Brihannala

Scene 1

Narrator’s introduction

“Arjuna, the third Pandava, was the best archer in the world. He was disciplined and very true to his craft. Being in exile he had not met his father for a long time, so he was invited to Indra Lok by Lord Indra himsel~~f.~~ f where he was cursed by Urvashi to live the life of a napunsak for a year because he rejected her love which made her feel offended and furious~~, Indra's love interest, started falling for Arjuna, as soon as she saw him. She found Arjuna very attractive and thus is drawn towards him.”~~

~~Scene 2~~

~~Arjuna is enjoying the royal Madira with Lord Indra. He sees Urvashi advancing towards him.~~

~~Urvashi:~~

*~~Oh Prince Arjuna, I'm in love with you. Your magical eyes have mesmerized me to an extent that I can't think of anyone else right now. Your hair is as soft as silk, I feel like playing with it. Your eyes are like lotus . Oh Panduputra Gandhivdhaari Arjuna, I want you to marry me.~~*

~~Arjuna spits the drink. He then looks at Urvashi.~~

~~Arjuna:~~ *~~I look up to you as my mother, Urvashi Amma.~~*

~~Everyone in the court starts laughing.~~

~~Urvashi becomes angry and starts chasing Arjuna. Arjuna runs and goes near Indra.~~

*~~Urvashi: You have rejected ME, the most beautiful woman in the world?? That too by calling me your amma. You have no right to be happy.~~*

*~~Arjun: You are undeniably the most beautiful in the world and heavens. I beg your forgiveness for I did not mean to offend you, Amma.~~*

*~~Urvashi: THERE HE’S DOING IT AGAIN! My wrath knows no qualms now you impervious man! I hereby curse you that you lose your manhood and live as napunsak for the rest of your life!~~*

*~~Indra: Beloved, you musn't ! The boy did what was right and you reward his self control and rightfulness with a curse!~~*

~~Scene 3~~

~~Narrator: On Indra’s request Urvashi reduces Arjun’s curse of being a eunuch from the duration of a lifetime to one year,~~ . ~~t~~The time of activation being of his choosing~~.~~, ~~H~~he assume~~s~~d this form during agyatvas and t~~akes~~ook on the name Brihannala. Not knowing what happened and what his purpose ~~is now~~was, Brihannala roam~~s~~ed around on land, experiencing a sense of sadness, ~~feeling~~ and felt as if he was being punished for doing something wrong.

~~Wandering for a few hours, not knowing where he was,~~ ~~h~~He f~~inds~~ound ~~t~~ the kingdom of Matsuya. There was nothing special about the place he thought, but knowing that he needed to rest, he walked on hoping to find Asylum. Walking on for a little while, he decides to take rest under a tree.

Scene ~~4~~2

~~Narrator: walking on for a little while, he decides to take rest under a tree.~~

Unknown Voice: "where do you come from, pretty traveller? I have never seen you here before!"

Narrator: Brihannala confused, almost bewildered, not knowing where that voice was coming from..

Brihannala: "I arrived today and I'm a bit tired from all the walking around, so why don't you show your face and I'll answer all of your questions."

Narrator: From behind the tree she comes out, grinning, almost proud that the visitor could not figure out where she was..

Charulata: "Hmmph! So tell me now, what brings you to Matsuya?'

Brihannala: "I was pushed out of my home, somewhere I thought I belonged. I have been walking ever since, not knowing who i am, where I am to go or what I'm supposed to do.."

Charulata: "Then find another home! Matsuya is a really good place to stay, I've been here my whole life!"

Brihannala: "But I don't know anyone here.."

Charulata: "I don't think you're very smart, Just make me your friend! I'll even tell you a bit about myself! You do resemble me an awful lot. Except less beautiful of course, and why are your clothes so drab? Oh that’s besides the point, now about me!"

Narrator: Charulatta starts taking a few steps back and begins humming a tune, she even starts to move with the rhythm. She was singing a song. Brihannala slowly realising that it was a song about her, and where she belonged.

*Charulatta is my name*

*Born though male*

*I relinquished my masculinity*

*To transform and be the receptacle of Ardhanari*

*Neither man nor woman*

*Shakti and shiva are one in me*

*Adorning my body with colourful saris and rouge*

*Is such great fun!*

*Matsuya i call home*

*The land has shown me kindness*

*‘Tis here my community dwells*

*I am the most beautiful dancer*

*Singer second to ~~none~~nonetheless*

*My blessing brings forth the highest auspicion*

*But should you dare to spit on or scorn me*

*Or treat my dance with discontent*

*Then my curse shall make your head roll off*

Scene ~~5~~3

Charu takes Brihannala to meet Guru Jogamma.

CHARU- see,I told you you should make me your friend.. now ill take you to meet Jogamma. She has the solutions to almost all of life’s problems.

BRIHANNALA- Who is Jogamma?

CHARU- Brihannala , In our clan ,we have a guru whom we look up to. She is our mother figure. I sometimes wonder, how does she know everything that happens around her, mmhmm anyways, come with me..I'll take you ~~to~~ to meet her.

Brihannala-  (\*to herself\*- I wonder who she is, but I can't meet her now for sure!)

No..No….you go and see if she’s home first. I'll stay back and wait for you right here since i’m tired (she’s very hesitant). (\*to herself\* this character is really suspicious and pushy. I hope she takes the bait and leaves so i can run away before she’s back.)

CHARU- Now don’t you trust me or what? I’m telling you, it's a GREAT idea. I say - we should leave right now.

Brihannala- I trust you but-but how can I intrude on her hospitality when I don’t even-

CHARU- ( cuts off her in the middle) don’t worry! What could go wrong when I’m with you ..ah? Lets go, lets go.

\*So charu convinces and pushes a hesitant Brihannala to jogamma’s place\*

Jogamma welcomes her and sings a song about what they must do (i.e. the next gig, blessing a newly wed couple)

*Welcome, young one*

*Though grace and sway you may lack*

*I see in you a late lotus bud*

*It shall be beautiful on blossom*

*Born of the same blood we may not be*

*But to one another, our bonds are close as family*

*Eunuchs and Intersex and trans, we are all one people*

*You may call me guru Jogamma*

*Mother of this hijra clan*

*Come with us, new flower*

*The mother goddess beckons her vehicles of divine force*

*Bahucharita Mata tells us of newlyweds nearby*

*Come with us to dance for alms*

*And shower the youths with blessings of fertility and good fortune*

CHARU- Brihannala, we are known for our grace, poise and charm which makes our dance so special …  and you..you don’t even know how to wear a sari properly. Always tripping over yourself..huh. How will it work if u continue like this… I am the most beautiful dancer ..at least learn something by watching me only…

Brihannala- I’ll try but-

CHARU- But what? How long will you take? Let me tell you that I will age into an old, old woman by the time you learn and won’t even be able to dance anymore.

Scene ~~6~~4

Charu, Jogamma and Brihannala arrive at the wedding venue of a newly married couple. Charu dances and sings about the fertility and auspiciousness they bring the couple (aka their powers). Jogamma supervises and plays an instrument. Brihannala dances too but is clumsy.

(these aren’t lyrics, just information that needs to be in the song)

*Bahucharita Mata blesses you with fertility and fortune*

*We, her vessels of divine energy bring you her gifts*

*My impotence transformed bequests you great virility*

*So pay us our due and we shall pray you birth 10 children, all hearty and hale*

*That your families grow to be a large and old and sturdy as a great Banyan*

*That you lead long lives together blessed with an outpouring of love and happiness*

After the dance Jogamma pulls Brihannala aside and divulges that she suspects her of her true identity. She tells her that her position is meant to be in the palace and that in a month’s time the king will choose a tutor for the princess Uttara.

Brihannala- what happened jogamma...what made you suddenly get me here ?

JOGAMMA- Brihannala …. I know ~~who~~ you aren’t who you appear to be.

Brihannala- what are you talking about ? I don’t understand …

~~JOGAMMA- i know that you are Arjun .one of the five brothers of the pandavas..~~

~~Brihannala- jogamma.. i … how did you get to know?~~

JOGAMMA- i keep a note of everything that is happening around me. I observed you closely. You really thought that I won’t recognise you? (made up reason)

Brihannala- please don’t tell anyone jogamma .. no one can know of my true identity.

JOGAMMA- I know ..thats why I pulled you over here .

Brihannala- thank you

JOGAMMA- The king will be choosing a tutor for the princess Uttara soon. You have a month’s time to work on yourself. Become so polished that the king cannot even think of choosing anyone else. You are ~~arjun.~~someone who ~~The one who~~ never backs out of a task. Who excels at everything that he does. This too is no different.. u are Brihannala now…embrace it, live it. Don’t question yourself so much… work on your grace and dance . Charu and I.. we are both here to help you.

Brihannala- but will it really be possible in a month?

JOGAMMA- why not? Just trust me child, you will~~..you are Arjun.~~ ... Nothing is impossible for you.

Scene ~~7~~5

Narration- And so Brihannala continues to practice under the tutelage of Charu and Jogamma until the day of choosing. She trains day and night continually to grasp the body language and mannerisms of the Hijras. Jogamma sees the improvement in her and realises how skilled she is. Being Arjun, she learns ably and fast, perfecting the art.

Scene ~~8~~6

The final performance. Brihannala sings Charulatta’s introductory song with minor changes, signifying the completion of her character arc. Jogamma appraises her performance and Charu appreciates that she finally has the grace and dignity of a hijra.

Setting- a town square/palace courtyard

Announcer: “Come one, come all! Watch the most skilled dancers of the kingdom perform for ‘tis the day of choosing and princess Uttara needs a master!”

Jogamma: \*to Brihannala\* it’s your turn dear. \*to the crowd\* Our youngest shall now be performing, try as you might, your eyes shall look towards no other way!

Brihannala: thank you for all your tutelage and blessing, guruji.

\*she starts performing and dances well, unlike last time\*

*Brihannala is my name*

*Born though male*

*I relinquished my masculinity*

*To transform and be the receptacle of Ardhanari*

*Neither man nor woman*

*Shakti and shiva are one in me*

*To be adorned in uniform of colourful sari and rogue*

*Is of an order the Gods consider divine*

*Matsuya i call home*

*The land has shown me kindness*

*‘Tis here my community dwells*

*Patronised by Bahucharita Mata*

*I spin song and and dance*

*Bless the newlyweds with many children*

*And bless the many children with long lives*

*But should you dare to spit on and scorn me*

*Or treat my dance with discontent*

*Then my curse shall make your head roll off*

*Forget this not*

*Brihannala is my name*

*\*the crowd applauds\**

*Jogamma- you’ve come far since the day you first came to us. Teach the princess well, make our hijra clan proud!*

*Charu- wow you performed well! I wonder who the teacher was, she must be really good hahaha. I’ll miss having you around here.*

Scene ~~9~~7

Narration- “Watching the conclusive performance, King Virata and Princess Uttara choose to appoint Brihannala as Uttara’s dance and singing master. She starts teaching uttara the art of dancing. Brihannala, learning these new aspects of being a hijdra,

imparts those values to uttara. She tells her to be respectful to every human being and treat everyone as an equal. “We all are born different but at the end we all are humans”.

~~“We all are born different and we are all humans”~~

Charulata- vivacious, playful, loud, pushy, teasing

Jogamma- older and very maternal, quiet (as compared to Charu), sagacious

Arjuna is enjoying the royal Madira with Lord Indra. He sees Urvashi advancing towards him.

Urvashi:

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Arjuna: *I look up to you as my mother, Urvashi Amma.*

Everyone in the court starts laughing.

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*Urvashi: You have rejected ME, the most beautiful woman in the world?? That too by calling me your amma. You have no right to be happy.*

*Arjun: You are undeniably the most beautiful in the world and heavens. I beg your forgiveness for I did not mean to offend you, Amma.*

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*Indra: Beloved, you musn't ! The boy did what was right and you reward his self control and rightfulness with a curse!*