

Bhāsa
CĀRUDATTA IN POVERTY
(Daridra-Cārudattam)

translated by

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INTRODUCTION

There lived in Ujjain an opulent young merchant named Cārudatta. He was so charitable, so liberal in offerings to the gods and in gifts to his friends, that all his wealth was dissipated. Then it happened that he became enamoured of a beautiful young courtesan of the refined, affectionate type familiar in the literature of the East from Greece to Japan. Vasantasenā, the courtesan, had fallen in love with the young merchant.

The play opens with a prologue in which the stage-manager speaks Prakrit and goes out to invite a poor brahman to share a meal. This introduces Maitreya, the Jester boon-companion of the hero Cārudatta. From him, and from his dialogue with Cārudatta, we hear much of the woes of poverty.

Outside the house the Courtesan is chased by the villain, that is, by the King's brother-in-law, and an attendant Parasite. She gives them the slip in the dark. The Hero sends out the Jester and a maid for some religious observance. The Courtesan enters the Hero's house and is mistaken for the maid. Having shaken off the libertines in the street, the Jester returns. The Courtesan is discovered, and, claiming protection, leaves her jewels in the Hero's care. She is escorted home by the Jester. (ACT I.)

The Courtesan discusses her beloved with her maid and then with the Shampooer, who rushes in to escape a creditor. He has been in Cārudatta's service, so Vasantasenā befriends him. A page rushes in with a story of a rogue elephant and of Cārudatta's kindness. They catch a glimpse of Cārudatta from the parapet. (ACT II.)

The Hero and the Jester have been to a concert and are returning late. The Courtesan's jewels are made over to the Jester. He and his master sleep. Sajjalaka, an expert burglar, cuts an artistic hole in the wall and goes off with the jewels, which the sleepy Jester thought he was handing over to Cārudatta. When the theft is discovered, his wife sacrifices her pearl necklace, worth a lakh, to compensate the owner. (ACT III.)

It appears that Sajjalaka, the enterprising burglar, is in love with Vasantasenā's maid, Madanikā, and needed money to buy the young woman out. He comes to the Courtesan's house and confesses his crime to the Maid.

She recognizes the jewellery and tells him to give it to her mistress in the merchant's name. In the meantime the Jester arrives with the pearl necklace. After he has gone, Sajjalaka brings in the Courtesan's own jewellery, pretending to bring it from Cārudatta.

Vasantasenā loads her maid with jewellery and packs her off to marry her burglar. The Courtesan is preparing to visit Cārudatta, in spite of a threatening storm, in order to return the necklace, when the play suddenly ends. (ACT IV.)

What we have here is obviously a fragment, not a complete play in itself. *The Little Clay Cart* completes the story up to the reprieve of Cārudatta, who has been condemned to death for the murder of Vasantasenā. The later play has more literary polish, including an elaborate description in Prakrit of Vasantasenā's palace, but the dramatic force seems to come from the earlier play. How much in the later scenes of *The Little Clay Cart* is due to the second hand (said to be King Śūdraka) we can hardly guess. The way in which *The Little Clay Cart* is based on an older play is a warning of how we may be deceived by what appears to be uniform original work.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

(In order of appearance.)

Stage-manager, in Prologue.

Actress, in Prologue.

Jester, Maitreya, friend of Cārudatta.

Hero, Cārudatta, the impoverished merchant of Ujjain.

Śakāra, the king's brother-in-law, a libertine pursuing Vasantasenā, the villain of the play (Samsthāna).

Parasite, attendant on Śakāra.

Radanikā, maidservant in Cārudatta's house.

Courtesan, Vasantasenā, in love with Cārudatta.

Maid, Madanikā, in Vasantasenā's house.

Shampooer, formerly in Cārudatta's service.

Page in Vasantasenā's household (Kaṇṇapūra).

Vardhamānavaka, servant in Cārudatta's house.

Sajjalaka, burglar who marries Madanikā.

Brahman Lady, wife of Cārudatta.

Second Maid, in Vasantasenā's house, Vicchittikā.

Third Maid, in Vasantasenā's house, Caturikā.

PROLOGUE

At the end of the opening, enter the Stage-manager.

Stage-manager. I left my house so early in the morning that my eyes are rolling with hunger like two water drops on a lotus leaf. [*Turning round.*] I will just go home and see whether or no there is a meal ready. [*Turning about.*] Here is my house. I will go in. [*Enters and looks round.*] The ground has been blackened by turning round iron pots. There is a scent like the savoury smell of grease, and as a good omen the attendants are running to and fro. Is there then a meal ready? Or does hunger make me think the whole world is made of rice? Well, I will call my wife. Madam, will you come here a moment?

Actress. Here I am, sir. It is a good thing that you have come.

Manager. My dear, is there any breakfast in the house?

Actress. There is.

Manager. Long life to you, and may you ever be the giver of good food!

Actress. Why, sir, I have been waiting for you.

Manager. Ah, my dear, is there what I want?

Actress. There is.

Manager. So may the gods bless you. What is there, my dear?

Actress. There is melted butter, sugar, curds, and rice.

Manager. All this in our house?

Actress. No, no, in the market.

Manager. Oh, you wicked woman, so may your own hopes be cut off, and you shall come to naught. I am like a wisp of grass tossed up by a fierce wind so high from the hill top and then let fall again.

Actress. Don't be alarmed. Just wait a little while. Everything will be ready. I have got it, never fear. You must assist me, sir, in my fast to-day.

Manager. What is this fast of yours, ma'am?

Actress. It's the fast to get a handsome husband.

Manager. In your next life, I presume?

Actress. Quite so.

Manager. That's all right then. But who gave you the idea of this fast?

Actress. This servant of ours, Cūrṇagoṣṭha.

Manager. Well done, Cūrṇagoṣṭha, well done.

Actress. If you approve, sir, I should like to invite some brahman worthy of our company.

Manager. A most pious suggestion. In that way I shall get a good breakfast. Very well, do you go in, ma'am, and I will find a brahman worthy of our company.

Actress. As you bid, sir. [*Exit.*]

Manager. Now where can I get a poor brahman? [*Looking around.*] Ah! here comes the noble Maitreya, Cārudatta's friend. I will invite him. [*Stepping round.*] Sir, I invite you to take a meal at my house. Do not despise me and my invitation because I am poor. There will be everything good to eat. There's melted butter, sugar, curds, rice, everything. Moreover, there will be a fee, in gold pieces.

[*Voice behind the Scene.*] You must invite somebody else. I am not free.

Manager.

Deign to enjoy, good sir, this exquisite rice offered with great respect. Well prepared with butter and sugar and curds, it is flavoured with scented curry and spice. (1)

END OF PROLOGUE

ACT I

[*Outside Cārudatta's house and later inside.*]

[*Enter the Jester.*]

Jester. You must invite somebody else. I am not free. I am not free, I tell you. What do you say? There will be an ample meal? Yes, I know. But one doesn't eat the stone of the very sweetest mango, because it doesn't suit one. Now why do you keep on trying to coax me? I tell you I am engaged. What do you say—"there will be a fee, in gold coins"? I decline it—in words, but cling to it in my mind. Alas! oh, misery! I, too, am looking for the invitations of others. I used to pass my days in Cārudatta's house chewing the cud of savoury sweetmeats, like a bull at the cross-ways stuffed up to the gullet. I used to sit like a painter amid his numerous pans of paint, surrounded by countless dishes of various kinds, ready throughout the twenty-four hours, seasoned with asafoetida, and in between whiles there were drinks, fragrant for gargling, produced at the lift of an eyebrow. And now that same I, because the noble Cārudatta is poor, must live like the pigeons, running elsewhere for my food before I come to his house.

And there's another wonderful thing. My belly understands the change in affairs. It is satisfied with quite little. It will take a good weight of rice if it is offered. What is not offered it does not demand or expect. Of course it is not I that am not content with such a state of affairs.

The noble Cārudatta is at his devotions, so I have got him a garland and a garment of air. Now let me attend at his side. [*Stepping and looking around.*] Here is the noble Cārudatta, beautiful but pitiful like the moon at dawn. He is coming this way worshipping the household deities according to his means. I will go up to him. [*Exit.*]

[*Enter the Hero offering oblations, the Jester,
and a Maid-servant with wood-sorrel in her hands.*]

Hero. [*Sighing deeply.*] Oh! poverty is a living death to a high-minded man. For,

On this threshold of my house, where swans and flocks of cranes enjoyed the flower of libations, there sprouts the corn of old libations, and my handful of seed falls mumbled by the mouths of worms. (2)

Jester. Do not torment yourself too much. The young days of a house are like those of a man, subject to vicissitudes of circumstance. The ruin of your wealth, by charity from sea to sea, lends a charm to your present poverty like that of the moon loosing all its light in the dark fortnight.

Hero. Nay, I do not grieve for a fortune lost. But the ruin of a man with a sense of virtue and of sentiment seems to me very pitiful. For,

Prosperity after a season of woe is glorious like the sight of a lamp to one lost in the dark, but he who comes to poverty after prosperity lives in his body but is as good as dead. (3)

Jester. Ah, comrade. Where has it all gone, such heaps and heaps of wealth, the choicest from mart and sea?

Hero. [*Sighing.*] Gone, my friend, the same way as my luck. Look you, My money has been used up on the needs of my friends. I remember none that was refused. This spirit has paid the price of confidence, but cannot perish. (4)

[*Shows his grief.*]

Jester. Are you grieving for wealth and prosperity ?

Hero.

In truth my trouble does not come from the loss of riches, for they can come again with a turn of fortune. It is this that torments me, now that I have lost my wealth, my friends become indifferent to a man that's merely good. (5)

Again,

If a man be poor his kinsmen reckon nothing of his words. His magnanimity becomes ridiculous. The beauty of a moon of virtue is dimmed. Without enmity friends are estranged. Calamities abound. The evil deeds that others do are put upon his head. (6)

Jester. These damnable business affairs are running away from the house like herd boys seared by gnats. You are troubled now by the loss of your wealth. But it will sprout up again like the shoots of an old clump of reeds in the spring. So do not be so depressed.

Hero.

Why should I be depressed, comrade? Am I poor, whose wife will follow my fortunes, whose good friend, thou, wilt share my

joys and woes? And what is lacking with the indigent, I have not lost my magnanimity. (7)

[Enter a **Courtesan** in a flurry, pursued by the **Parasite** and **Śakāra**.]

Śakāra. Stop, Vasantasenā, stop I say.

Why are you going away, running away, racing away as you stumble? Oh, please now, I won't slay you. Do stop. My body, indeed, is scorched with love like a bit of leather fallen on red-hot coals. (8)

Parasite. Vasantasenā,

Why dost thou flee in terror like a gazelle frightened by a tiger's pursuit? Why transform thy delicate grace to hustle thy feet so skilled in teaching the dance? Why should thine eyes dart sidelong glances tremulous with fright? (9)

Śakāra. Ah, doctor, this Vasantasenā's off.

Closely chased by us two lads like a jackal by a couple of hounds, with the merry jingling of her anklets and girdle, she's stolen my heart with the pericardium. (10)

Parasite. Vasantasenā,

Taking step after step by the hundred, why dost thou glide away like a female snake overwhelmed with the fear of the lord of birds? When I run at full speed I am like unto the wind. Dost thou think then I cannot catch thee? (11)

Courtesan. Pallavaka! Pallavaka! Parabhṛitikā! Parabhṛitikā! Madhukaraka! Sārikā! Alas, I have lost all my servants, so I must just take care of myself by myself.

Śakāra. Shout away. Shout for the sprout, the cuckoo, the bee, and the starling; the whole month of Spring.¹ Who in the world will protect you?

Like Vishṇu am I, the lord of the corpse bazaar, or Janamejaya, Kuntī's son. I shall catch thee with my hand in thy hair and carry thee off as Duḥśasana did to Sītā.² (12)

Parasite. Vasantasenā, put me down as a man whose heart is entirely innocent of fear. Look you,

1 Play on the names of Vasantasenā's servants.

2 Mythology muddled, as if he were to say "Apollo Lord of Hades, Romulus son of Helen." Something similar is found in *The Little Clay Cart*.

The murk of night is familiar to me from the blackness of my character. Again and again have I passed through side-alleys shady with unending darkness. Though I should not say this before a young woman, go and ask the policemen in the market-place, who have escaped being murdered? (13)

Courtesan. Now I am in a pretty pass. Will these men who vaunt their own qualities abstain from evil deeds?

Parasite. Lady, kindly comply with our request. Look you, It is a cause of wrath when a civil request is refused. When such as I are full of wrath what is it they cannot do? Thou art wooed by this powerful hand, made longer by my sword. Save me, save thyself from the horror of a maiden's murder. (14)

Courtesan. Even his wooing is most alarming.

Śakāra. Vasantasenā, the doctor is quite right. The suit of such a mighty man is rare and you should make much of it. Look you, my wench, Right sharp is the sword, blue as the peacock's neck. I'll cut off thy head or else I'll slay thee. Have done with enraging men like us. When a man's dead he lives no more. (15)

Courtesan. Good sir, I am but a courtesan who gets her living by the virtuous entertainment of the scions of nobility.

Parasite. Yes, that's why we're after you.

Courtesan. Good sir, what can you want from a little woman like me, her person or her jewellery ?

Parasite. Who would strip a creeper of its flowers? Have done with your jewellery.

Courtesan. Well, then there is no need to worry.

Śakāra. Vasantasenā. You must love me, I am a prince.

Courtesan. Rest in peace.

Śakāra. Listen to that, doctor. She thinks I need a rest.

Parasite. [*Aside.*] The fool doesn't see she's cursing him. She means he'll be dead, and he thinks she means "tired." Besides,

Gesticulating with all his limbs, he utters rubbish devoid of sense.

His movements are uncouth, his speech is debased. A new incarnation of a beast in human form. (16)

[*Aloud.*] Vasantasenā, what is this you are saying to my face? This is contrary to the ways of your house. Mind you,

The dwelling of a courtesan must be reckoned the friend of all the youth. Remember thou art like the flowering tree that grows

beside the road. Thy body is a chattel to be bought at a price, so serve the man you love, fair lady, and serve the man you hate.

(17)

Courtesan. The nobility appreciate my devotion.

Śakāra. Doctor, here is a lane full of the deepest gloom. Don't let her slip away down there. Ever since the Love God's festival she's been sweet on a lad called Cārudatta, a poor merchant's son, firm only in her eyes. This is the side-door of his house.

Courtesan. [*Delighted. Aside.*] This is his house. Fortunately I have been brought near my beloved by the persecution of my enemies. Good, I'll do it !
[Slips away.]

Śakāra. [*Looking round.*] Eh, doctor, she's lost, the baggage is lost, I say.

Parasite. What do you mean by "lost"? Search her out, search her out!

Śakāra. She's nowhere to be seen, doctor.

Parasite. Confound it all, we have been cheated. Vasantasenā, I know now where you are.

Albeit thou art not visible in the evening dusk, like a lightning flash confined in the belly of a cloud, thy jingling ornaments will betray thee and thy perfume wafted by the breeze. (18)

[*The Courtesan removes her garland and throws off her ornaments.*]

Parasite. Ah! This darkness is plaguey thick. For now,

Darkness anoints my limbs, the sky it seems is raining lampblack; my sight is useless, like service rendered to a rascal. (19)

Moreover,

As a ready shelter and as a source of dangers, darkness is the equal of a deep forest. Both are protected by the dark, what causes terror and the terrified. (20)

Again,

My eyes are staring wide to see, but all at once are completely wrapped in darkness; open though they are, they seem to be closed by the gloom. (21)

Courtesan. Oh, the side-door seems to be by the end of the wall. The gloom of disappointment makes the darkness thicker. So I shall wait here.
[*Does so.*]

Hero. Maitreya, go and make oblation to the mothers in the square.

Jester. I have no faith. Let somebody else go.

Hero. What do you mean?

Jester. My intellect is like the reflection in a mirror, right for left and left for right.

Hero. Idiot! One must worship according to one's means. The feeling of devotion satisfies the deities. So go along.

Jester. How can I go all alone?

Hero. Radanikā, accompany this gentleman.

Radanikā. As you order, sir.

Jester. I will bring the lamp, lady.

Radanikā. As you think best, very well.

Jester. [*Taking the lamp.*] Open the side-door, Radanikā.

Radanikā. [*Opening the door.*] There you are.

[**Courtesan** puts out the lamp with the end of her robe.]

Jester. Oh, damn!

Hero. What's the matter, comrade?

Jester. I was going out, and when the door was opened a filthy gust of wind came in from the street and put out the lamp in my hand.

Hero. Tut! What a fool you are.

Jester. It was only a small mistake. Radanikā, go and wait for me in the square. I'll come in a moment with a lamp from the inner room.

Maid. Very well, sir. [*Steps round.*]

Courtesan. Good, the door is open, so I can enter. This is no time to hesitate about the proprieties. I shall go in. [*Goes inside and waits.*]

Parasite. [*Looking round, aside.*] Here is a woman who has come out of the house and is coming this way. Good. I'll palm her off on this swine. [*Aloud.*] Here is a smell that reeks of the perfume of a scented bath.

Śakāra. Ay, doctor, I can hear the smell with my own ears, but I can't see properly, my nostrils are so full of fog.

Parasite. Stop, stop. Where are you going. [*Catches the maid.*]

[*The Maid falls to the ground in fright.*]

Śakāra. Catch her, doctor, catch her.

Parasite.

In the pride of her youth she spurned the scions of nobility. Now she is dragged along by her tresses that should be dressed with flowers. (22)

Śakāra. Have you caught her, doctor?

Parasite. Why, yes. I caught her by following the scent.

Śakāra. I'll cut her bloody head off and then I'll kill her.

Parasite. Catch hold of her then.

Śakāra. [*Catching hold of the Maid.*]

Now I've got the wench by the head, by the hair, by the locks, and by the tresses. Now you may coo, or squeak, or scream to God, to the Lord, or to the Almighty. (23)

[*Drags the Maid violently along.*]

Maid. Gentlemen! What are you going to do?

Śakāra. I say, doctor, I can tell from her voice this is not Vasantasenā.

Parasite. Don't let her go. Of course it's Vasantasenā.

She's been on the stage and she is trained in the arts, so she's clever at changing her voice. So do not release her. (24)

[*Enter the Jester with a lamp.*]

Jester. I have managed to bring the lamp, but it is difficult to keep it in. There's a cool breeze blowing down the street, and every step I take shakes up the oil in the bowl into waves.

Maid. [*Kicking Śakāra and screaming.*] Oh, sir! Maitreya! Is this an insult or simply insolence?

Jester. None of that, now, none of that.

[*Sees that the Parasite and Śakāra have swords, hesitates and stops.*]

Parasite. Ah! this is Maitreya, the noble Cārudatta's comrade. This, then, is not Vasantasenā. Great brahman, we have not acted thus through overweening pride, but owing to a mistaken identity. Look you, sir,

We were in pursuit of a certain lady, mistress of her youth, who denies us. She has eluded us. We mistook this lady for the same, hence this breach of good behaviour. (25)

Śakāra. Drat it! This is a maidservant of that fellow Cārudatta, the son of a miserable merchant. This is not Vasantasenā. Bravo, Vasantasenā! The doctor was deceived by its being dark in between. And I was deceived by the tricky slippery wench. Anyhow, it's a bad business.

Jester. Nay now, this is not right.

Parasite. Great brahman, lo, I fold my hands, which is the essence of entreaty.

Jester. Very well. You're not to blame. It's I that am to blame for letting you wheedle me.

Śakāra. I say, doctor, you seem mightily afraid of that fellow Cārudatta, the son of a miserable merchant,

Parasite. Truly, I am afraid of him.

Śakāra. Why, doctor, why?

Parasite. Because of his virtues. Look you,

He is beggared by the suits of men like me. There is none but has been adorned by his riches. He is like a great tank dried up in summer, but it dried up after quenching men's thirst. (26)

Great brahman, please don't tell the merchant's son about this business.

[*Exit Parasite.*]

Śakāra. Mārisha, my lad, take a message from me to that fellow Cārudatta, son of a miserable merchant, "the king's brother-in-law, Saṃsthāna, salutes you with his turbaned head and says, 'An actress, named Vasantasenā, daughter of a courtesan of the gold caste, being taken in arrest by two of us, has entered your house with a lot of gold ornaments. She must be handed over to-morrow. Otherwise there will be serious trouble between us.'" And Mārisha, my lad, you can go on to say, "Otherwise, you son of a slave, I'll crack your skull-cap like a garlic root in the beak of a turtle-dove; otherwise, I'll chew up your head like a ripe apple caught between two doors."

Jester. Oh, you will, will you? [*Frightens the Śakāra with the lamp.*]

Śakāra. [*Looking all round.*] Where's the doctor? He's gone. Hi! doctor!

[*Exit Śakāra.*]

Jester. Let us report to the noble Cārudatta that the oblation has been offered to the deities. Put away resentment from your heart, my good girl. Don't say anything about this affair indoors.

Maid. I shall be mum, sir.

Jester. Come, let us go.

[*Both step around.*]

Hero. Has the oblation been offered to the deities, my good girl?

Courtesan. [*Aside.*] He mistakes me for his maid. Never mind, I am saved.

Hero. The evening is inclined to be windy. So take this mantle.

Courtesan. [*Taking the mantle, joyfully.*] This garment has a scent of perfume, that shows he is not quite indifferent to the vanities of youth.

Hero. Radanikā, you had better go into the inner room.

Courtesan. [*Aside.*] Not I. I have no right to enter there.

Hero. Well, why don't you go in?

Courtesan. What am I to say now?

Hero. Why are you loitering, Radanikā?

[*Enter Radanikā and the Jester.*]

Radanikā. My good master, here I am.

Hero. Who, then, is this lady?

In ignorance I ventured to press my garment on her. She shines like a digit of the moon enclosed in autumn clouds. (27)

Courtesan. [*Aside.*] There he is, his beauty lit up by the lamp, for whose sake I inhabit this body, kept together only by sighs.

Jester. Cārudatta, the king's brother-in-law, Saṃsthāna, salutes you with his turbaned head and says, "An actress named Vasantasenā, daughter of a courtesan, being taken in arrest by two of us, has entered your house with a lot of gold ornaments. She must be handed over to-morrow."

Courtesan. [*Aside.*] He calls it "taken in arrest," does he? Well, this is my opportunity. [*Aloud.*] Sir, I throw myself on your protection.

Hero. Don't be afraid, don't be afraid. Is this Vasantasenā?

Jester. Oh, yes, this is Vasantasenā. [*Aside to Cārudatta.*] This is the Vasantasenā, whom your eyes have extolled ever since the Love God's festival, who is exalted by your love-sick heart. So look at her.

Hero. I can see her, comrade.

Love has come to me, when the mass of my wealth has left me.

It must subside in my own breast like a coward's wrath. (28)

Courtesan. I have done wrong, sir, to enter boldly, uninvited. I bow my head, and ask your pardon.

Hero. If so, I also am to blame for treating you unawares like a servant, and I ask your pardon.

Jester. Oh, these two are worrying each other like a pair of ill-trained bullocks pulling a cart in opposite directions. Whose pardon shall I ask? I know, Radanikā's. Radanikā, I beseech your ladyship to pardon me.

Hero. I am no longer independent, lady. What place is there for affection?

Courtesan. [*Aside.*] Sweet indeed, what we would like would be. But it wouldn't do to stay here on our first meeting, especially as I came here of my own accord. I know what. [*Aloud.*] If, sir, I am pardoned, will you let me leave my ornaments here? Wicked men follow me because of my jewellery. And I would like to go to my house, sir, under your protection.

Hero. Her suggestion is quite reasonable. Maitreya, take the jewels.

Jester. Nay, I have no faith.

Hero. Take them, idiot.

Jester. As you command. Bring them over, lady.

[**Courtesan** takes off her jewellery and hands it over.]

Jester. [*Taking them.*] Radanikā, take this golden jewellery and keep it on the sixth and seventh. I'll keep them on the eighth, which is a holiday.

Radanikā. [*Laughing.*] The young master will have a rest from his studies, so you will have some spare time. Hand them over, sir.

Hero. Ho, without there! bring a lantern.

Jester. There's no oil in the lantern, as there is no affection in a courtesan.

Hero. Well, there is no need of a lantern. [*Gazing out.*] The moon has risen, the common lamp for all the world. So,

Here rises the moon, pale yellow like soft dates, the light of the highway, the escort of young ladies. The white beams fall amid the dense darkness like streams of milk on dried-up mire. (29)

Lady, now you can go on the king's highway. My friend, follow this lady.

Jester. As you command, Come, lady.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II

[**Vasantasenā's house.**]

[*Enter the Courtesan and a Maidservant.*]

Courtesan. And what then?

Maid. But I said nothing. Why do you ask, "What then"?

Courtesan. Did I say anything, my dear?

Maid. Mistress dear, it's love, not curiosity, asks the question. What are you thinking about?

Courtesan. What would you guess, my dear?

Maid. I believe that contrary to the needs of her profession my mistress is in love with some one.

Courtesan. You have guessed right. Your perception is unerring. That's what's the matter with me.

Maid. I see my mistress has made her toilet without her jewellery. The Lord of Love is the unsung festival of the young.

Courtesan. Silly girl, what can you feel for my beloved?

Maid. Mistress dear, I want to ask, is he some prince as charming as he's grand?

Courtesan. I wish to love, not to serve.

Maid. Well, then, is it some young brahman, fascinating because of his deep learning?

Courtesan. Do the highly respected ever relax their self-control? I should have to reverence him.

Maid. Is it a visitor, some merchant's son?

Courtesan. Lunatic! What woman in love could endure the disappearance of her hopes?

Maid. Can't I hear, then, who has possessed your heart?

Courtesan. Didn't you go to the Love God's festival?

Maid. Yes, I did.

Courtesan. Then why do you talk as if you knew nothing about it?

Maid. Oh, tell me, mistress dear, tell me, tell me!

Courtesan. Listen, my dear. It's the young merchant, Cārudatta.

Maid. Who protected you when you sought shelter?

Courtesan. The very same.

Maid. Unfortunately—he is poor.

Courtesan. That's why I am in love with him. A courtesan attached to a very poor man earns no reproach.

Maid. My dear mistress, do the bees settle on a mango when the flowers have fallen ?

Courtesan. That's so, my dear, they settle—and that's why they are called bees.

Maid. What if he doesn't come? The loss of his wealth might make him shy of frequenting a courtesan's house.

Courtesan. But it is I that am in love with him.

Maid. If you think so much of him, why don't you go to him?

Courtesan. I don't say I won't go. But I am putting it off, because if I went all of a sudden and he couldn't give me a present, I mightn't be able to see him again.

Maid. Ah, then that was why you left your jewellery in his house.

Courtesan. Quite so.

[*Enter a Shampooer, in great haste.*]

Shampooer. Lady, I seek your protection.

Courtesan. Come, calm yourself.

Maid. Oh, but who is this fellow?

Courtesan. Silly girl, does one question one who seeks protection?

Maid. All the same, he might be a violent person.

Courtesan. Silly girl, the virtuous must always be protected.

Shampooer. Lady, I forgot my manners through terror, not from impudence. You know, lady, those who are scared, harried, in an accident, or easily put about, may readily offend.

Courtesan. Never mind, sir, be at your ease. I am only a courtesan.

Shampooer. By birth only, not by character.

Courtesan. Yes, my dear.

Maid. Mistress would like to know what frightened you.

Shampooer. A dun, lady.

Courtesan. If that is so, give the gentleman a seat.

Maid. Very well. [*Offers a seat.*]

Courtesan. Sit down, sir.

Shampooer. [*Aside.*] She's so polite about it, I suppose I must. [*Sits down.*]

Courtesan. One moment, my dear. [*Whispers.*]

Maid. Oh, my mistress, really? Sir, my mistress would like to set you on the road free of embarrassments. What is due, and to whom?

Shampooer. Listen, lady.

Courtesan. I am all attention.

Shampooer. I was born in Pataliputra. By origin I am a trader, but owing to the vicissitudes of fortune I now follow the profession of a shampooer.

Courtesan. So you are a shampooer. You have learned a very delicate art.

Shampooer. I learned it as an art. Now it is my livelihood.

Courtesan. Your words point to a bitter experience. Well, what then?

Shampooer. Why, mistress, as I'd heard about it from travellers and was keen on meeting distinguished people, I've come here to Ujjain.

Courtesan. Well?

Shampooer. When I got here, I fell in with a certain young merchant.

Courtesan. What was he like?

Shampooer. A fine figure of a man, dignified, but not arrogant, charming but not conscious of his charm, clever but kindly, able but very polite, generally esteemed, calm and collected but easy to please. Generous without boasting of it, he always remembered even trifling obligations but forgot all the wrongs done to him. In short, good mistress, one could not describe the quarter of the virtues of this noble youth in the longest summer day. To sum it up, he is so kind he treats his body as if it were a trust.

Courtesan. [*Aside to her Maid.*] My dear, who can it be, that imitates the virtues of the noble Cārudatta?

Maid. I am curious to hear who it is that adorns Ujjain with his virtues.

Courtesan. Well, go on.

Shampooer. Then, being completely won by his qualities, I forgot my wife and became one of his attendants.

Courtesan. Isn't he poor?

Shampooer. How could you tell that, lady, without being told?

Courtesan. It is difficult to find wealth and merit together. Go on.

Maid. What's the gentleman's name?

Shampooer. Cārudatta.

Courtesan. I thought as much. Well, what then?

Shampooer. Then, on account of his scanty means, he dismissed his attendants and, relieved of the burden of a household, he is living in the

merchant's house with nothing left but his character. My master asked me to find another employer. I thought I could never find another jewel of a man like him. Nor would I sully this hand by shampooing common men after touching his tender charming exquisite body. So I was filled with disgust for the world, but to keep my blasted body going I became a professional gambler.

[*The Courtesan looks at her Maid with tears of joy.*]

Maid. Well then?

Shampooer. Then one day I lost ten pieces of gold to a man from whom I had won for several days.

Courtesan. Yes?

Shampooer. Then to-day, when I happened to be near the street of pretty ladies, I ran across the man. It was from fear of him I came in here. So now your ladyship knows all about it.

Courtesan. [*Aside.*] Alack-a-day! It is sad to think how the birds are scattered on the destruction of the sheltering tree. [*Aloud.*] And so you have come to us. Go, girl, and send that man away.

Maid. Very well. [*Exit.*]

Courtesan. You need not worry, sir, about the money. You may regard it as a present from the noble Cārudatta.

[*Enter the Maid.*]

Maid. I sent the man away, mistress. He went away quite satisfied.

Shampooer. I am much obliged to you.

Courtesan. Good sir, you may go, and give us the pleasure of seeing you again.

Shampooer. I am disgusted with the world, and shall renounce it this very day. But if this art of mine were entrusted to your humble servant I should be very grateful to your ladyship.

Courtesan. It would be better to attend on him for whose sake you learned this art.

Shampooer. [*Aside.*] A clever way of declining my services. For who will spoil a favour by accepting a return for it? [*Aloud.*] Lady, I take my leave.

Courtesan. Good-bye, sir, till we meet again.

Shampooer. Amen to that, lady. [*Exit.*]

Courtesan. Hullo. What noise is that?

[*Enter a Page.*]

Page. Vicchittikā, where is the mistress?

Courtesan. What's the matter, boy?

Page. Oh, I am so disappointed that my mistress did not see Karṇapūra's valiant deed. If only she had seen, leaning forward from the casement with bosom bowed...

Courtesan. Feather-headed people are easily amazed. What is the cause of your excitement?

Page. Oh, mistress, listen. The sacred elephant, Bhadrakapota, was returning at great speed from a bath, making the high road fragrant with his flowing ichor. And in the street, crowded with innumerable people, he made for an ascetic, who was conspicuous by the red colour of his robe.

Courtesan. Oh, yes, go on.

Page. Then the elephant caught hold of the ascetic by the feet, hauled him up and knocked him about with his trunk. So there he lay between the two tusks. And the people cried, "Alas, alas, he is torn in pieces, alas, alas, he is killed!" Then I released him, driving away the elephant with blows of my fist.

Courtesan. I am glad of that—go on.

Page. Then everybody said, "Bravo, boy, well done," but nobody wanted to give me anything. Then, mistress, some young nobleman looked down where ornaments are usually worn and felt with his fingers, but finding nothing, he sighed deeply and reviled his fate. Then he sent me this mantle by an attendant, saying it was all he had.

Courtesan. Who is this that emulates the virtues of Cārudatta?

Maid. I, too, am very curious to know who it can be.

Courtesan. It must be a very good man.

Maid. Well, ask him.

Courtesan. Ah, my dear, partiality for one man kills all other qualities.

Maid. Do you know his name, dear boy?

Page. No, I don't know.

Courtesan. You were very thoughtless.

Maid. Well, then, what did you say to him?

Page. I do know this—the gentleman is not at all proud.

Courtesan. Come, let us have a look at him.

Page. Look, mistress, here he comes.

Courtesan. [*Looking from the parapet.*] My dear, why it is the selfsame Cārudatta. He has nothing but his sacred thread for an upper garment. Let us look at him before he is too far away.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III

[*Street. Then Hero's house and a room in it.*]

[*Enter the Hero and the Jester.*]

Hero. Ah! comrade. The lute is a jewel, though not from the sea. For, Like a friend, it is in tune with a lover's heart, a discourse of purest tone on the objects of his passion. A delightful companion where the torments of love are nothing but play, but a real rival to the ladies who delay their delights. (1)

Jester. What's the time, my friend? The street is deserted as if by proclamation. Even the dogs have gone to sleep. But we get no sleep at all. There's another funny thing. I don't enjoy the cursed lute. I wish its strings would snap in the thickest place.

Hero. But, comrade, the master's singing to-day was extremely sweet. Didn't you enjoy that?

Jester. That's why I didn't enjoy it. Too much sweet stuff is indigestible.

Hero. Besides, his voice was beautifully clear.

Melodious, sweet at the highest pitch and equally clear, full of feeling but free from flourishes. But why praise him in various ways, quoting this and that—were he behind a wall, I should think it was a woman. (2)

Jester. You may praise him if you like. But as for me, I don't care for a man singing nor a woman reading. A man singing cuts a sorry figure like a priest garlanded with red flowers. And a woman reading is as ghastly as a cow with a slit nose.

Hero. My friend, midnight is upon us. The streets are wrapped in darkness. Traffic has stopped, and Ujjain seems fast asleep. For,

That eight-day moon gives place to darkness and sets, as when a woodland elephant plunges into water, the curved end of his tusk is gradually submerged. (3)

Jester. You're quite right. The darkness gets its chance when the moon disappears and seems to steal down from the roof.

Hero. [*Stepping about.*] Here is our house. Vardhamānavaka!
Vardhamānavaka!

Jester. Vardhamānavaka! Vardhamānavaka, open the door.

[*Enter a Servant.*]

Servant. Hullo, it's the noble Maitreya.

Hero. Vardhamānavaka!

Servant. Oh, the master! Sir, I salute you.

Hero. Bring water to wash our feet.

Servant. [*Stepping round.*] Here is the foot-water. [*Washes the Hero's feet.*]

Jester. Vardhamānavaka, wash my feet too.

Servant. When your feet are well washed you'll go rolling on the ground. Pour away the water. Nay bring them here, I'll wash 'em.

[*Indicates the washing of the Jester's feet.*]

Jester. The scoundrel has not only washed my feet, but my face too.

Hero. Comrade.

Sleep descends upon mine eyes and from my brow creeps over me, unseen, elusive, like old age, that waxes greater as it saps a mortal's strength. (4)

Let us sleep, Maitreya.

[*Exit Servant.*]

[*Enter the Maid with a casket of jewels in her hands.*]

Maid. Master Maitreya, wake up, do.

Jester. What is it, lady?

Maid. I was to look after this gold box on the sixth and seventh. To-day is the eighth.

Hero. Is this the property of Vasantasenā?

Maid. Yes. Oh, tell him, Master, he must take it.

Hero. Take it, Maitreya.

Jester. Why don't you send this jewellery into the inner apartments?

Hero. Idiot! Somebody in the house must not see jewellery worn by outsiders.

Jester. No way out of it. Bring it here. I'll take it. It's sure to be stolen by thieves.

[*Maid gives it to him and exit.*]

Jester. I say. Why did you give your mantle to the courtesan's servant?

Hero. From sympathy.

Jester. What, sympathy even for that creature?

Hero. Nay, my friend, speak not so.

Jester. I have to roll on the ground like a pack donkey.

Hero. I am sleepy. Be quiet.

Jester. Sleep well and wake refreshed. Well. I'll go to sleep too. [*Both sleep.*]

[*Enter Sajjalaka.*]

Sajjalaka. Here I am,

I have made a road for my work by strength and skill in my art, an entrance easy for the body's girth. In I glide like a snake that sloughs his worn-out skin by rubbing his sides as he creeps along the ground. (5)

Ha! I have come in here by cutting a hole in the garden wall. Now I must get into the inner rooms.

[*Thinks anxiously.*] Ah!

Let the wiseacres call it low, this business when folks are asleep, for the shame of cheating those that are trustful comes from daring, not from cruelty. Independence, though of ill report, is better far than the folded hands of servility. This was the road that was taken of old by Droṇa's son when he slew the sleeping kings. (6)

[*Reflects.*]

As for a merchant greedy and rich, despising honest folk, ruthless in his business, if I get hold of his house, my mind is not overpowered with remorse. (7)

So let things wag. What doesn't the Love God drive us into? I must get to work. Ah!

Now where is the spot where the bricks have been loosened by running water and can be breached without a sound? Where can a yawning cavity be easily made in the wall to show the interior? Where is the mansion decayed, rotten with saltpetre and thinned by falling bricks? Which way can I avoid the sight of women and crown my efforts with success? (8)

[*Steps round.*] This is the operation called "quartering the site." The presence of moisture shows this foundation to be the best in the house, It is here I shall make room for an entrance. Now what kind of breach should I make?

Lion's stride or full-orbed moon? The jaws of a pike or semicircular? Tiger's maw or triangular? Like a stool or like an

elephant's mouth? How should we amaze the votaries of our art? (9)

So be it, I'll carve the "lion's stride."

Jester. I say. You're awake, aren't you?

Hero. What is it?

Jester. I can't sleep any more than a Buddhist monk that's made an assignation with a servant girl. My left eye is throbbing. I believe I can see a thief cutting a hole in the wall. If this is what it feels like to have wealth, I would be a poor man by caste.

Hero. Tut! What a fool you are, longing for poverty.

Sajjalaka. Now what shall I use to measure the breach? This will do, sacred thread by day and measuring line by night. To-night I pierce the walls of this house leaving them smooth after the cutting and touching them once with the burglar's drone.

To-morrow the neighbours will foregather with long and gloomy faces to discuss my errors and the skill of my work. (10)

Praise be to the Lord of Thieves. Praise to the Gods that go by night. [*Makes the breach.*] Ha! ha! 'tis done. Let's go in. [*Enters.*] Oh, there's a lamp burning. I must be off. Nay now, I am Sajjalaka,

A cat to leap, a wolf to slink away, a snake to glide, a hawk to sight a mouse; like sleep to weigh the strength of slumberers. Illusion's self in donning disguise of form or hue, goddess of speech in the lingos of the land, a light by night, in danger darkness, like the wind on land, like a boat on water. (11)

[*Looking all round.*] As a stranger, I know nothing of the extent of this man's affluence. I came in relying simply on the appearance of the mansion. But now I don't see anything special in the way of furniture. Is he but a poor man after all? Or does he keep what's must have squandered his wealth on pleasure.

So, though short of funds, he keeps the house, when it's time to sell, because it is his birth-place and he loves it dearly. (12)

Well we must see. Or rather a gentleman no better off than myself should not be troubled. I will go.

Jester. Oh, take this golden casket.

Sajjalaka. Eh, what? “Golden casket” says he? Had he seen me, when he spoke? Or through lack of self-control was he talking in his sleep? We must have a look. [*Takes a look at him.*] He is really asleep. For,

His breathing is regular and steady and comes at even intervals.

His body is stretched out with joints relaxed, too long for the bed.

His eyes are firmly closed, not rolling beneath the lids. Nor could he bear to face the lamp, if he were feigning sleep. (13)

Now where is it? Ah, now it is visible in the light of the lamp wrapped in a piece of an old cloak. He has got his arms round it. The moment has come. Here I have some moths. I let one loose to extinguish the lamp. [*Lets one loose from a bee-box.*] Ah, he’s down and the lamp’s out.

Jester. Damn it, now the lamp’s gone out. I shall be robbed. Ho, Cārudatta, do take this golden jewellery. I can’t sleep for fright, like a trader who’s got off the right road. I’ll curse you with a brahman’s curse if you don’t take it.

Sajjalaka. No need of imprecations, I will take it. [*Takes it.*]

Jester. [*After handing it over.*] Now I shall sleep soundly like a trader who has sold all his wares.

Sajjalaka. Sleep sound, great brahman. [*Reflects.*] Ah! ought I to take what a brahman gives me in confidence?

A curse on poverty. Young blood has no remorse. For I blame this cruel deed and do it. (14)

[*A drum is beaten behind the scene.*]

Sajjalaka. [*Listens.*] Ah! It is dawn. I must be off at once.

[*Exit Sajjalaka.*]

[*Enter a Maidservant.*]

Maid. [*Shouting.*] Master Maitreya. A thief has been and cut a hole in the orchard door and got into the house.

Jester. [*Getting up in a hurry.*] What do you say, girl?

[*Maid repeats what she said before.*]

Jester. Cut a hole in the thief? And the breach came in?

Maid. Drat the man. The thief cut the hole and got into the house.

Jester. Come and show me,

Maid. [*Stepping round.*] There.

Jester. Damn it all, the rascally dog got in all right. Come lady, I will break the pleasant news to Cārudatta.

[*Both return to Cārudatta.*]

Cārudatta. I’ve got some pleasant news for you.

Hero. [*Waking.*] What is this pleasant news for me? Has Vasantasenā come?

Jester. No, not a lady, but a gentleman.

Hero. What does he mean, Radanikā?

Maid. Oh, Sir, a thief has cut a hole in our orchard door and got into the house.

Hero. A burglar got in?

Jester. Ah, my friend, you are always saying “Maitreya is a fool, Maitreya is a blockhead.” But I did well to entrust that golden casket to your hands.

Hero. You gave it to me?

Jester. Why, of course!

Hero. At what time?

Jester. At midnight.

Hero. At midnight you say? You really gave it to me?

Jester. Yes, Cārudatta, I gave it to you while you were awake.

Hero. [*Aside.*] Alas! the golden casket has been stolen.

Jester. Now you had better give it back to me.

Hero. [*Aside.*] Who will credit the truth? Everyone will suspect me. For in all crimes powerless poverty is suspect. (15)

[*Enter a Brahman Lady.*]

Lady. Radanikā! Radanikā! Come here. She doesn't hear. I must knock on the door. [*Does so.*]

Maid. Oh, a knock on the door. My mistress calls me. [*Stepping round.*] Here I am, mistress.

Lady. They are not wounded or killed? My husband or Master Maitreya?

Maid. They are both all right. But that person's jewellery has been stolen by a burglar.

Lady. What do you say? Stolen by a burglar?

Maid. Yes.

Lady. What recompense can we give that person? Nay, I will give this. [*Puts her hands to her ears.*] Alas! only palm leaf. Old habit is mocking me. Now what shall I do? [*Reflects.*] Yes, I know. There is the pearl necklace worth a lakh that I have from my family. My lord is so munificent, he will give that instead. Good, that's what I'll do. [*Exit.*]

Jester. With bowed head I entreat your pardon for this fault due to the dark. Now you can give it back to me.

Hero. What, are you pressing me now?

Thou knowest my character day by day, yet thou hast misgivings.
How much more so one that lives by the arts, learned in
deceits? (16)

[*Remains in grief.*]

Jester. I believe, wretched fellow that I am, that I handed it to the burglar.

[*Enter the Brahman Lady.*]

Lady. Radanikā, call Master Maitreya here.

Maid. Master Maitreya, the mistress calls you.

Jester. What me, lady?

Maid. Yes.

Jester. Here I come. [*Approaches.*]

Lady. Master Maitreya, accept this donation.

Jester. This costly present is not in keeping with our circumstances. Why does this come to me?

Lady. Why on the sixth day I observe a fast. I desire the blessing of a brahman propitiated by the best of my possessions; that's why it comes to you.

Jester. But to-day is the eighth.

Lady. My neglect is due to thoughtlessness. The rite is completed to-day.

Jester. This gift is so lavish it savours of compassion. [*Aside to the Maid.*] What shall I do, Radanikā?

Maid. [*Aside to him.*] My mistress gives it to you to free the master from debt, because she thinks he must be worried about what to give that person. So you'd better take it.

Lady. Pearls grow in water and it was difficult to meet you, so my duty slipped by. Please accept. [*Gives the necklace.*]

Jester. [*Taking the necklace.*] May all be well. But there are tears in your eyes.

Lady. The temple smoke has made my eyes water.

Jester. The noble Cārudatta will curse you, if that is untrue.

Lady. Alas! [*Exit.*]

Jester. She has gone without betraying her grief in words, but her tears make it plain. [*Going up to the Hero.*] Well, here it is.

Hero. What is it?

Jester. The result of marrying a lady of your own rank.

Hero. What, my wife takes pity on me?

Jester. As you see.

Hero. Fie on me! To-day I am crushed indeed.

So reduced am I by loss of wealth, the man is rescued by a woman's help. The man in fact is but a woman, and the woman is the man. (17)

Jester. Her ladyship entreats you from her heart, I entreat you with my bowed head. Please accept it.

Hero. Very well. [*Takes the pearls.*] Comrade, take this pearl necklace to Vasantasenā.

My desire that found its pleasure in my wealth now pays unseemly court to women's treasures, loitering behind both pride and duty. What's family pride if a man is a pauper? (18)

Jester. Alack-a-day! here's a necklace worth a lakh to replace a trumpery golden casket.

Hero. Nay, comrade, say not so.

She trusted us in making this deposit. Give her this present as the price of her great confidence. (19)

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV

[Enter **Vasantasenā** in love and a **Maid** with a portrait-panel holding paint-box and brushes in her hand.]

Courtesan. Look, my good girl. Is it like him?

Maid. My dear mistress, that's just how he looked, that prince among men, when I saw him from a distance—with my eyes respectfully cast down—in the confusion of the struggle with the elephant.

Courtesan. “None so sly as those that serve a courtesan.” You fulfill the proverb and are telling fibs.

Maid. What's that? “Every servant of a courtesan is sincere”? Look you, my Mistress, *nimbu* trees do grow in a *campaka* garden. I am delighted that it is so very like. In very truth it does him honour, I mean the God of Love.

Courtesan. My good girl, I do not allow my friends to make a mock of me.

Maid. That is right. Courtesans, they say, find rival wives in their own girl friends.

[Enter another **Maid** with her hands full of ornaments.]

Second Maid. Is my mistress well?

Courtesan. You are welcome, my good girl.

Second Maid. Mistress mine, your mamma sends this message. “The blue lotus carriage has returned and just come into the gateway. So be quick with your finery and come with your veil.” Here are the ornaments, put them on.

Courtesan. Will the noble Cārudatta grace us with a visit?

Second Maid. No, the man who sent the ornaments is Saṃsthāna the king's brother-in law.

Courtesan. Away with you, insolent creature!

Second Maid. Forgive me, mistress mine, forgive me, I was only giving the message. [*Falls at her feet.*]

Courtesan. Get up, get up, 'tis the evil message I am displeased with, not with you.

Second Maid. What am I to say to your mamma!

Courtesan. Tell her that I will put on my finery if I am to meet the noble Cārudatta.

Second Maid. Very well. [*Exit.*]

[*Enter Sajjalaka.*]

Sajjalaka.

By night I did a famous wrong, overcoming sleep and darkling fear. But with the rising of the sun my valour grows gradually fainter like the moon in daylight, and I am frightened. (1)

Fortunately my work was finished before dawn. I have just done this to compensate Vasantasenā, for her lady's-maid Madanikā. [*Steps around.*] This is Vasantasenā's house. I will go in. [*Enters.*] Now is Madanikā in the inner rooms? Why yes, in the morning these people always stick to the inner rooms. So that's where she must be. I will call her. Madanikā! Madanikā!

Maid. [*Listening.*] That sounds like Sajjalaka's voice. My mistress is busy. So I will slip out. [*Coming out to Sajjalaka.*] Here I am.

Sajjalaka. Come here.

Maid. Why do you look so apprehensive?

Sajjalaka. Not at all, I want to tell you something.

Courtesan. My good girl, put this picture on my bed. [*Looking around.*] Where has the silly girl gone? Well, she can't have gone far. I'll have a look for her. [*Steps round and looks about.*] Oho, there she is, talking to some man, fairly drinking him up with most loving glances. I think it must be the man who wants me to let her go by purchase.

Sajjalaka. I will tell you a secret.

Courtesan. It is wrong to listen to other people's secrets, I will go.

Sajjalaka. Will Vasantasenā— [*Stops in the middle.*]

Courtesan. So I am the subject of this story. Very well, I shall listen.
[*Comes back and waits.*]

Sajjalaka. Will she set you free for a compensation?

Courtesan. That is he. Good, I shall listen.

Maid. Sajjalaka, my mistress was the first to suggest setting me free.

Sajjalaka. Then offer her this and say,

These ornaments are fashioned as if to fit thee. Show them not abroad, but wear them for love of me. (2)

Maid. Let me see them.

Sajjalaka. Take them. [*Shows them.*]

Maid. I seem to have seen this jewellery before.

Courtesan. It looks like mine.

Maid. Tell me, tell me, how did you get them?

Sajjalaka. Through love of you I did a violent deed.

Both Women. Oh, a man of violence!

Maid. [*Aside.*] Indeed it is hers. This fellow's face is troubled because of his cruel deed. [*Aloud.*] Alas, for my sake you have imperilled both your life and your character.

Sajjalaka. Nonsense! Fortune dwells with daring.

Maid. You are an ignoramus. For who, forsooth, will sell his body for his life? But in whose house did you commit this breach of confidence?

Sajjalaka. As I heard in the morning, there was a merchant's son living in the Bankers' Square called Cārudatta.

Both Women. Oh dear! oh dear!

Sajjalaka. Gracious!

All thy limbs are drooping in distress, thine eyes dilated in alarm. Thou art trembling like a wounded deer and quivering with compassion. (3)

Maid. Tell me truly, when you were robbing the merchant's house did you kill a young man of the house, or wound him with your weapon?

Courtesan. Good, she has asked exactly what I wanted to ask myself.

Sajjalaka. Madanikā! Hadn't I done enough, that I should commit a second crime? No, I neither killed nor wounded anybody.

Maid. Is that true, Sajjalaka?

Sajjalaka. Quite true.

Maid. Good for you, Sajjalaka. My heart rejoices.

Sajjalaka. Your heart rejoices? What is the meaning of that? So, Madanikā,

I, that am sprung from forbears contented with their lot, commit a crime, because my heart is bound with love of thee; I keep this frame together torn by passion—and thou pretendest I am thy friend but goest to another. (4)

Maid. Listen to me, Sajjalaka. This jewellery belongs to my mistress. [*Whispers.*] It was like this

Sajjalaka. So,

Tormented by the summer heat and seeking shade I have returned to the selfsame branch that I stripped erstwhile of all its leaves in ignorance. (5)

Courtesan. I think he is repenting that he did the crime.

Sajjalaka. That being so, what am I to do, Madanikā?

Maid. Return them where they were. My mistress will not put them on.

Sajjalaka. But if the gentleman should be angry and hand me over to the police as a thief, what shall I do then?

Maid. Don't be afraid. He is a gentleman, and will be conciliated by your good qualities.

Courtesan. Well said, my dear, you are beyond reproach. That speech of yours does you honour.

Sajjalaka. I can't go there, absolutely.

Maid. There's another way.

Courtesan. These are the tricks of the trade.

Sajjalaka. What's the other way?

Maid. Could the merchant or my lady recognize you?

Sajjalaka. No, not at all.

Maid. Well then, present this jewellery to my lady in the merchant's name. In this way you will be quite safe, that noble man will be free from anxiety, and I shall not be worried. Otherwise, if my lady is cheated again, I shall be back in slavery.

Sajjalaka. Madanikā, I agree.

Courtesan. Good, I will go and wait inside. [*Does so.*]

Maid. Come along, Sajjalaka. Wait for me in the Love God's temple. I will tell my lady as soon as I get a chance.

Sajjalaka. Splendid! [*Exit.*]

[*Enter another Maid.*]

Second Maid. Good luck, my lady. A brahman has come from a merchant's house to see you.

Courtesan. [*Respectfully.*] Go, show him in at once.

Second Maid. Very well. Come in, sir.

[*Enter the Jester.*]

Jester. [*Looking all round.*] Oho, she's got a magnificent mansion, this courtesan. Visitors from various towns are busy reading. Various delicacies are being prepared. People are playing on lutes. Goldsmiths are carefully setting every kind of jewellery.

Second Maid. Here is my lady, sir. Go up to her.

Jester. [*Coming forward.*] Good health to your ladyship.

Courtesan. You are welcome, sir. Come, girl, a seat for the gentleman and water for his feet.

Jester. [*Aside.*] She can bring everything except food.

Maid. As my lady commands. [*Gives him a seat and water for his feet.*] Sit down, sir.

Jester. [*Sitting down.*] Please take a seat, lady. I have come to say something.

Courtesan. [*Sitting down.*] I am all attention.

Jester. What is the value of those ornaments?

Courtesan. Why do you ask me that, sir?

Jester. Listen, Lady. You deposited your jewellery with Cārudatta because you relied on his virtue, and he's lost it gambling.

Courtesan. Gambling? Quite so. Well?

Jester. So will your ladyship please accept this pearl necklace in payment for the jewellery?

Courtesan. [*Aside.*] Alack, what it is to be a courtesan! He thinks me greedy. If I do not take it, it will be the same trouble over again. Give it here, sir.

Jester. Here it is; take it, ma'am.

Courtesan. [*Taking hold of it.*] Please report that I accept it.

Jester. [*Aside.*] Not a word of polite refusal. [*Aloud.*] Very well. [*Hands it over and exit.*]

Courtesan. Bravo, Cārudatta, bravo! Though your fortune has changed you have saved your pride from a fall.

[*Enter Madanikā.*]

Madanikā. Oh, my lady, there's a man come from the house of a merchant's son and wants to see you.

Courtesan. Have I seen him before or is he a new comer?

Madanikā. No, lady, I think he is a dependent of that one.

Courtesan. Go, bring him in.

Madanikā. Very well. [*Exit.*]

Courtesan. Oh, what a delightful day!

[*Enter Madanikā with Sajjalaka.*]

Sajjalaka. 'Tis an ill thing an uneasy conscience.

If a man walks briskly by and looks at me, if he comes up quickly in confusion or stands still, my mind suspects them all alike; for a man's own guilt makes him apprehensive. (6)

Madanikā. Here is my lady. Go up to her.

Sajjalaka. [*Approaching.*] All happiness to your ladyship.

Courtesan. You are welcome, sir. My dear, give the gentleman a seat.

Sajjalaka. Nay, let be. Here is a seat. I have some very pressing business.

Courtesan. Very well. Speak out, sir.

Sajjalaka. I come from the noble Cārudatta with this message. He finds it difficult to take care of the jewellery entrusted to him because the house is unkempt through lack of use and the family is away. So would you kindly take it back.

Courtesan. Come, sir, give it back to Cārudatta.

Sajjalaka. Lady, I am not going.

Courtesan. I know what it is, you have stolen that jewellery with violence from his house. You should respect his virtues, sir.

Sajjalaka. [*Aside.*] How did she find me out?

Courtesan. Ho there, a carriage for the gentleman!

Madanikā. I hear the sound of wheels. The carriage must have come.

Courtesan. [*Leading Madanikā with the jewellery.*] Into the carriage, sir, with your lady.

Madanikā. Mistress dear, what do you mean?

Courtesan. Restraining him with warning words you have now become his lawful wife. Take her, sir.

[*Takes hold of Madanikā and pushes her towards him.*]

Sajjalaka. [*Aside.*] Ah, when can I requite her kindness? But may all harm be averted.

The man who looks for recompense does but gain calamity. May destruction fall on those that hate them, either him or the lady. (7)

[*Exit Sajjalaka with Madanikā.*]

Courtesan. Caturikā!

[*Enter Caturikā.*]

Caturikā. Here, my lady.

Courtesan. Look, girl, I was wide awake but had a dream like this.

Caturikā. I am glad. That's just the play they call the Ambrosial Act.

Courtesan. Come, let us take this jewellery to Cārudatta.

Caturikā. As you will, my lady. But that storm is coming up, the escort of trysting ladies.

Courtesan. Little wretch, don't delay me.

Caturikā. Come, dear mistress, come along.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT IV.