

Harsha

Priyadarśikā

translated by

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Stage-manager (*sūtradhāra*), who appears in the Induction and probably recites the two stanzas of the Invocation at the opening of the play.

Vatsarāja, or **Udayana**, **King** of Kauśāmbī, hero of the drama.

Vasantaka, **Jester** (*vidūṣaka*), friend and confidant of the King.

Rumaṅvant, minister to **Vatsarāja**.

Vijayasena, general of the army of **Vatsarāja**.

Vinayavasū, chamberlain (*kañcukin*) of Dṛḍhavarman, King of the Aṅgas.

Vāsavadattā, daughter of King Mahāsena-Pradyota, **Queen** to **Vatsarāja**.

Āraṇyakā, whose real name is **Priyadarśikā** (or **Priyadarśanā**), daughter of King Dṛḍhavarman and heroine of the play, living unknown at **Vatsarāja's** court as attendant to the **Queen**.

Manoramā, a female attendant, confidante of **Āraṇyakā**.

Indīvarikā, a maidservant (*ceṭī*) of the **Queen**.

Kāñcanamālā, a handmaiden of the **Queen**.

Sāñkṛtyāyanī, an elderly lady of rank and associate of the **Queen**.

Yaśodharā, portress (*pratīhārī*), female doorkeeper at **Vatsarāja's** court.

A **Bard**, behind the scene at the close of Act I.

Retinue attendant upon the Queen.

CHARACTERS OF THE MIMIC PLAY

Vāsavadattā, daughter of King Mahāsena—acted by **Āraṇyakā**.

Vatsarāja—acted by himself.

Kāñcanamālā, handmaiden of **Vāsavadattā**—acted by herself.

Chamberlain of Mahāsena—presumably acted by a Chamberlain of **Vatsarāja**.

Place: The scene is laid at the palace of **Vatsarāja** at Kauśāmbī. The Explanatory Scene of Act I, however, is laid in some part of the Vindhya Forest.

Time: Fifth century B. C., in the first part of the reign of **Udayana Vatsarāja**.

Duration of the Action: Somewhat more than a year, from one autumn to the next.

ACT I

[INDUCTION]

[INVOCATION]

Her glance is troubled by the smoke [of the altar], and yet
her eyes are gladdened by the moonbeams;
She looks with longing at the bridegroom, but again bows
down her face through modesty in Brahma's presence;
She feels jealousy [when she beholds], reflected in the mirror
of the moonlike nails of her feet, Hara (Śiva)
supporting Gaṅgā;
Yet she is thrilled by his touch in the rite of hand-
clasping.—May She, Gaurī (Pārvatī), be gracious unto
you! [1]

And again:—

Mount Kailāsa upheaved is quaking, the Ganas manifest their
amazement,
Kumāra clings to his mother's lap, the poison-venting Serpent
glares with rage,
his frame tottering on his firm-set feet;
And the Ten-headed One (Rāvana) descends to the depths of
Pātāla,
Yet Śiva, for all his wrath, is delighted at being embraced by
Umā (Pārvatī) in the excess of her fear.—May He
protect us! [2]

(*At the end of the Invocation:*)

Stage-Manager. (*Walking around.*) Today at the Spring Festival I was very respectfully summoned by the group of kings assembled from various regions as vassals at the lotus-feet of His Majesty King Harsha, and was thus addressed: "We have heard by a series of rumors that our lord, His Majesty King Harsha, has composed a play called *Priyadarśikā*, graced by the treatment of a novel subject; but we have not seen it produced. So you ought to have it acted in appropriate style out of high respect for the King himself, who gladdens the hearts of all men, and also with the idea of conferring a favor on us." Accordingly, after arranging the costumes, I shall proceed to do as

requested. (*Looking around.*) I am convinced that the minds of the audience are favorably inclined. For,

His Majesty Harsha is a skilful poet, this assemblage, too, is
appreciative of merit,

The story of Vatsarāja is a popular subject, and we are
expert in acting.

Any one of these facts assures the attainment of the desired
result,

But how much more so does this whole set of excellences
when combined through my abundant good fortune! [3]

(*Looking toward the dressing-room.*) Why, here comes my brother, just as I am engaged in the Induction; he has learned of my intention, and has assumed the part of the chamberlain of Dṛḍhavarman, king of the Aṅgas. So I shall proceed to enact the next part. (*Exit.*)

END OF THE INDUCTION

[EXPLANATORY SCENE]

(*Enter the Chamberlain [Vinayavasū].*)

Chamberlain. (*Acting as if sad and weary; sighing.*) Alas, oh, alas!

The misfortune of my king, the grief of separation from my
kinsmen,

Exile from my country, the fatigue of a hard journey—

This I taste as the fruit of a long life,

Bitter and fruitless! [4]

(*With sadness and amazement.*) To think [that it could have happened] to such a one as King Dṛḍhavarman, the possessor of the three irresistible powers, the equal of Raghu, Dilīpa, and Nala! [Yet] the accursed Kaliṅga, harboring resentment because Dṛḍhavarman had given his daughter to Vatsarāja, although he himself had sought her in marriage, and finding his opportunity in the fact that Vatsarāja was still in captivity, has suddenly appeared and brought about this disaster. I cannot believe it, though it has actually come to pass. How excessively cruel is such a fate for us! For I had thought to free my master of his obligation by bringing the princess somehow or other to Vatsarāja; accordingly I carried her out of the turmoil even of that onslaught which was terrible as doomsday, and placed her in the house of the forest-king Vindhyaketu, who was amicably disposed toward my lord Dṛḍhavarman. When

I had gone to the Pool of Agastya to bathe, because it was no great distance away, in a moment some foes made an attack like demons, slew Vindhyaketu, destroyed the people, and gave the place to the flames. Now I do not know in what plight the princess is, and, although I have carefully searched the entire place, I have not found out whether she was taken away by those savages or was burned. So what am I, unhappy man, to do? (*Reflecting.*) Ah! I have heard that Vatsarāja has escaped from captivity, carrying off the daughter of Pradyota, and has reached Kauśāmbī. Shall I go thither? (*Sighing as he beholds his plight.*) What in the world am I to say if I go there without the princess? Ah, Vindhyaketu said to me today: “Have no fear. His Majesty King Dṛḍhavarman is alive, but he is disabled by severe wounds and is a prisoner.” So I will go now to my master and will devote the remainder of my life to his service. (*Walking around, glancing upward.*) Oh, how pitiless is the consuming heat of the autumn sun! For I feel its penetration, consumed as I am by many miseries.

The sun, set free from <the bondage of the clouds>, has reached <<Libra next after occupying Virgo>>, And blazes forth, having regained <<<his proper effulgence>>>;

Just as Vatsarāja, set free from <close confinement>, has reached <<the highest ascendancy after marrying the maiden>>,

And blazes forth [in regal splendor], having regained <<<his own domain>>>. [5]

(*Exit.*)

END OF THE EXPLANATORY SCENE

(*Enter King and Jester.*)

King.

I am convinced of the constancy of my servitors, I have seen the wisdom of my councilors,

I have also proved my friends and know full well the devotion of my people;

I have satisfied my passion for the dangers of battle, I have won the pearl of women—

What, indeed, have I not gained by my captivity, as though by piety unfeigned? [6]

Jester. (*Angrily.*) My dear fellow, why do you praise that whoreson, damnable captivity? Forget it now. For, like a newly taken lordly elephant, whose feet are tripped by the shackles of the iron chains as they rattle again and again, whose torment of heart is futile and hard to bear, whose eye is in a fixed stare through the force of his rage, whose heavy trunk tears up the ground—thus you have experienced [captivity] without the joy of sleep even at night.

King. Vasantaka, you certainly are a rascal. Look!

You saw only the dungeon dense with gloom, and not the
radiance of her moonlike face;

You were tormented by the clank of the fetters, and did not
hear her honeyed accents;

You still have in mind the cruel prison-guards, and not her
loving glances;

You see the defects of captivity, but not the merits of
Pradyota's daughter. [7]

Jester. (*With importance.*) Sir, if bondage is a bond of bliss, why then do you bind your wrath upon King Kalinga for having Dr̥dhavarman thrown into bondage?

King. (*Laughing.*) Out on you, idiot! Not everyone is a Vatsarāja to escape from bondage in this way and take a Vāsavadattā with him. So let the subject rest now. Many days have passed since Vijayasena was dispatched against Vindhyaketu, and as yet nobody has come from him. So let the minister Rumaṇvant be summoned at once. I wish to talk over something with him.

(*Enter Portress.*)

Portress. Hail, hail to Your Majesty! Here are Vijayasena and the minister Rumaṇvant standing at the threshold.

King. Have them enter immediately.

Portress. As Your Majesty commands. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter Rumaṇvant and Vijayasena.*)

Rumaṇvant. (*Reflecting.*)

Servitors generally enter the king's presence with misgiving.

Like culprits, though without guilt, even when they have
been gone but an instant. [8]

(*Approaching.*) Hail to Your Majesty!

King. (*Pointing to a seat.*) Rumaṇvant, be seated here.

Rumaṇvant. (*With a smile, sitting down.*) Vijayasena, the vanquisher of Vindhyaketu, bows here before you.

(**Vijayasena bows.**)

King. (*Embracing him graciously.*) Is Your Honor well?

Vijayasena. Now [I am], through my Lord's favor.

King. Vijayasena, be seated.

(**Vijayasena sits down.**)

King. Vijayasena, tell the tidings about Vindhyaketu.

Vijayasena. Your Majesty, what more can I tell? He has felt my Lord's anger.

King. Even so, I wish to bear in detail.

Vijayasena. Your Majesty, hear. With an army of elephants, cavalry, and infantry, as directed by Your Majesty's command, we traversed the road from here, though long, in three days. At daybreak, while our presence was wholly unsuspected, we fell upon Vindhyaketu.

King. Then, then?

Vijayasena. Then, aroused by hearing the tumultuous din of our forces, Vindhyaketu himself rushed forth like a lion from a cave in the Vindhya mountains, and, without waiting for his forces or his chariot, and having only the few followers that chanced to be at hand, shouted his name and proceeded at once to engage us.

King. (*Looking at Rumanvant, with a smile.*) Well done by Vindhyaketu! Then, then?

Vijayasena. Then, with the cry "There he is!" and with efforts redoubled by our fury, we annihilated his followers by our mighty onslaught. But Vindhyaketu, all alone as he was, impelled by overpowering anger at the crushing blow, made a still fiercer attack.

King. Bravo, Vindhyaketu! Bravo, bravo!

Vijayasena. How can it be described? Your Majesty, I shall relate it briefly.

Himself on foot, he first of all pressed down the foot-soldiers

by the mere pressure of his breast;

With showers of arrows he scattered the panic-stricken cavalry afar in every direction like a troop of gazelles.

When he had discharged on all sides his whole supply of missiles, he quickly unsheathed his sword,

And thereupon proceeded to engage in the sport of cutting off our elephants' trunks as if they were a plantain grove. [9]

While singlehanded he was thus throwing our threefold force
into confusion

His towering shoulders gashed by flashing swords,
His broad chest torn by blows of a hundred weapons,
The exhausted Vindhyaketu was at last struck down in the
fight. [10]

King. Rumaṅvant, we are in truth put to the blush by the death of Vindhyaketu, who has gone the way befitting brave men.

Rumaṅvant. Your Majesty, to persons of your disposition, who are solely partial to virtue, even an enemy's virtues cause delight.

King. Vijayasena, is there any child of Vindhyaketu toward whom I may show a token of my appreciation?

Vijayasena. Your Majesty, I shall tell about this also. When Vindhyaketu had thus been killed along with his kinsmen and retainers, and his faithful wives had followed him [in death], when his people had taken refuge on the summits of the Vindhya Mountains, and the place had been deserted, we heard in the dwelling of Vindhyaketu a piteous lament "Oh, father, father!" uttered by a maiden whose beauty matched her noble birth. Thinking that she was his daughter, we brought her hither, and she is standing at the door. It is for Your Majesty to decide regarding her.

King. Yaśodharā, go at once and entrust her yourself to Vāsavadattā. Say to the Queen that she is to regard her always in the light of a sister, and is to have her taught everything that a noble damsel should know concerning singing, dancing, instrumental music, and the other accomplishments. When she becomes of marriageable age the Queen is to remind me.

Portress. As Your Majesty commands. (*Exit.*)

(*A Bard behind the scenes.*)

Now the entire company of the beauties in thy zenana
Are preparing for the pleasure-bath the articles requisite for
its enjoyment;
And when through the exertion their garments slip down,
their breasts, gleaming with the beauty disclosed,
Make the bathing-place adorned as if with a second set of
upraised golden bowls. [11]

King. (*Looking upward.*) Why, the Blessed One of a Thousand Rays has reached mid-heaven! For now—

The water of the pool glitters with the leaping of the
śaphara-fish as if boiling with the heat of the sun's
rays;

The peacock spreads his heavy tail fan-wise, though it is
drooping from the gay dance;

The fawn, eager for the water in the basins around the trees,
seeks the circle of their shade;

The bee now leaves the elephant's temples and hides itself in
the flap of his ear. [12]

Rumaṅvant, up, arise! Let us go within and, after duly attending to our
duties, entertain Vijayasena and dispatch him to destroy Kaliṅga.

(Exeunt omnes.)

END OF THE FIRST ACT

ACT II

(*Enter Jester.*)

Jester. Now I've been told by Indīvarikā: "Worthy sir, Queen Vāsavadattā is engaged in the observance of a fast and summons you for the *svastivācana* rite." So, after bathing in the pool of the garden of the fountain-house, I shall go into the Queen's presence and make a noise like a cock. Otherwise how are Brahmans like us to get donations at court? (*Looking toward the dressing-room.*) Why, here is my dear friend now, just on his way to the garden of the fountain-house in order to dispel the lovesickness caused by [the Queen's] absence. So I'll go along with my friend and do as I said.

(*Enter King, with a lovesick air.*)

King.

Emaciated is she, wearing only the auspicious ornaments,
speaking slowly and with effort,
Outvying with the pale hue of her countenance the light of
the moon at dawn,
Full of longing as she observes the fast she has vowed.—My
heart longs
This day to see my beloved, who appears in a state like that
produced by first love. [1]

Jester. (*Approaching.*) Hail to Your Honor! May you prosper!

King. (*Looking around.*) Vasantaka, why do you look so happy?

Jester. Why, the Queen is doing honor to a Brahman.

King. If so, what of it?

Jester. (*With importance.*) O sir, such a Brahman! For I, indeed, shall be the first to receive from the Queen's hand the *svastivācana* offering in the palace, though it is thronged with thousands of Brahmans who know four Vedas, five Vedas, six Vedas!

King. (*Laughing.*) The quality of a Brahman is known by the number of his Vedas! So come along, great Brahman. Let us go to the garden of the fountain-house.

Jester. As Your Honor commands.

King. You go first.

Jester. Come, sir, let us go. (*Walking about and looking.*) Dear fellow, look, look at the loveliness of this garden of the fountain-house, where the surface of the stone slab is made soft by the various flowers that ceaselessly fall upon it, where the buds of the *bakula* tree and of the jasmine creeper are

broken down by the weight of the bees enveloped in the fragrance, where the stems of the *bandhūka* flowers are stirred by the wanton breeze charged with the perfume of the lotus, and where the sunlight and the heat are shut out by the dense *tamāla* trees.

King. Well expressed, dear fellow; for here
The ground shines with the stems of the *śephālikā* flowers as
if it were covered with fragments of coral;
The perfume of the *saptacchadas* conveys momentarily the
impression of the sweet odor of the elephant's ichor;
Here, too, the bees, their bodies tawny-colored with the
abundant mass of pollen that is shaken from the
full-blown lotuses,
Hum a kind of confused song, drunk with nectarous drafts. [2]

Jester. My dear fellow, look, look at this, too—how this *saptaparṇa* tree, with its mass of flowers falling constantly, seems now as if it had drops of water trickling between its leaves at the close of the rainy season.

King. A happy simile, dear fellow. It is very like the rainy season; for,
The earth here, which recently was clothed in softness
through its grassplots surpassing the loveliness of the
śirīṣa flowers,
And which had a pavement fashioned, as it were, of pure
emerald-dust,
Seems now at this moment as if covered with hundreds of
cochineal-insects,
Because of the quantities of *bandhūka* flowers that have
dropped from their stems. [3]

(*Enter a Maidservant [Indīvarikā].*)

Maidservant. Queen Vāsavadattā has commanded me: “Indīvarikā, my girl, I have to offer an oblation today to the great sage Agastya. So do you go and bring back quickly a garland of *śephālikā* flowers; and let Āraṇyakā here quickly gather and bring back from the pool of the garden of the fountain-house the full-blown lotuses before they are closed by the sun, eager to set.” That poor girl does not know the pool, so I shall get her and go there. (*Looking toward the dressing-room.*) This way, this way, Āraṇyakā, come!

(*Enter Āraṇyakā.*)

Āraṇyakā. (*With tears and agitation; to herself.*) To think that I, who am sprung from such a family, who have been used to commanding other people, must now do the command of another! This is not the hardship of fate; it is

rather my own fault. For, though aware of it, I did not kill myself. So what shall I do now? But it is a hard thing that I have thought of. Better so, than that I should lower myself by revealing my illustrious race. Then what way out is there? I shall carry out what I said.

Maid-servant. Come, Āraṇyakā, this way!

Āraṇyakā. Here I come. (*Acting as if weary.*) My dear, is the pool still a long way off?

Maid-servant. Here it is, hidden by the clump of śephālikās. So come, let us walk down.

(*They act as if walking down.*)

King. Dear fellow, why do you seem to be thinking of something else? Did I not say: “It is very like the rainy season”?

(*He recites again the stanza beginning*

“The earth here, which recently was clothed in softness.”)

Jester. (*Peevishly.*) Sir, you divert yourself when full of longing by looking at this or “something else”; but for me, the Brahman, the time of the svastivācana offering is going by. So now I’ll quickly bathe in the pool and go into the presence of the Queen.

King. Why, you fool, we have already gone beyond the pool. Although you are thus receiving through your several senses an excess of pleasure, you do not perceive it. Look!

The note of the swan here, resembling the tinkling of the
loved one’s anklets, delights the ear;

The outline of the palace, descried through the trees on the
bank, gives pleasure to the eye;

The sense of smell is charmed by the perfume of the lotuses
with their penetrating fragrance;

The breezes, cooled by contact with the waters, diffuse
delight through the limbs. [4]

So come, let us approach the bank of the pool. (*Walking around and looking.*)
Friend, look, look!

This <crystal> pool, <<which is captivating through the
charm of its full blown lotuses>>, enchants me by its
mere sight,

As if it were the <lustrous> eye of the garden-nymph,
<<which robs the full blown lotuses of their
charm>>. [5]

Jester. (*With curiosity.*) My dear fellow, look, look! Who is this damsel around whose tresses, fragrant with the perfume of the flowers, the bees cluster, and whose bud-like hands are roseate as branches of coral, while her twining arms are radiant, slender, and delicate? She seems in truth like the garden-nymph moving before our eyes.

King. (*Looking with curiosity.*) Dear fellow, her matchless beauty of form gives rise to many surmises. I myself do not know for a certainty. Look!

Is she a Nāga-maiden, arisen from Pātāla in order to view the earth?

Vain thought! For that realm I myself have seen, and in it
there is not her like.

Could moonlight be incarnate here? But the sight of that is
not possible by day.

Who then is she that appears like Śrī with a lotus in her hand? [6]

Jester. (*Observing closely.*) This one certainly is the Queen's attendant, Indī-varikā. So let us hide behind the clump of bushes and look.

(*Both do so.*)

Maid servant. (*Acting as if picking a lotus leaf.*) Āraṇyakā, do you pick the lotuses, and I'll pick the *śephālikā* flowers in this lotus leaf and go into the presence of the Queen.

King. Dear fellow, a conversation seems to be going on. So let us listen attentively. Perhaps in this way the situation will be cleared up.

(**Maid servant** acts as if going away.)

Āraṇyakā. Dear Indīvarikā, I can't stay here without you.

Maid servant. (*Laughing.*) According to what I heard the Queen say today, you'll have to stay a long time without me.

Āraṇyakā. (*With dismay.*) What did the Queen say?

Maid servant. This: "I was told at that time by the King that he was to be reminded when the daughter of Vindhyaketu became of marriageable age. So I shall remind the King at once, in order that he may take thought about a husband for her."

King. (*Joyfully.*) This is the daughter of Vindhyaketu! (*Regretfully.*) We have long been robbed of her. Dear fellow, it is not wrong, forsooth, to look at this maiden. Let us now look without hesitation.

Āraṇyakā. (*Angrily, stopping her ears.*) Now you go away! I've no use for you when you talk nonsense.

(**Maid servant**, going aside, acts as if picking flowers.)

King. Ah, her noble birth is clearly revealed by her dignified bearing! Dear fellow, happy indeed will be he who shall enjoy the bliss of embracing her form.

(**Āraṇyakā** acts as if picking lotuses.)

Jester. My dear fellow, look, look! Marvelous, marvelous! As she picks the bunch of lotuses she puts their beauty to shame by the luster diffused by her bud-like hand as it moves through the water.

King. Dear fellow, that is quite true. Look!

By her glance [like the moon] she gives pleasure which is as
a continued shower of drops of nectar;

She becomes <exquisitely lovely when the robe slips from
her bosom> [even as the moon becomes] <clearly
revealed when the veil of clouds drifts away>;

It is a wonder indeed that the lotuses do not close up at once

After receiving the touch of the <hand> of her who is like the moon
itself, [as they do] by its <rays>. [7]

Āraṇyakā. (*Acting as if tormented by bees.*) Oh, oh! These horrid bees again leaving the lotus [and] lighting on the clusters of blue water-lilies bother and torment me insistently. (*Covering her face with her mantle; in [a tone of fear.]*) Dear Indīvarikā, save me, save me! These horrid bees will get the best of me!

Jester. My dear fellow, your wishes are fulfilled. Before that slave-born girl can come, do you approach in silence, and she'll think it's Indīvarikā coming, when she hears the sound of footsteps in the water, and it will be you that she'll cling to.

King. Bravo, dear fellow, bravo! Your suggestion comes at the right moment. (*He approaches Āraṇyakā.*)

Āraṇyakā. (*Acting as if hearing the sound of footsteps.*) Indīvarikā, come quickly, come quickly! I am distracted by these horrid bees. (*She clings to the King.*)

(*The King throw his arm around her neck. Āraṇyakā, drawing her mantle back from her face, without seeing the King, acts as if looking at the bees.*)

King. (*Keeping off the bees with his own mantle.*)

Ah, timid one, dismiss thy fear! These bees
Light upon thy lotus-face, lured by the fragrance of its
perfume.

If, with thine eyes dilated and trembling through fear, thou
still wilt shed

Loveliness like that of a cluster of water-lilies, how then will
they leave thee?

Āraṇyakā. (*Seeing the King, acts as if frightened.*) Why, this is not
Indīvarikā! (*Leaving the King in alarm and moving away.*) Indīvarikā, come
quickly, come quickly! Defend me!

Jester. Lady, though defended by Vatsarāja, who is able to defend the
whole world, you call for Indīvarikā, a servant!

(*The King recites again the stanza beginning “Ah, timid one, dismiss.”*)

Āraṇyakā. (*Looking at the King with longing, and with modesty; aside.*)
So this is the great king to whom I was given by my father! My father’s
preference was certainly appropriate. (*Acts as if confused.*)

Maid servant. Āraṇyakā is tormented by the horrid bees, so I’ll go up
and comfort her. Āraṇyakā, don’t be afraid; here I come!

Jester. Come away, sir, come away! Here comes Indīvarikā. If she sees
what’s going on, she’ll tell the Queen. (*Pointing with his finger.*) So let’s go
into this plantain bower and wait a moment.

(*Both do so.*)

Maid servant. (*Approaching and patting her cheeks.*) Dear Āraṇyakā,
it’s the fault of your lotus-like face that the bees are so bothersome. (*Taking
her by the hand.*) So come, let’s go; the day is at its close.

(*They act as if going.*)

Āraṇyakā. (*Looking toward the plantain-bower.*) Dear Indīvarikā, a sort
of numbness has come over my limbs owing to the excessive coldness of the
water. So let’s go very slowly.

Maid servant. Certainly.

(*Exeunt both [Āraṇyakā and Maid servant].*)

Jester. Come, sir, let’s step out [of the plantain-bower]. That slave-born
Indīvarikā has gone off with her.

(*They both come out.*)

King. (*Sighing.*) What! she is gone? Friend Vasantaka, not without
hindrance do the unlucky obtain what they wish for. (*Looking around.*) Look,
my friend, look!

This cluster of lotuses, though their flower-faces are closed, tell, as
it were,

By their fuzziness their joy at having touched her tender bud-like
hand. [9]

(*Sighing.*) My friend, what way is there now to see her again?

Jester. Sir, now you're crying, after breaking your doll yourself. You don't act on the advice given by me, the "fool of a Brahman."

King. What didn't I do [that you advised]?

Jester. You've forgotten it already! I said "Approach in silence." You, on reaching the critical moment, through the conceit of your pretended learning scolded her away with "Ah, timid one, dismiss thy fear" and other sharp words; why, then, are you now crying? And you're even asking about a way [to see her] again.

King. What! Though it was comforting her, the fool calls it "scolding"!

Jester. It's quite easy to see who's the fool here. So what of it? The Blessed One of a Thousand Rays is eager to set. So come, let's go indoors.

King. (*Looking around.*) Ah, the day is almost at its close. Alas, for now, Taking away the beauty of the lotus clusters, the loveliness of the day, like my dearest one, is gone;

In yon orb of the sun, as in this heart of mine, a ruddy glow appears;

The love-bird stands, like me, on the marge of the lotus-pool, thinking of his mate;

The regions of the world, too, have suddenly grown dark like the depths of my own heart.

(*Exeunt omnes.*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT

ACT III

[INTRODUCTORY SCENE]

(*Enter Manoramā.*)

Manoramā. I've been bidden by Queen Vāsavadattā as follows: "Manoramā, today, at the great Kaumudī-festival, you are to perform the rest of the play which was composed by Sāṅkr̥ṣṭyāyanī about the adventure of my lord and myself." Now, yesterday it was acted poorly by my dear friend Āraṇyakā because of her absentmindedness. If she does so again today in the rôle of Vāsavadattā, the Queen will surely be angry. So where now shall I look for her and take her to task? (*Looking around.*) Here is Āraṇyakā entering the plantain bower by the bank of the pool, talking to herself about something or other. So I'll remain concealed behind the clump of bushes and listen to her unreserved talk.

END OF THE INTRODUCTORY SCENE

(*Enter Āraṇyakā seated, acting as if in love.*)

Āraṇyakā. (*Sighing.*) O my heart! why dost thou make me so unhappy by longing for one that can hardly be thine?

Manoramā. So this was the cause of her absentmindedness! But what is she longing for? I'm going to listen attentively.

Āraṇyakā. (*In tears.*) How can the King, whose appearance is so noble, cause me such distress? Strange, strange! (*Sighing.*) On the contrary, it's my own misfortune, and not the King's fault.

Manoramā. (*Weeping.*) What, is it the King she is longing for? Good, my dear friend, good! Your passion is in keeping with your noble birth.

Āraṇyakā. To whom, pray, can I tell this matter and make the pain of my misery in a way endurable. (*Reflecting.*) Why, I have my dear friend Manoramā, who is like my own heart.—I can't bring myself to tell it even to her because of bashfulness. What other solace for my heart is there at all, save death?

Manoramā. (*In tears.*) Alas, alas! The poor girl's passion has reached an extreme. So what am I to do about it now?

Āraṇyakā. (*Longingly.*) This is the place where, as I was tormented by the bees, I clung to the King and was comforted by him with the words "Ah, timid one, be not afraid!"

Manoramā. (*Joyfully.*) What! the King has seen her, too? Surely there's a way to save her life. I'll approach directly and comfort her. (*Suddenly approaching.*) It's quite right for your heart to be abashed.

Āraṇyakā. (*Bashfully, aside.*) Alas, alas! She has heard everything. So it's quite right to speak out about it. (*Aloud, taking her by the hand.*) Dear friend, don't be angry, don't be angry! Bashfulness is to blame here.

Manoramā. (*Joyfully.*) My friend, no more hesitation! Tell me this: is it true that you've been seen by the King, or not?

Āraṇyakā. (*Lowering her face bashfully.*) My dear friend has heard it all.

Manoramā. If you have been seen by the King, then don't be distressed any longer; he himself will now be anxious to contrive a way to see you.

Āraṇyakā. That's a friend speaking with partiality. Ah, you flatterer, how can this be when that one is bound by the fetters of the Queen's charms?

Manoramā. (*Laughing.*) You unsophisticated girl! Even though its love is fixed upon the lotus, does the bee, when it sees the jasmine and hankers after the sweetness of a new perfume, keep quiet without obtaining it?

Āraṇyakā. What is the use of such an impossible idea? So come. My limbs are greatly distressed by the autumn heat and even yet find no relief from their distress.

Manoramā. O you bashful girl, it is not right for you, when in such a state, to conceal your feelings.

(*Āraṇyakā hangs her head.*)

Manoramā. O you unconfiding girl! Why conceal now? Does not your passion, evinced by sighs day and night like the whirring sound produced by the ceaselessly falling showers of arrows of the god whose darts are flowers, speak for itself? (*Aside.*) But really this is no time for reproaches. So I shall now put some lotus-leaves upon her heart. (*Rises and takes lotus leaves from the pool and places them on Āraṇyakā's heart.*) Be comforted, friend, be comforted.

(*Enter Jester.*)

Jester. My dear friend's passion for Āraṇyakā is surely very great; for he neglects affairs of state and diverts himself by thinking about a way to see her only. (*Reflecting.*) Where now shall I find her?—Why, I shall search there at the pool. (*He walks about.*)

Manoramā. (*Listening.*) I hear something like footsteps. So let's conceal ourselves in the clump of plantains and see who it is.

(*Both do so and look.*)

Āraṇyakā. Why, this is the Brahman who is the companion of the King!

Manoramā. What! Vasantaka? (*Joyfully, to herself.*) May it be true!

Jester. (*Looking in all directions.*) Why, has Āraṇyakā [Forest Maiden] really become a “forest maiden”?

Manoramā. (*Smiling.*) My dear, the King’s friend, the Brahman, is talking about you. So let’s listen attentively.

(**Āraṇyakā** *listens eagerly and bashfully.*)

Jester. (*Anxiously.*) Since, at the distracted bidding of my dear friend, who can hardly bear the torment of his great love, I searched the apartments of Vāsavadattā, Padmāvātī, and the other queens, and did not see her, I have come in order to look also at the pool where she was seen. But she isn’t here either. What am I to do now?

Manoramā. Did my dear friend hear that?

Jester. (*Reflecting.*) Now that I think of it, my friend said to me: “If you do not find her by searching for her, then at least bring from the pool there the lotus-leaves that have had their grateful coolness doubled by the touch of her hand.” But how am I to tell them?

Manoramā. This is my chance. (*Approaching and taking the Jester by the hand.*) Vasantaka, come, I’ll tell.

Jester. (*In fear.*) Whom are you going to tell? The Queen? I haven’t said anything at all.

Manoramā. Vasantaka, there’s no need to be alarmed. The plight of your dear friend on account of Āraṇyakā, as you describe it, is only half the plight of my dear friend on account of our lord. So look, look! (*Approaching, she points out Āraṇyakā.*)

Jester. (*Seeing her, joyfully.*) My efforts have borne fruit! Hail to your Ladyship!

(**Āraṇyakā** *bashfully lays aside the lotus-leaves and rises.*)

Manoramā. Worthy Vasantaka, the distress of my dear friend has vanished at the mere sight of you, for she lays the lotus-leaves aside of her own accord. So take them, sir.

Āraṇyakā. (*With agitation.*) O you mocking girl! Why do you embarrass me? (*She stands with her face somewhat averted.*)

Jester. (*Dejectedly.*) Let the lotus-leaves be. Your dear friend’s too bashful.—Now, how can a meeting between the two be arranged?

Manoramā. (*After reflecting a moment, joyfully.*) Vasantaka, in this way. (*Whispers in his ear.*)

Jester. Bravo, clear girl, bravo! (*Aside.*) While you two are putting on your costumes, I’ll get my friend and come. (*Exit.*)

Manoramā. O you cross girl, get up, get up! We have to act the rest of that play. So come, let's go to the playhouse. (*Walking about and looking around.*) Here is the playhouse. Come now, let's go in. (*With a gesture of entering; looking around.*) Bravo, bravo! Everything is ready. The Queen must be coming.

(*Enter Queen [Vāsavadattā], Sāṅkṛtyāyanī,
and the Retinue in order of rank.*)

Vāsavadattā. What poetic talent is yours, good madam! For this dramatized story of my Lord and myself, with its secret incidents, although I took part in it, raises my interest to the highest pitch when it is seen, just as if it had not been seen before.

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Your Highness, the mere merit of this subject is such that the poetry, even though insipid, necessarily causes delight to the ears of its hearers. Look you,

As a rule, a thing, whatever it be, attains eminence through contact
with what is great;

Ashes, indeed, become an embellishment when applied to the
forehead of an elephant in rut. [1]

Vāsavadattā. (*With a smile.*) Good madam, it's well known that every one is fond of a son-in-law. So why continue this conversation? It's better to see the performance.

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Quite so. Indīvarikā, direct us to the playhouse.

Maid-servant [Indīvarikā]. Let Your Highness deign to come.

(*All walk about.*)

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. (*Looking around.*) O the wonderful appearance of the playhouse!

Lovely with golden columns adorned with hundreds of jewels,

Festooned with great strings of pearls,

Thronged with damsels that surpass the Nymphs

This playhouse shines resplendent as the abode of the gods. [2]

Manoramā and Āraṇyakā. (*Approaching.*) Hail, hail to Your Highness!

Vāsavadattā. Manoramā, twilight is already past. So do you both go [and] put on your costumes quickly.

Both. As Your Majesty commands. (*Both start to go.*)

Vāsavadattā. Āraṇyakā, go to the dressing-room and adorn yourself with these ornaments that I am wearing. (*Taking off the ornaments from her person, she hands them to Āraṇyakā.*) Manoramā, do you in turn take from Indīvarikā the ornaments that were given to my Lord by my father in delight at

his capture of [the elephant] Nalagiri, and, going to the dressing room, decorate yourself, so as to look as like as possible to the King.

(**Manoramā** takes the ornaments from **Indīvarikā**
and goes out with **Āraṇyakā**.)

Indīvarikā. Here is a seat; let Your Highness be seated.

Vāsavadattā. ([Addressing **Sāṅkṛtyāyanī**; pointing to a seat.) Good madam, be seated.

(Both sit down.)

THE MIMIC PLAY

(Enter a **Chamberlain** in Costume.)

Chamberlain.

<Maintaining the order of the zenana>,

<<Guarding against stumbling at every step by the guidance of a staff>>,

I, who am now enfeebled by age,

Imitate the whole conduct of a king,

<Who maintains the order of his towns within>

And <<guards [them] against slips continually by the administration of justice>>. [3]

Ah! I have been commanded by Mahāsena—well he deserves that name, disdainful as he does all the armies of his foes—as follows: “Announce to the ladies of the zenana that, as we are tomorrow to celebrate the Festival of Udayana, they are to come to the Garden of Love, with their retinue in splendid attire befitting the festival.”

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. (Pointing to the Chamberlain.) Princess, the play has begun. Look!

Chamberlain. So I must direct them to come with a retinue, but I need not direct that these put on costume, for—

Among them even the retinue of the maids-of-honor of the queens is conspicuous,

With their feet adorned with anklets, their broad hips with tinkling girdle-bands,

With their swelling bosoms’ loveliness enhanced by pearl necklaces,

With armllets on their arms, bracelets on their wrists, rings in their ears, and swastikas in their hair. [4]

Surely there is nothing special to be done in this case. I received my orders with the idea that I should merely follow my Lord's direction. So I shall communicate the rest of the command to the Princess. (*Walking about and looking around.*) Here is Vāsavadattā [just] entering the music-room attended by Kāñcanamālā who has a lute in her hand. I shall tell her at once. (*He walks about.*)

(*Enter Āraṇyakā seated, in the costume of Vāsavadattā, and Kāñcanamālā with a lute in her hand.*)

Āraṇyakā. Kāñcanamālā, why is the music-teacher late again today?

Kāñcanamālā. Princess, he has seen a crazy fellow and, struck with wonder at hearing his talk, is standing there laughing at him.

Āraṇyakā. (*Clapping her hands and laughing.*) My dear, he does well to question him. "Like will to like," as they say. So it's a case of two crazy fellows together.

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. (*Addressing Vāsavadattā.*) I see that her bearing is like that of a princess; with such a bearing she will surely enact your part adequately.

Chamberlain. (*Approaching.*) Princess, the King gives you this command: "Tomorrow we must surely hear you play the lute, so you must be ready with Ghoṣavatī newly strung."

Āraṇyakā. If so, send the music-teacher at once.

Chamberlain. I myself shall send Vatsarāja. (*Exit.*)

Āraṇyakā. Kāñcanamālā, hand me [the lute] Ghoṣavatī, so that I may examine its strings.

(*Kāñcanamālā gives her the lute. Āraṇyakā puts the lute on her lap and runs over [the strings].*)

(*Enter Manoramā in the costume of Vatsarāja.*)

Manoramā. (*Aside.*) The King is certainly late. Didn't Vasantaka tell him? Or is he afraid of the Queen? If he should come now it would be charming.

(*Enter King, with his body wrapt [in a mantle], and the Jester.*)

King.

Today the chill-rayed moon does not cause me such distress as at first,

Nor do burning sighs now so constantly parch my lips;

My mind is not vacant, nor my limbs so languorous as before;

My misery grows less even as I ponder upon my heart's desires. [5]

Friend, did Manoramā really say: “Since this dear friend of mine is kept even out of the King’s sight by the Queen, there is this way for them to come together. This evening we are to enact before the Queen a play called *The Adventure of Udayana*. In it Āraṇyakā will be Vāsavadattā and I shall be Vatsarāja. It must all be learned according to the way in which it actually happened. So let him come himself and by playing his own part enjoy the pleasure of the meeting.”?

Jester. If you don’t believe me, here is Manoramā, wearing your costume. So approach and ask her yourself.

King. (*Approaching Manoramā.*) Manoramā, is what Vasantaka reports true?

Manoramā. My Lord, it’s quite true. Adorn yourself with these ornaments. (*Taking off the ornaments from her person, she hands them to the King.*)

(*The King puts them on.*)

Jester. Here we have kings made to play a part by a mere serving-maid! Oh, what a state of affairs!

King. (*Laughing.*) Fool! this is not the time for a joke! Go quietly into the picture-gallery with Manoramā and stay there watching our acting.

(*Both do so.*)

Āraṇyakā. Kāñcanamālā, let the lute be. I want to ask you something.

King. I’ll listen to see what she is alluding to. (*Listens attentively.*)

Kāñcanamālā. Let the Princess ask it.

Āraṇyakā. Does my father really express himself to this effect: “If Vatsarāja transports me by his playing on the lute, I shall certainly release him from captivity”?

King. (*Entering with a toss of the curtain, joyfully; he ties a knot in the border of his mantle.*) It is so. What doubt is there [about it]?

Having won the admiration of Pradyota and his retinue by my playing on the lute,

I shall carry off Vāsavadattā; not for long will I look on [without acting].

For everything has been well arranged by Yaugandharāyaṇa. [6]

Vāsavadattā. (*Rising suddenly.*) Hail, hail to my Lord!

King. (*Aside.*) What! Am I recognized by the Queen?

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. (*With a smile.*) Princess, do not be misled!

This is a play.

King. (*Aside, joyfully.*) Now I breathe freely again.

Vāsavadattā. (*Sitting down with an embarrassed smile.*) Why, that's Manoramā And I thought it was my Lord! Bravo, Manoramā, bravo! Splendidly acted!

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Princess, it was quite natural that Manoramā should cause your mistake. For look!

Here is that self-same form which causes delight to the eyes, the same splendid raiment;

Here, the same characteristic gait of the maddened elephant, and here that lofty dignity;

This, just his graceful bearing and the voice like the rumble of the heavy [thunder-] cloud—

Before our very eyes King Vatsa himself is shown by this clever [actress]. [7]

Vāsavadattā. Indīvarikā, when my Lord taught me to play the lute he was in fetters; so make a chain for him with the garland of blue water-lilies. (*Taking from her [own] head a garland of blue water-lilies, she hands it to her.*)

(**Indīvarikā,** *having done as directed, resumes her seat.*)

Āraṇyakā. Kāñcanamālā, do tell me, does my father really express himself to this effect: “If Vatsarāja transports me by his playing upon the lute, then I shall certainly release him from captivity.”

Kāñcanamālā. Princess, it is true. Perform in such a way that you surely may be highly thought of by Vatsarāja.

King. [Soliloquizing.] Kāñcanamālā has actually brought about what I wished then.

Āraṇyakā. If so, I'll play [the lute] carefully.

(*Singing as she plays.*)

At the sight of <the vault of heaven obscured by chains of clouds>
<<The royal swan>> yearns <<<to go to [Lake] Mānasa>>>, his
own abode, taking with him his <<<<mate>>>>;

So [Vatsarāja], <<swan among kings>>, at the sight of <his
prison-vault closed by heavy chains>

Yearns <<<to attain his heart's desire>>>, his own abode, taking
with him his <<<<beloved>>>>. [8]

(**Jester Mimics Sleep.**)

Manoramā. (*Giving him a shake with her hand.*) Vasantaka, look, look! My dear friend is acting [her part].

Jester. (*Angrily.*) You hussy! Even you do not let me sleep. From the moment that my dear friend saw Āraṇyakā, I haven't, in his company, seen a

wink of sleep night or day. So I'll go off somewhere else and have a sleep.
(*Goes out and lies down.*)

Āraṇyakā. (*Sings again.*)

The honey-making bee, smitten with new passion through adverse
Love,

Pines with longing to see her mate, who is lovely to look upon. [9]

King. (*Directly upon hearing this, approaching suddenly.*) Well done,
Princess, well done! Such a song and such an accompaniment! For thus—

Distinctness has now been attained here through the
“distinguishing” mode of playing, in all its ten forms;

The tempo, in its threefold division of allegro, moderato, and
adagio, has been clearly marked;

All three pauses, with the *gopuccha* first, have been brought out in
due order;

And the three styles of instrumental playing—tranquil, lively, and
intermediate—have been appropriately shown. [10]

Āraṇyakā. (*Clasping her lute and rising from her seat, looks
passionately at the King.*) Teacher, I make my obeisance.

King. (*With a smile.*) May that be yours which I wish [for you]!

Kāñcanamālā. (*Pointing to Āraṇyakā's seat.*) Will the teacher sit down
here?

King. (*Sitting down.*) Where now is the Princess to sit?

Kāñcanamālā. (*With a smile.*) The Princess has just now been
complimented by you through the honor paid to her skill, so she really deserves
a seat by the teacher.

King. Let her occupy half of the seat here, as she deserves. Princess, be
seated.

(*Āraṇyakā looks at Kāñcanamālā.*)

Kāñcanamālā. (*With a smile.*) Princess, sit down. What's the harm in it?
You are certainly a distinguished pupil.

(*Āraṇyakā sits down bashfully.*)

Vāsavadattā. (*Shocked.*) Madam, you have overdrawn the piece. I
certainly did not sit on the same seat with my Lord at that time.

King. Princess, I should like to hear you again. Play your lute.

Āraṇyakā. (*With a smile.*) Kāñcanamālā, from playing so long I have
become tired. My limbs now have no strength, so I am not able to play.

Kāñcanamālā. Teacher, the Princess is completely tired out. See, the drops of perspiration stand out on her cheeks, and her fingers tremble. So let her rest for a moment.

King. Rightly said, Kāñcanamālā. (*Tries to take Āraṇyakā by the hand. She withdraws her hand.*)

Vāsavadattā. (*Indignantly.*) Madam, this also has been overdrawn by you. I am not by any means to be deceived by Kāñcanamālā's artifice.

Sāñkṛtyāyanī. (*Laughing.*) Your Highness, poetic art must always be like this.

Āraṇyakā. (*As if angry.*) Go away, Kāñcanamālā, go away. I don't care for you.

Kāñcanamālā. (*With a smile.*) If you don't care for me when I stay, then here I go. (*Exit.*)

Āraṇyakā. (*In confusion.*) Kāñcanamālā, stay, stay! His hand is touching me.

King. (*Taking Āraṇyakā's hand.*)

Could it be the lotus bud, suddenly cooled through contact with the dewdrops?

Not such as this, methinks, is its joy at dawn when the heat of the sun is absent.

These five moonlike fingernails diffuse a shower of snow; can that also burn?

Ambrosia, recognized under the guise of perspiration, it is plain, flows without ceasing. [11]

And again:

With this hand of yours, skilled in robbing the young coral branch of its beauty,

You have implanted this passion in my heart. [12]

Āraṇyakā. (*Indicating a peculiar sensation of touch, aside.*) Oh, oh! As I touch Manoramā here, my limbs feel a strange thrill.

Vāsavadattā. (*Suddenly rising.*) Madam! You may look, but as for myself, I can't bear to watch this false representation.

Sāñkṛtyāyanī. Princess, this is the Gandharva form of marriage sanctioned by the Law Books. What reason is there to be shocked at it? This is a play; so it is not proper to go at the wrong moment and break up the enjoyment.

(*Vāsavadattā walks about.*)

Indīvarikā. (*Looking around.*) Your Highness, Vasantaka is lying asleep at the door of the picture-gallery.

Vāsavadattā. (*Looking closely.*) This is indeed Vasantaka. (*Reflecting.*) The King also must be here. So, then, I'll wake him and ask him. (*She wakes him.*)

Jester. (*Rising, heavy with sleep, and looking around suddenly.*) Manoramā, has my friend come back from acting, or is he acting still?

Vāsavadattā. (*In dismay.*) What! is my Lord acting? Where then is Manoramā?

Jester. She's here in the picture-gallery.

Manoramā. (*In fright, aside.*) What! did the Queen speak, meaning it in one way, and this fool of a fellow understand it in another and spoil the whole thing?

Vāsavadattā. (*Smiling angrily.*) Bravo, Manoramā, bravo! Splendidly acted by you!

Manoramā. (*Trembling with fright and falling at her feet.*) Your Highness, I'm not to blame in this. This rascal took away the ornaments by force, shut me up here, and stayed at the door. I cried out, but the sound was not heard by anybody, as it was drowned by the fool's noise.

Vāsavadattā. Girl, stand up! I know it all. Vasantaka's the stage manager in the play *The Adventure of Āraṇyakā*.

Jester. Just stop to think. What has Vasantaka to do with Āraṇyakā?

Vāsavadattā. Manoramā, bind him securely and come here [with him], so that I may see the spectacle he presents.

Manoramā. (*Aside.*) Now I breathe again! (*Binds the Jester by the hand.—Aloud.*) You rascal! Now reap the fruit of your own misbehavior!

Vāsavadattā. (*In agitation, approaching [the King].*) My Lord, may this evil omen be averted! (*With these words she removes the chain of blue water-lilies from his feet; ironically.*) Pardon me, my Lord, that you were bound with the chain of blue lilies under the impression that it was Manoramā.

(**Āraṇyakā** moves away in fright and stands still.)

King. (*Rising suddenly and seeing the Jester and Manoramā; aside.*) What! am I recognized by the Queen? (*Acts as if embarrassed.*)

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. (*Looking at them all; with a smile.*) Why! This play has turned out to be quite something else. This is no place for persons of our position. (*Exit.*)

King. (*Aside.*) This sort of anger is unprecedented. I see that a reconciliation will be hard to effect in this case. (*Reflecting.*) This is what I'll do, then. (*Aloud.*) My Queen, lay aside your anger.

Vāsavadattā. My Lord, who is angry here?

King. What! you are not angry?

Though the glance of thine eyes is loving, still their gleam is fiery;
Though there is sweetness in it, thy trembling voice falters at every
word;

Thy sighs, though repressed, are betrayed by thy heaving bosom;
This anger of thine, though restrained with manifest effort, is
plainly visible. [13]

(Falling at her feet.) Pardon me, pardon me!

Vāsavadattā. Āraṇyakā, my Lord, imagining that you are angry, is trying to make you forgive him by saying “Pardon me, my dear.” So come nearer. *(With these words she draws her nearer by the hand.)*

Āraṇyakā. *(In fright.)* Your Highness, I don’t know anything at all.

Vāsavadattā. What, Āraṇyakā! You don’t know anything? Now I’ll teach you. Indīvarikā, seize her.

Jester. Madam, today at the Kaumudī-festival my friend got up the play to divert your thoughts.

Vāsavadattā. When I see this misbehavior of yours I have to laugh.

King. My Queen, away with unfounded suspicion! See—

Wherefore is thy moonlike brow marred without cause by frowns?
Why is thy quivering lip made to resemble the *bandhūka*-flower
shaken by the wind?

Thy waist, moreover, is oppressed by the burden of thy bosom
heaving violently.

Lay aside thine anger! This amusement was devised by me just to
divert thy thoughts. [14]

My Queen, pardon, pardon! *(He falls at her feet.)*

Vāsavadattā. Girl, the play’s over. So come, let’s go inside. *(Exit.)*

King. *(Looking around.)* What! has the Queen gone without granting
pardon?

When I see before me here the countenance of the Queen and that
of my beloved,

The one with brow contracted by anger into a frown, more
threatening because streaked by beads of sweat,

The other with her lotus eyes roving through fear, like those of a
gazelle bounding again and again,

I am placed in a great dilemma between fear and longing. [15]

Now I'll go to my couch and think out some means of gaining the Queen's pardon.

(Exeunt omnes.)

END OF THE THIRD ACT

ACT IV

[INTRODUCTORY SCENE]

(Enter **Manoramā**.)

Manoramā. (*In distress.*) To think of the Queen's long-continued anger! How is it that she doesn't take pity on my dear friend Āraṇyakā, who has been imprisoned for such a long time? (*In tears.*) The poor girl isn't distressed so much by the misery of her imprisonment as by the hopelessness of her seeing the King. And so great is her wretchedness that I had great difficulty this very day in restraining her as she was going to kill herself. I've just been telling Vasantaka to report this occurrence to the King.

(Enter **Kāñcanamālā**.)

Kāñcanamālā. How is it, though I've been searching for the lady Sāṅkrtyāyanī, I haven't seen her? (*Looking around.*) Well, I'll just ask Manoramā here also. (*Approaching.*) Manoramā, do you know where the lady Sāṅkrtyāyanī is?

Manoramā. (*Looking around, wiping away her tears.*) O Kāñcanamālā! I've seen her; but what do you want of her?

Kāñcanamālā. Manoramā, a letter was sent today by Queen Aṅgāravatī. On reading this, the Queen's eyes filled with tears and she became greatly distressed. So I'm looking for the lady to have her cheer the Queen up.

Manoramā. But what, my dear, was written in this letter?

Kāñcanamālā. This: "My sister is just a mother to you; her husband Dṛḍhavarman is [as] your father—but why need I tell you this? For more than a year he has been kept a prisoner by the accursed Kaliṅga. So it is not proper for your powerful husband, who is close at hand, to remain thus indifferent after hearing of this unfortunate event.

Manoramā. But, Kāñcanamālā dear, who then read this letter aloud, when the King gave orders that this matter should not be read to the Queen by any one?

Kāñcanamālā. While I was reading it over to myself in silence, the Queen snatched it from my hand and read it herself.

Manoramā. Therefore go; the Queen's right here with the lady, in the ivory tower.

Kāñcanamālā. Then I shall go to the Queen. (*Exit.*)

Manoramā. It's a long time since I left Āraṇyakā. The poor girl is utterly wearied of her life. Something dreadful might happen at any moment. So I'll go directly to her. (*Exit.*)

END OF THE INTRODUCTORY SCENE

(*Enter, seated, Vāsavadattā in a distressed state of mind,*

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī, *and the Retinue in order of frank.*)

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Princess, cease your distress. Vatsarāja is not that kind of man. How can Vatsarāja remain unconcerned when he knows that the husband of your mother's sister is in such a plight?

Vāsavadattā. (*In tears.*) Madam, now you are too naïve. When he has nothing to do with me, what will he have to do with mine? It was proper for my mother to write this to me, but she does not know that Vāsavadattā is no longer such as she was. You, however, witnessed this affair of Āraṇyakā with your own eyes. How, then, can you say this?

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Just because I witnessed it myself, I speak thus. He really played this joke at the Kaumudī-festival in order to make you laugh.

Vāsavadattā. Madam, that's the truth of it; I've been made so laughed at, that I can hardly stand before your Ladyship for shame. So, what's the use of such talk? I've been reduced to this state, in fact, just by this fondness. (*Weeps.*)

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Weep no more, Princess! Vatsarāja is not that kind of man. (*Looking around.*) But here he is coming to dispel your sorrow.

Vāsavadattā. These are now [merely] your Ladyship's desires.

(*Enter King and Jester.*)

King. Dear fellow, what way is there now of getting the dear girl set free?

Jester. My dear fellow, free yourself of dejection! I'll tell you the way.

King. (*Joyfully.*) Dear fellow, out with it—quick, quick!

Jester. Sir, you have two arms that have proved their power in the shock of many a battle; besides that, you are possessed of an irresistible force of many elephants, horses, and foot-soldiers. So lay siege to the zenana with the assemblage of your entire forces and set free Āraṇyakā this very moment.

King. Dear fellow, what you have suggested is impossible.

Jester. What's impossible about it? For there's not a man there except hunchbacks, dwarfs, and the old chamberlain.

King. (*contemptuously.*) You fool! Why do you talk nonsense? There's no other way of getting her free than getting the Queen's favor. So tell me how I can get the Queen's favor.

Jester. Sir, live fasting for a month. In that way the Wrathful Queen will be appeased.

King. (*Laughing.*) Enough of your jesting. Tell me how I am to appease the Queen.

Shall I boldly bar the way before her and, laughing, clasp the dear one about the neck?

Or shall I make her glad by the use of a hundred varied blandishments?

Or shall I fall before the Queen's feet and remain in suppliant posture?

Truly, truly—alas!—I know not in what way to conciliate the Queen. [1]

So come, let us go straight to the Queen.

Jester. Sir, you may go; but I've only now escaped with difficulty from confinement, so I'm not going.

King. (*Laughing, takes him around the neck and makes him return by force.*) Come along, you fool, come along! (*Walking about and looking.*) Here is the Queen sitting in the ivory tower. I shall approach, then. (*Approaches abashed.*)

(**Vāsavadattā** rises languidly from her seat.)

King.

Why leave thy seat? Be not disturbed on my account.

It is not appropriate in my case that thou, O slender-waisted one, shouldst rise thus.

Why is it that I—who am ravished by the mere bestowal of the favor of a glance

Am made embarrassed by this excessive courtesy? [2]

Vāsavadattā. (*Looking him in the face.*) My Lord, you are embarrassed now?

King. My beloved, truly I am embarrassed; for, though you saw my offence with your own eyes, I am resolved to appease you.

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. (*Pointing to a seat.*) Your Majesty, pray be seated.

King. (*Pointing to a seat.*) Let the Queen sit here.

(**Vāsavadattā** seats herself upon the ground.)

King. What! the Queen seated on the ground! I'll sit down there also. (*Seating himself upon the ground; making an obeisance.*) Pardon me, my beloved, pardon me! Why do you display still deeper anger, though I am thus bowed before you?

Ah, thou whose glance is lovely, thou dost not knit thy brow;
thou only weepest ever!

Thy lip quivereth not over-much; yet thou heavest sighs
incessantly; Thou utterest not one word, but remainest
with face bowed in thought;

Thy rigid anger pains me like a hidden wound. [3]

Pardon me, my beloved, pardon me! (*With these words he falls at her feet.*)

Vāsavadattā. You are surely very happy. Why, then, torment an
unhappy creature? Arise! Who is angry here?

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Arise, Your Majesty! What is the use of this? Something
quite different, indeed, is the cause of her distress.

King. (*Hastily.*) Good madam, what else is it?

(**Sāṅkṛtyāyanī** *whispers in his ear.*)

King. (*Laughing.*) If so, no more distress! I knew it also, but I did not
tell, thinking that I should congratulate the Queen when this undertaking had
been actually accomplished. Otherwise, how could I remain unconcerned in the
affair of Dr̥dhavarman? Well, it is several days since news about him arrived;
and this is what took place.

Led by Vijayasena, our armies invaded the frontier region
And destroyed the glory of the accursed Kaliṅga,
Who suddenly withdrew to his fortress
And, with a rampart as his sole defense, has been made
defenseless. [4]

And, he being in such a plight,

Crippled by the invasion described, and with the activity of
his slavish warriors decreasing day by day,
With ruin impending, with his elephants, horses, and men
being destroyed, and his entire army depleted,
When his fortress there shall have been breached on all sides
in a twinkling, today or tomorrow, by my forces,
You will hear before long, my Lady, that Kaliṅga has been
captured or slain in battle. [5]

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Princess, I said to you at the very outset, “How will
Vatsarāja rest without making a counterstroke?”

Vāsavadattā. If so, I am glad.

(*Enter Portress.*)

Portress. Hail, hail to Your Majesty! Here at the door stands Vijayasena, accompanied by the chamberlain of Dr̥dhavarman, with his eyes beaming with joy and eager to announce good tidings.

Vāsavadattā. (*With a smile.*) Good madam, as I regard it, my Lord has completely satisfied me.

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Being partial to Vatsarāja, I say nothing at all.

King. Have them enter at once.

Portress. It shall be done. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter Vijayasena and the Chamberlain.*)

Vijayasena. Sir Chamberlain, in truth I feel a kind of ecstatic joy, beyond compare, at the thought of seeing my master today.

Chamberlain. Vijayasena, that is undeniable. For—

Even under other circumstances a servitor is filled with joy at beholding his master,

But how much more when he has fulfilled his lord's command by annihilating the army of his enemy. [6]

Both. (*Approaching.*) Hail, hail to our master!

(*The King embraces them both.*)

Chamberlain. Your Majesty, you are to be congratulated.

For Vijayasena, vanquishing the foe, has, at Your Majesty's command,

Slain the accursed Kaliṅga and restored my master to his kingdom. [7]

Vāsavadattā. O good madam, do you recognize this chamberlain?

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. Why should I not recognize him? He is the very one in whose care your mother's sister forwarded the letter.

King. Bravo! Vijayasena has accomplished a great feat!

(*Vijayasena falls at his feet.*)

King. My Queen, you are to be congratulated! Dr̥dhavarman has been restored to his kingdom.

Vāsavadattā. (*Joyfully.*) I am deeply gratified.

Jester. At a time of such rejoicing in the royal family this is the thing to be done:—(*pointing to the King and imitating playing on the lute*) honor to the teacher; (*showing his own sacrificial cord*) hospitality to a Brahman; (*alluding to Āraṇyakā*) release of all prisoners.

King. (*Snapping his fingers without letting Vāsavadattā see.*) Bravo, dear fellow, bravo!

Jester. Madam, why don't you give some order about it?

Vāsavadattā. (*Looking at Sāṅkṛtyāyanī, with a smile.*) Āraṇyakā is as good as released by the rascal.

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. What possible good is there in keeping the poor girl in prison?

Vāsavadattā. As pleases your Ladyship.

Sāṅkṛtyāyanī. If so, I myself will go and have her set free. (*Exit.*)

Chamberlain. This message, besides, has been sent by King Dṛḍhavarman: “By your grace everything has turned out after my own heart. Therefore my life is yours. You have the right to do with it as you please.”

(*The King modestly stands with bowed head.*)

Vijayasena. Your Majesty, it is altogether impossible to express Dṛḍhavarman’s extreme devotion to you.

Chamberlain. (*Continuing the message.*) “Even though it was a misfortune that no alliance between us came about, in consequence of the loss of my daughter Priyadarśikā who was affianced to you, nevertheless this has been altogether removed by your marriage with Vāsavadattā.”

Vāsavadattā. (*In tears.*) Worthy Chamberlain, how did my cousin disappear?

Chamberlain. Princess, during the onslaught by the accursed Kaliṅga, when the inmates of the zenana had fled hither and thither, I fortunately chanced to see her, and, thinking that it was no longer advisable for her to remain there, I took her and started to go to the presence of Vatsarāja. Then, upon further reflection, I put her in the care of Vindhyaketu and went away. When I came back I found that some foes had made that place, as well as Vindhyaketu, a matter of the past.

King. (*With a smile.*) Vijayasena, what have you to say?

Chamberlain. And I searched for her there, but could not find her. From that day to this no one knows where she is.

(*Enter Manoramā.*)

Manoramā. Your Highness, the poor girl is at the point of death!

Vāsavadattā. (*In tears.*) But do you know the fate of Priyadarśanā?

Manoramā. I certainly do not know the fate of Priyadarśanā, but Āraṇyakā here has drunk poison, brought to her under the guise of wine, and is at the point of death. That is what I have reported. So save her, Your Highness! (*Falls at her feet, weeping.*)

Vāsavadattā. (*Aside.*) Alas, alas! This affair of Āraṇyakā overshadows even my sorrow for Priyadarśanā. The world is very malicious. Perhaps it will judge me wrongly. So this is the thing to do. (*Aloud, agitatedly.*) Manoramā,

bring her here immediately. The King is expert in this matter, having acquired knowledge of poisons in the world of the Nāgas.

(Exit **Manoramā**.)

(Enter **Āraṇyakā** supported by **Manoramā** and exhibiting the symptoms of poisoning.)

Āraṇyakā. O Manoramā, why are you now leading me into the dark?

Manoramā. (*In despair.*) Alas, alas! Her sight, too, is affected by the poison! (*Looking at Vāsavadattā.*) Your Highness, quick, quick! Save her, save her! The poison has overcome her.

Vāsavadattā. (*Agitatedly, taking the King by the hand.*) My Lord, come, come! The poor girl's sinking rapidly. (*All look.*)

Chamberlain. (*Looking closely.*) She certainly looks exceedingly like Priyadarśanā, the daughter of my king. (*Addressing Vāsavadattā.*) Princess, whence comes this maiden?

Vāsavadattā. Worthy sir, she's the daughter of Vindhyaketu. She was brought here by Vijayasena, who had slain him.

Chamberlain. How his daughter? She is the daughter of my king. Alas, I am undone, unfortunate man that I am! (*Falls on the ground.—Rising.*) Princess, this is Priyadarśikā, your cousin.

Vāsavadattā. My Lord, save her, save her! My cousin is dying.

King. Take heart, take heart! Let us see now. (*Aside.*) Alas, oh, alas!

The bee in its course went to sip the lotus-bud,

Sweet with the rich nectar that it distils,

But it was blasted by a frost that had suddenly fallen upon it!

When Fate is adverse, wishes bear no fruit. [8]

(*Aloud.*) Manoramā, ask her now whether she is conscious.

Manoramā. My dear, are you conscious? (*In tears, shaking her again.*) My dear, I am asking whether you are conscious.

Priyadarśikā. (*Indistinctly.*) Indeed, the King was seen by her, not by me—(*With the sentence half spoken, she falls to the ground.*)

King. (*In tears; aside.*)

She closes these two eyes of hers—the heavens grow dark to me;

Her throat is choked—my words come forth with difficulty;

Her breath has ceased—my body has become paralyzed;

On her, methinks, indeed, the poison fully takes effect—but mine is all the anguish. [9]

Vāsavadattā. (*In tears.*) Priyadarśanā, arise, arise! Look! Here stands the King.—What! has she lost consciousness, too? What wrong, pray, have I done unwittingly, that you are angry and do not speak? Then pardon me, pardon me! Arise, arise! I'll not do wrong again. (*Looking upward.*) Ah, cursed fate! What misdeed, pray, have I done that I should see my cousin brought to such a plight! (*Falls upon Priyadarśikā.*)

Jester. My dear fellow, why do you stand there like one dazed? This is no time for despair. The working of the poison is alarming. So show the power of your science.

King. That is quite true. (*Looking at Priyadarśikā.*) I have indeed been dazed all this while. So I will bring her [back] to life. Water, water!

Jester. (*Exit and re-enters.*) Sir, here is water.

(*The King, advancing, lays his hand on Priyadarśikā and acts as if reciting incantations. Priyadarśikā slowly rises.*)

Vāsavadattā. My Lord, my cousin has been happily brought back to life.

Vijayasena. O the power of the King's science!

Chamberlain. O the altogether irresistible <maj-esty> and <mag-ic art> of the King!

Priyadarśikā. (*Rises slowly and sits up; indicates a yawn; dejectedly and indistinctly.*) Manoramā, I've been asleep a long time.

Jester. My dear fellow, your medical skill has been fully demonstrated.

(*Priyadarśikā, gazing longingly at the King, modestly stands with her face slightly lowered.*)

Vāsavadattā. (*Joyfully.*) My Lord, why does she still act strangely?

King. (*With a smile.*)

Her sight is not in its natural condition; her speech is not very distinct;

Her body, manifestly athrill and covered with beads of sweat, is relaxed;

And since this trembling causes distress to her bosom,

The poison is certainly not yet wholly allayed. [10]

Chamberlain. (*Addressing Priyadarśikā.*) Princess, I am your father's servitor. (*Falls at her feet.*)

Priyadarśikā. (*Looking at him.*) What! the chamberlain, the worthy Vinayavasū? (*In tears.*) Alas, my father! Alas, my mother!

Chamberlain. Princess, weep no more! Your parents are well. Through the power of Vatsarāja the kingdom is re-established.

Vāsavadattā. (*In tears.*) Come, you cheat of a girl! Now show your cousinly affection. (*Clasping her around the neck.*) Now I am comforted.

Jester. Madam, you are gratified by thus embracing your cousin, but the gratuity for the physician has been forgotten.

Vāsavadattā. Vasantaka, it's not forgotten.

Jester. (*Addressing the King with a smile.*) Physician, stretch out your hand. I shall have the cousin's hand given to you as a gratuity.

(*The King stretches out his hand; Vāsavadattā places*

Priyadarśikā's hand in his.)

King. (*Withdrawing his hand.*) What have I to do with her? Only now you have with difficulty been reconciled.

Vāsavadattā. What right have you to refuse? Her father gave her to you in the first place.

Jester. Sir, the Queen is to be obeyed. Do not act against her wish.

(**Vāsavadattā** forcibly draws the **King's** hand to her
and gives [him that of] **Priyadarśikā.**)

King. (*With a smile.*) The Queen prevails. How is it possible for us to do otherwise?

Vāsavadattā. My Lord, is there anything besides this that you would wish done?

King. What besides this could I wish? Observe—

Drdhavarman possesses once more his own kingdom entire;

You, who were transported beyond bounds with anger, are
now gracious to me;

Your cousin Priyadarśanā is alive, nay more, is united with
you;

What other wish could there be, my beloved, that could be
wished for now? [11]

And may this also come to pass:

(EPILOGUE)

May Indra pour down the wished-for rain and make the earth
abound in grain;

May the most excellent Brahmans duly effect through
sacrifices the propitiation of the gods;

May unity among good men be firm and ever-increasing unto
the world's end;

May the words of carping persons, intolerable [yet clinging
like] cement, be utterly brought to naught!
(*Exeunt omnes.*)

END OF THE FOURTH ACT

Here endeth the Play called Priyadarśikā