. And those others are pitifully poor, with large families, and are competent performers, but have never yet received a fee; anything you give them spells heaven, long life, avoidance of calamity.’ Thus they extract tremendous fees in others’ names, and slyly devour them.

“ ‘ “So when a man learns his political science and governs accordingly—without a particle of repose day or night, with no end of botheration, with unremitting irritations—he finds it difficult to control his own household, not to mention an empire. Whatever gifts, whatever homage, whatever compliments he gets from his fellow-scholars, he thinks a cheat and does not trust them. Now lack of confidence is the mother of misfortune. The less technique a man uses, the better he succeeds. Science is wasted. Why, even a baby contrives to get milk from his mother, one way or another. Drop this cramping research; follow your instincts to the pleasures of sense.

“ ‘ “Take the very fellows who preach: ‘This is the way to conquer the senses; this is the way to elude the six enemies (desire, anger, greed, passion, perversity, envy); always apply the four rules of strategy to friends and enemies; spend your time in worrying about peace and war; don’t give a moment to pleasure’

—why, these pious frauds enjoy the salary stolen from you in servant-girls' houses. And what kind of scamps are the inspired scribblers who are so fierce on theory—Shukra, Angirasa, Vishnu, Indra, Parashara, and all the rest? Did they conquer the six enemies? Did they practice what they preached? You can read success or failure in what they actually did. Besides, the educated are fooled by the uneducated, in plenty of cases.

“ ‘ ‘ ‘Would it not be silly for Your Majesty, considering your universally honored ancestry, blooming youth, handsome appearance, and limitless power? Don't spoil it all by studying science: that makes you distrust everybody, interferes with enjoyment, compels you to consider alternatives, and so troubles every enterprise with doubt. You have ten thousand elephants, three hundred thousand horses, no end of foot soldiers; and your treasures burst with gold and gems. And if all the people in the world should eat for a thousand ages, they would not empty your granaries.

“ ‘ ‘ ‘Isn't it enough to take pains with what others have earned for you? Why, the life of a mortal passes like four or five days, and precious little of that fit for real enjoyment. Fools earn money and go to seed doing it; they don't want to take the smallest nibble at what they have earned. Why spin it out? Pack the administrative burden on devoted friends who have backs for burdens; amuse yourself with these heaven-

ly ladies; indulge in song, music, drink, and gossip as occasion offers; make your body pay its way.” With this he fell flat on the floor and lay still, his hands clasped on his brow, while the ladies laughed aloud and their eyes twinkled approval.

“ Then the monarch smiled and said: “Rise! You give me good advice, and are therefore my teacher. Why behave in a manner so unprofessional?” So he helped him to his feet, remaining in playful humor.

“ In the following days, when repeatedly stimulated by the old counselor to the appointed task, he assented verbally, but inwardly despised him as a pedant. So then the counselor reflected: “I am an obstinate blockhead. Urging him to an irksome task, I have become in his eyes an importunate bore, an object of ridicule. His conduct is quite obviously altered. Thus, he no longer looks on me with affection; he does not speak with a smile, or impart his secrets, or touch my hand. He does not sympathize with my setbacks, or congratulate me on happy occasions. He sends me no ingratiating gifts and does not enumerate my services. He no longer inquires about my household, or notices my friends, or confides his plans to me, or invites me to visit the ladies. Moreover, he employs me in humiliating jobs, permits others to pre-empt my chair, gives his confidence to my enemies, leaves my remarks unanswered. He reprimands my familiar failings, turns any *faiblesse* of mine into a jest, rejects his own conviction when championed by me, does not ac-

knowledge the valuable gifts that I send, causes the blunders of political scientists to be bellowed forth in my hearing by fools. The great Chanakya is right in saying: 'We love the sympathetic mischief-worker; we hate the unsympathizing benefactor.'

" " " Yet what can I do? Despite his waywardness, I cannot abandon this king, my king by generations of inheritance. Yet not abandoning him, what benefit can I confer, when my words go unheeded? Surely, this realm will fall a prey to Vasantabhanu, lord of Ashmaka, who knows his political science. I only hope that disasters, when they come, will bring our king to his senses. Though misfortunes, among their disagreeable consequences, may also produce hatred, still, since honest conduct does not please him, let the inevitable misfortune come. If I can bridle my malicious tongue, I may somehow keep my footing at court."

" While the counselor was in this mood and the king was flirting, Chandrapalita arrived, son of Indrapalita, counselor of the lord of Ashmaka. He had been exiled by his father for loose living, and came attended by numerous bands of musicians, by crafts-women of no mean skill, and by many menials and spies in disguise. With such an assortment of diversions he captured Viharabhadra, and so bridged the gap to the king.

" Whenever he found an opening, he would white-

wash some vice or other, after this fashion: "Your Majesty, there is nothing so beneficial as hunting. It gives the legs magnificent exercise; and long-winded speed might prove very handy after a defeat. It dries up the phlegmatic humor; thus promoting digestion, the sole foundation of health. By reducing fat, it makes the body vigorous, sinewy, agile. It gives power to endure cold, heat, wind, rain, hunger, thirst. It interprets the mental activities of living beings from their physical expression. It supplements scanty crops with the flesh of deer, buffaloes, wild oxen, and other game. It makes land routes secure by killing such creatures as wolves and tigers. It explores mountainous or forested regions, with their varied resources. It wins the confidence of jungle tribes. It fosters energy, thus impressing hostile armies. These advantages deserve a high rating.

" " " Or take gambling. It develops an unexampled magnanimity, since you drop a pile of money like a straw. With its alternations of winning and losing, it liberates you from servile joy or despondency. It nourishes impetuosity, the basis of all manliness. It compels a continuous exercise of quick intelligence in detecting tricks (very difficult to perceive) with dice, sleight of hand, the board, and other equipment. Demanding exclusive attention, it gives superb training in mental concentration. It makes for delight in audacity, the companion of brisk resolution; for ability

to hold one's own while rubbing up with the toughest customers; for the cultivation of self-reliance; for getting a living without stinginess.

“ “ “Or again, take the society of good-looking girls. That makes money and virtue worth having. That means genuine manly pride; skill in thought-reading; conduct untainted by sordid greed; training in all the social arts; quickness of wit and speech because you must be forever devising means to get what you lack, to keep what you get, to enjoy what you keep, to dream of what you enjoy, to pacify the peevish, and so on; public deference for your well-groomed person and stunning clothes; social acceptability; great respect from servants; smiling address; dignity; gallantry; the winning, through children, of salvation on earth and salvation in heaven.

“ “ “Then again, take alcohol. This fortifies the charm of youth through steady use of spirituous antidotes to numerous diseases. It neutralizes all misfortunes by increasing self-esteem. It kindles sexual desire and improves the capacity for pleasure. It drowns the consciousness of sin, so counteracting morbidity. By removing the fetters of reticence, it conduces to mutual confidence. By repressing envy, it makes for pure joy. It encourages continual enjoyment of music and other sense-impressions; the acquisition of countless and varied friendships; unrivaled beauty of person; unparalleled graces; martial spirit, resulting from the loss of fear and depression.

“ “ “Beneficial also, on occasion, are scurrility, cruelty, and spoliation of goods. For a king is not a hermit, subduing the six enemies to bask in religious peace, nor can he be held to commonplace morality.”

“ So the poor king adopted these opinions, like the counsels of a teacher, with the greatest respect; while his ministers, imitating him, embraced vicious courses without restraint. And as all were equally self-indulgent, no man investigated another's delinquency.

“ Since king and ministers behaved alike, the bureaucrats consumed the profits of their own labors, thus slowly drying up the sources of revenue, while their master's expenditures increased daily; for he was subservient to gay dogs. His confidence was increased by finding a community of tastes in the vassals, prominent citizens, and district leaders to whom, with their wives, he issued invitations for alcoholic *conversazioni*. He found them ready to transgress convention and took liberties with the ladies on any pretext; while they, abating their reverence for court ladies who met them half way, indulged in many flirtations.

“ Presently, all the ladies of the land, finding indecency easy and pleasant, broke the bonds of decorum; they did not care a straw for their husbands as they listened to the proposals of crowding lovers. Passionate squabbles resulted. The strong killed the weak. Thieves stole the wealth of the wealthy. The paths of crime were free and frequented. Citizens

whose kinsfolk were slain, whose property was plundered, who were sick of slaughter and bondage, loosed their throats in sobbing lamentation. Unjust punishments begot fear and wrath. Greed stalked through impoverished households. The self-respecting flamed with humiliated pride. Treasons flowed from all these wrongs.

"Then poisoners and other plotters, in the pay of the lord of Ashmaka, destroyed Anantavarman's picked soldiers and debilitated his army by many devices. Dressed as hunters, they enticed men by stories of abundant game into ravines without exit, then set fire to the dry grass and bamboo clumps at the entrance. They urged the killing of tigers and other wild beasts, then helped the beasts to kill them. They enlisted deadly hunger and thirst against men led far astray by desire for the water of some choice well. They led rough chases that caused falls from cliffs on treacherous slopes covered with grass and brush. They drew thorns from feet with poison-tipped knives; they made easy prey of stragglers, striving individually to rejoin a scattered troop. Others they shot with arrows, pretending to mistake them for deer; or dared them to scale rugged heights, and pushed them off with no witnesses; or disguised themselves as men of the jungle to overpower small bands in a thicket. They forced others into brawls at gambling matches, cockfights, festivals, and the like; made them injure each other; fomented secret un-

pleasantnesses, then published the resulting insults before witnesses, thus compelling duels to conceal dishonor. Attaching themselves in the guise of friends to others' wives, they suggested acts of violence aimed at lovers, husbands, or both. They seduced some with fit females, lurking at the rendezvous and bursting out with damning evidence. Some they induced to enter caves, to dig for treasure, to practice magic, attributing their death to the difficulties of the job. They would persuade men to mount must elephants, meanwhile suppressing precautions; or, on some wild wager, excite a rogue elephant against a picked troop. They assassinated those who quarreled over a donation, casting the blame on the disputants; they secretly smote those who abused vassal cities or districts, and proclaimed the names of personal enemies. They spread debilitating disease by encouraging constant indulgence with that kind of female; they skillfully rubbed poison on garments, ornaments, garlands, and salves; they fostered sickness in the name of medicine.

"Then Vasantabhanu instigated Bhanuvarman, lord of Vanavasi, to make war on Anantavarman, who mobilized for offense the moment his boundary was violated. Of all his vassals, the first to arrive and the most welcome was the lord of Ashmaka. When the others gathered, they made a short march, encamping on the bank of the Nerbudda.

"At this juncture, the king summoned a girl in

the train of a powerful vassal, the lord of Kuntala; she was dancer to the person of His Majesty of Avanti, was called "the human sylph," and was highly extolled by Chandrapalita and others for terpsichorean talent. On seeing her dance, he fell in love, made her drunk, and abused her.

"Then the lord of Ashmaka whispered to the lord of Kuntala: "This wanton king outrages our wives. What measure of humiliation must we endure? I have a hundred elephants; you have five hundred. Let us join forces, and speak a quiet word to the lord of Murala, Virasena; also to Ekavira, lord of Richika; to Kumaragupta, lord of Konkana; and to Nagapala, ruler of Sasikya. They will infallibly resent his insolence and fall in with our plan. Besides, this lord of Vanavasi is a dear friend of mine. We will let him engage our blackguard in front, while we attack from the rear. And we will divide the treasure and animals."

"Receiving joyful assent, he made up parcels as gifts—twenty fine garments, twenty-five portions of gold, saffron, and blankets—chose a fit go-between, came to an understanding with the vassals mentioned, and won them to his plan. For these vassals and for the lord of Vanavasi, Anantavarman next day became mincemeat, because he despised political science.

"Now Vasantabhanu, having set his own guards over the chaotic booty of treasure and animals, made this insidious proposal to all his confederates: "Di-

vide the spoil in proportion to your exertions and your contributions of force. I shall be content with any fragment you may allot." Thus he baited all the vassals into a ruinous squabble, and himself swallowed the whole plunder. After bestowing a petty fraction on the lord of Vanavasi, he faced about and reduced the entire realm of Anantavarman.

"In this posture of affairs, the aged counselor Vasurakshita, with the help of certain hereditary servants of the monarchy, contrived to escape with the lad Bhaskaravarman (whom you see here), with his elder sister, the thirteen-year old Manjuvadini, and with their mother, Queen Vasundhara. The counselor, foreseeing the inevitable disaster, perished by an inflammatory fever; but certain friends (of whom I was one) conducted the queen and the royal children to the city Mahishmati and presented them to Mitra-varman, her consort's half-brother.

"This scoundrel fancied her as loose as himself; and when she repulsed him, he heartlessly strove to kill this lad, imagining that she preserved her honor only to keep her son fit for the succession. When the queen understood the situation, she besought me thus: "Father Nalijangha, wherever you have to put him, save my boy's life, and your own. If my life is preserved, I will follow. And when you are secure, send me a message."

"I managed to spirit him away from the muddle at court and plunged into the Vindhya forest. I gave

him a few days' rest in a herdsmen's hamlet—for we traveled on foot—but fearing a descent of the king's agents even there, made a further long journey. Then, when dreadful thirst distressed him, I tried to give him water but stumbled and fell into this well, where you were so kind to me. Henceforth, sir, pray help this helpless prince.' And he bowed respectfully.

"Now when I inquired concerning the mother's origin, he told me: 'His mother was born to Kusumadhanvan, lord of Kosala, and Sagaradatta, daughter of Vaishravana, a merchant of Patna.' 'In that case,' said I, 'his mother and my father had the same maternal grandfather.' And I embraced him tenderly. Then the old gentleman asked which of the sons of Sindhudatta was my father, and showed great delight at hearing the name of Sushruta. Thereupon I engaged to destroy the arrogant usurper by adopting his own political tricks, and to re-establish the lad in his paternal inheritance; but the more pressing anxiety was the alleviation of his hunger.

"At this moment two deer flashed past, and a hunter who had missed them with three arrows. Snatching from his hand his remaining two arrows and the bow, I shot. One arrow pierced beyond the feather, the other not so far; but both deer fell dead. One I gave to the hunter; the other I scraped, cleaned, skinned, and cut up, then spitted the quarters, neck, and other parts over the coals of a bonfire, and satisfied

the hunger of my two companions and myself with roast venison.

"The barbarian was greatly tickled by my smartness in this business, and I asked him: 'Do you happen to know any news from Mahishmati?' 'I left the city today,' he replied, 'after selling tiger skins and leather goods. You can wager I know. Chandavarman's younger brother Prachandavarman is coming to make a proposal to Manjuvadini, Anantavarman's daughter, and the city is set for a holiday.'

"Then I whispered my aged friend: 'That knavish Mitravarman is trying to win the mother's confidence by honorable conduct toward the daughter, through whom he will draw the boy back in order to kill him. Therefore return, give the queen secret assurance of the lad's welfare and of my existence, but lament in public that the young prince has been eaten by a tiger. That traitor, inwardly delighted, will express insincere sympathy for the queen; whereupon you will bear him this message from her: "The boy for whose sake I opposed your purpose, has for my sins departed this life. Today I am ready to receive your orders." This will please him and cause him to co-operate.'

"Then she must dip a garland in water holding the deadly *vatsanabha* poison in solution and lay it on his chest and face with the conjuring spell: "May this become a sword-thrust if you are a sinner and I a faithful wife." This will prove fatal. Next, she must

drop this antidote in the water, dip the garland, and give it to her own daughter. When he dies and the girl is unaffected, the citizens will say: "She *is* a faithful wife," and will follow her lead.

"Then she must send a message to Prachandavarman: "This realm lacks a leader. You should appropriate it, and this maiden too." Meanwhile, the boy and I, disguised as grim ascetics, will dwell beside the cemetery outside the city, awaiting alms from the queen's own hand.

"At this point, let the queen make a secret communication to staid, respectable citizens and chosen counselors: "The Vindhya-dwelling goddess visited me in the night with gracious power of vision. Four days from now, Prachandavarman will die. On the fifth day, a certain Brahman youth, if he finds her shrine on the bank of the Reva empty, will—after all worshipers have withdrawn—fling wide the door and come forth with my son. He will guard this kingdom and make my son its ruler. The boy is meanwhile held hidden by the goddess, who has assumed the form of a tigress. And dear little Manjuvadini is the destined bride of the Brahman youth. All must remain a profound secret among you until these things come to pass."

"The old gentleman joyfully approved, and started; events followed as planned. And gossip spread in widening circles: 'What wonderful power have faithful wives! One touch from a garland proved a sword-

thrust for him. And you can't possibly say there was any trick in the business, because the very same wreath, given to her daughter, looked beautiful on her breast, didn't kill her at all. Anyone who disobeys this faithful wife, will just turn to ashes.'

"Now when the queen beheld her son and me approaching, in grim ascetic garb, to receive alms, her breasts grew moist as she rose to greet us, and her voice broke with joy as she said: 'Receive my reverence, holy sir, and relieve my helplessness. To me it is all a dream. Is it true, or not?' 'Results will show,' said I, 'no later than today.' And she replied: 'If so, your handmaid is blest indeed. For the dream promised her a protector.' And she bade Manjuvadini bow, while the girl's shy demeanor betrayed her pleasure at the sight of me. 'If you are playing me false,' continued the queen in happy mood, 'tomorrow I shall have to punish this hermit lad of yours.' 'Very well,' said I with a smile, and accepted her alms; but my manhood melted as my glances led to an absorbing passion for Manjuvadini.

"I summoned Nalijangha; and as he followed me forth, I quietly inquired: 'Where is that rogue Prachandavarman, whose speedy doom has been predicted?' And he replied: 'Quite certain that the kingdom is his, he is in the royal reception hall, where actors fawn upon him.' 'Then wait in the garden,' I bade my venerable friend; deposited my trappings in an empty cell by its wall; and engaged the prince to

guard them. I myself assumed the costume of a professional entertainer and went to amuse Prachandavarman.

"At the hour when the sun's rays redden, I presented a vaudeville program adapted to the mentality of the gathering—dance, song, assorted pathos, and the like; hand-waving, foot-flourishing, and high kicking; the scorpion wiggle, the crocodile waddle, and the fish twitch. Next, I snatched knives from the nearest, disposed them about my person, and exhibited certain spectacular and scientific specialties, such as the hawk swoop and the osprey dive. Then I hurled a knife a distance of a hundred and twenty feet, striking Prachandavarman in the chest, while I bellowed: 'May Vasantabhanu live a thousand years.' A mercenary flourished his sword to cut me down; I leaped on the hump his shoulder made, easily paralyzing him and widening the excited eyes of the crowd; then at a bound I took the twelve-foot wall.

"My first word on landing in the garden was: 'Here is the visible track of my companions'; for the footprints were not obliterated in the sand leveled by Nalijangha's steps. So I hurried to the east along the wall by the alley of *tamal* trees, then ran to the south where my trail was lost among scattered heaps of bricks, leaped the encircling moat of the rampart, and darted into the empty cell. Here I assumed my earlier garb and returned with the prince to the cemetery, while the court, agog at my exploit, was hesitant in

pursuit. Now previously I had devised a nook for concealment in the shrine of the goddess, in the very base of the statue; its entrance was hidden by slabs of stone movable from the side.

"Then as the dark night glided by, the lad and I attired ourselves in silken garments brought by eunuchs and adorned with priceless gems; entered there; and remained without a sound. The queen had on the previous day given the fire-sacrament with fitting ceremony to Prachandavarman of Malwa and had reported to Chandavarman that his death was due to a treacherous trick of the lord of Ashmaka. This day at dawn she came with the respectable citizens, counselors, and vassals previously bidden to the rendezvous, and worshiped the blessed goddess. Before all these witnesses she proved the shrine empty by investigating every recess; then stood at gaze with the crowd, while a shrill drum-beat gave the signal.

"The signaling sound trickled through a tiny crack; I applied my head to the iron pedestal carrying the image and, gripping it with both hands, swung one side over—a task to tax the energy of a muscular man. Then I emerged with the young prince.

"I replaced the grim goddess, flung wide the door, and made my appearance, addressing the citizens who fell flat with glances of glad conviction, with visible thrills, with lifted hands and mounting astonishment: 'The Vindhya-dwelling goddess thus enjoins you through my lips: "I mercifully took the form of a

tigress to conceal this lad, whom today I restore to you. From today you must receive him as my son, the fondling of no heedless mother." Furthermore, you are to consider me his protector, whose ambition it is to shatter that pot which is Ashmaka—the cruel lord whose false heart is betrayed by his very skill in devising uncounted guileful wiles. As the wages of this protection, the holy goddess graciously grants me the lad's sweet-faced sister.'

"At this the people cried with delight: 'Blest is Bhoja's dynasty, receiving you as its chief from the holy goddess.' My mother-in-law attained a state of ineffable bliss, and that very day gave me Manjuvadini's blossom-hand with all due ceremony.

"Under cover of night I completely plugged the nook beneath the statue, so that searchers found no cranny for hiding. The people indulged in gossip that made them forget their meals and was enriched with invented details; they inferred that a spirit of divinity dwelt in me; and my word became law. They bestowed on the prince the title 'Son of the holy goddess,' and this became a source of prestige. On an auspicious day I clothed him brilliantly and had the chaplain perform the rite of investiture; I let the lad learn political science, while I attended to the details of government.

"Then I reflected: 'The realm is indeed docile to the three factors of power, while the factors—wise planning, prestige, and energy—so dovetail as to ac-

complish results. Our ambitions are defined by wise planning, set in motion by prestige, brought to a happy issue by energy. Now the tree of government—whose fivefold root is wise planning, whose double stem is prestige, whose four branches are energy, whose seventy-two leaves are the counselors, whose six twigs are the six expedients, whose flower is power, and the fruit, success—should benefit its governor. But so wide are its ramifications that one needs a companion for full exploitation. Now Aryaketu, Mittravarman's counselor, having his origin in Kosala, is loyal to the prince's mother and possesses the qualities of a counselor. Through contempt of his advice, Mittravarman came to grief. If he could be secured, it would be a blessing.'

"So I summoned Nalijangha and gave him secret instructions: 'Father, put this question privately to noble Aryaketu: "Who is this mystery man that enjoys the glory of our kingdom? You know the snake has caught our young prince. Will he spew him out or swallow him?" Then convey his answer to me.'

"Presently he brought me this report: 'I waited upon him with frequent gifts, skilfully beat about the bush, stroked his hands and feet, then in a moment of perfect confidence questioned him in the fashion dictated by you. And he made answer: "My very dear sir, you are much mistaken. This man gives evidence of pure aristocratic descent, unrivaled penetration, superhuman vigor, measureless nobility, miraculous

skill with weapons, no mean acquaintance with the arts, a benevolent spirit, and a majesty irresistible to his enemies. In him converge virtues, elsewhere hardly to be discovered individually. To his foes he is a upas, to the loyal a sandal tree: witness his supplanting of pedantic Ashmaka, and the restitution of our prince to his paternal dominion. Depend upon it, sir.”

“Even after this, I tested the man by a number of traps before familiarizing him with my design. With his friendly aid I selected truthful, incorruptible counselors and spies diversely disguised. Learning from these that the whole realm was avaricious of wealth, very uppish, and intractable, I publicly extolled generosity; exalted piety; confounded heretics; cleaned up prickly enemies; baffled the stratagems of foes; settled the four castes in their several duties; determined to replenish the treasury, since the best measures of regulation are dependent on money, and there is nothing more fatal than weakness in that department. Such were my principles of government.”

## CHAPTER XIV CONCLUSION

“And I reflected: ‘My subordinates, without exception, are most valorous and so devoted to me as not to care a straw for their lives in comparison with my command. With the total armies of two kingdoms at my back, I am not inferior to Vasantabhanu, lord of Ashmaka, and I hold the advantage in political science. I am therefore competent to conquer Vasantabhanu and to establish in his paternal inheritance Bhaskaravarman, son of Anantavarman, sovereign of Vidarbha. Besides, the rumor springs up everywhere that this prince is the adopted son of the holy goddess and that I am his deputed companion. Even yet no man knows that this is a consequence of my craft. Now our partisans have confidence in this prince Bhaskaravarman, believing that he, the son of their rightful lord Anantavarman, will gain this kingdom through the grace of the holy goddess; while the army of the lord of Ashmaka, realizing that the prince enjoys the favor of the goddess, and that human power is no match for power divine, has little stomach for a fight with us.

“Again, our hereditary counselors, desirous from the first of the prince’s elevation, and now secured by gifts and honors from me, show a peculiar enthusiasm

for the prince. On the other hand, reliable emissaries of mine have, at my command, greatly gained upon the intimate servants of the lord of Ashmaka and have insinuated this quiet word: "You are our friends, hence have a right to hear from us what is profitable. If any side with Vasantabhanu, lord of Ashmaka, in dividing the prince from his companion, the famous Vishruta, deputed by the goddess herself, and fight with him, they too will become guests of the death-god. So long as the lord of Ashmaka adopts no hostile measures, you will follow Bhaskaravarman, son of Anantavarman. Thus the lord of Ashmaka may dismiss alarms and live in peace and prosperity with his people. Otherwise, he will fall a victim to the trident of the holy goddess. Inform all, once for all, of the commands the goddess lays upon me. We feel a sincere friendship for you, so long as all abide by our bidding."

"Upon hearing this, the intimate servants of the lord of Ashmaka, who already realized that the prince was the nursling of the goddess, were shaken in allegiance. And since the message came from me, they fell decidedly under my influence.

"Now the lord of Ashmaka, becoming familiar with all these circumstances, reflected: 'All the hereditary subjects of the prince desire him as their sovereign; while my servants, remote and intimate, seem shaken in allegiance. If then I remain at home, relying on leniency, I shall be unable to guard even my

own kingdom, permeated by disaffection. Hence, before it comes to a dissension with my troops, whose wavering betrays my own uncertainty, I will employ them in war; in that case, he will be obliged to give me a brief interview.' With this in mind, impelled to the crime of unmotivated invasion, he marched with his army against us, and into the jaws of death.

"Apprised of his approach, the prince led our van; while I mounted a horse and rode straight at the lord of Ashmaka. Thereupon his entire army drew the inference that there could be but one unique explanation for the charge of a single man against so limitless a host—namely, the guardian favor of the goddess; and they stood stock still like painted pictures. I singled out Vasantabhanu and challenged him to combat; he faced me and fetched a stout blow with his sword. Parrying this with particular skill, I countered; and as his severed head dropped on the ground, I shouted to his army: 'Let any who still desire to fight, step forward and fight with me. If not, let all fall at the feet of the prince and become his men. Thereafter, undiminished in livelihood, securely pursuing their several avocations, let them dwell in peace.'

"Without delay or exception, all servants of the lord of Ashmaka clambered from their mounts, fell before the prince, and became subservient to him. I installed him as lord of the kingdom of Ashmaka, confirmed the hereditary functionaries in their offices,

and appropriated the army of the lord of Ashmaka. With it I proceeded to Vidarbha, anointed Prince Bhaskaravarman in the capital city, and set him in the place of his fathers.

"One day, when the king was with his mother Vasundhara, I said respectfully: 'I desire to undertake a certain task. Until it is performed I can nowhere remain at ease. Pray permit my wife, your sister Manjuvadini, to dwell a few days with you. I wish to wander for a space of time, seeking one I love; when that person is found, I will return.'

"Now the king asked his mother's permission before replying: 'You, sir, are the unique cause of our wonderful success, evidenced in the winning of this kingdom. Without you we cannot for a moment bear the burden of this kingdom. How can you make such a proposal?'

"But I replied: 'You need not cherish a grain of anxiety. In your palace is the pearl of counselors, Aryaketu, capable of bearing the burden of several such kingdoms. I will put him in charge before departing.' Though plied with much such argument, the king and his mother delayed my departure some little time with acts of affectionate insistence. Incidentally, he gave me the kingdom of Prachandavarman, overlord of Utkala.

"When I had settled that government, I bade my young king farewell and began my journey in search of you, sir. But being summoned by Simhavarman,

the Anga monarch, to succor him, I came hither, where whatever good I ever did, had rich reward. For here I met my master."

Hereafter, the princes there assembled—Apaharavarman, Upaharavarman, Arthapala, Pramati, Mitragupta, Mantragupta, and Vishruta—sent servants to summon Prince Somadatta, who was enjoying the position of crown prince in Patalipura and who, with his bride Vamalochana, was awaiting the invitation. Then all, in the companionship of Rajavahana, told tales in mutually pleasing union until from Blossom City came a dispatch sent by King Rajahansa. With this in hand, the gathered princes bowed before Rajavahana, saying: "Your Majesty, receive this dispatch of your father, Rajahansa." He rose, bowed repeatedly with deep respect, and received the dispatch before these witnesses.

Then Prince Rajavahana laid the letter on his brow, lowered it, broke the seal, and read in the hearing of all: "Blessings and benedictions. Given from Blossom City, our capital. King Rajahansa greets Rajavahana and the other princes sojourning in the city of Champa and sends these directions in writing. When you bade us a dutiful farewell and set forth on your journey, we established our residence in a forest glade by Shiva's shrine. Thither returned the army, reporting that Rajavahana had withdrawn by night to a shrine of Shiva in order to worship the god; that

all the remaining princes, failing to find him in the morning, had vowed to bow with Rajavahana before Rajahansa or to die, and had scattered.

"When we learned your story from the lips of the soldiers returning thence, your mother and I, two hearts sunk in a sea of unendurable sorrow, determined to visit Vamadeva's hermitage and, having made him acquainted with these events, to leave life behind. But when we arrived and bowed before him, our purpose was already known to that holy sage, to whom past, present, and future are revealed. Discerning our determination, he spoke: 'O King, all your purpose is already known, through the power of divine insight. These princes of yours, having for Rajavahana's sake suffered sorrow for a season, will then, through turn of fate and matchless valor, complete the conquest of the quarters. They will win many kingdoms and at the end of sixteen years will return in the train of Rajavahana victorious, to fall prone before you and Vasumati and to perform your commands. For their sake therefore you must dare no desperate deed.'

"Trusting the holy sage's word, the queen and I have fortified our hearts and drawn breath until this day. Now when the limit drew near, I visited Vamadeva's hermitage and spoke respectfully: 'My lord, the limit set by you is near at hand. Is further intelligence in your mind today?'

"The holy sage replied: 'O King, Rajavahana and

all the other princes have vanquished many doughty foes, have completed the conquest of the quarters, have subdued the earth, and are united in Champa. Send speedy couriers with dispatches to recall them.'

"I hearkened to the words of the holy sage and have sent this dispatch to summon you. If you delay a moment more, you will hear that I and Vasumati, your mother, are but a tale remembered. Realizing this, drink only water on your journey."

So they laid their sire's dispatch on their brows and determined to go. They determined also to assign adequate forces to the guarding of the conquered kingdoms and to appoint to every office a fit and competent functionary; further, to secure their line of march with proper detachments, to defeat their initial enemy, Manasara of Malwa, annexing his kingdom also, and then to bow in Blossom City before the feet of King Rajahansa and Queen Vasumati. So, taking their wives, they marched with a picked force against the monarch of Malwa. And Rajavahana, surrounded by companion princes, the moment he reached Ujjain, straightway defeated and slew—despite his might—Manasara, monarch of Malwa. He recovered Princess Avantisundari, freed Prince Pushpodbhava with his household from the prison where he was kept by the counsel of Chandavarman, and with his aid settled the kingdom of Malwa, appointing certain statesmen and soldiers to guard it. With the remainder of their picked army the princes came home to Blossom City

and there—Rajavahana leading—adored the feet of Rajahansa and of their mother, Vasumati. These two, on winning back their sons, felt their happiness complete.

Then, in the presence of the king and of Vasumati the queen, Vamadeva, penetrating the longing of the ten princes, said to them: "Depart now together and rule in righteousness, each his own kingdom. But when desire awakens, then return to bow low at your parents' feet." So all the princes, receiving with reverence the command of the sage, bowed before him and their parents; went and paraded the conquered world; then returned and related, in the sage's presence, each his own tale. And the parents, hearing those most ingenious adventures testifying to the native valor of their lads, experienced the extremity of joy.

Then the king deferentially addressed the sage: "Holy sir, through your grace we have attained a bliss surpassing human wishes, beyond the range of speech or thought. Henceforth it befits me to live a forest hermit at my teacher's feet, aiming at full possession of my soul. Pray ordain that Rajavahana be anointed ruler over the kingdom of Blossom City and over Manasara's realm; that the remaining kingdoms be severally assigned to the nine princes; that these princes, obeying Rajavahana yet in perfect amity, pluck all thorny rivals and take joy in the earth who wears the four seas as a girdle."

And the sage, perceiving the lads insistent to dissuade their sire from embracing the hermit life, said to them: "My princely lads, your father treads the path becoming to his years. In my hermitage he will lead his pious life with no hardship. Pray do not dissuade him. For there he will win the grace of God. Nor would you be always happy in your father's house." They bowed to the holy bidding and ceased their insistence.

So Rajavahana was established in Blossom City; and all his comrades, with his consent, governed their several kingdoms, coming and going at will to greet their parents. Thus settled, all the princely lads, righteously ruling—under Rajavahana's command—the circle of earth's lands, in amity perfectly reciprocated, delighted in kingly joys that gods can scarce attain.

## INDEX OF PROPER NAMES

This index has been prepared to facilitate correct pronunciation.  
Consonants are pronounced much as in English; vowels as in Italian.

The distinction between long and short vowels is important, long vowels having real musical length and short vowels being genuinely short. Consequently, correct pronunciation gives somewhat the effect of chanting.

Long vowels are marked by the macron. All unmarked vowels (not diphthongs) are short.

The accent is indicated, though the rules for its placing are almost those of classical Latin.

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