Vasavadutta

A Dramatic Romance
Characters

**VUTHSAUDAIAH**, King of Cowsamby.
**YOUGUNDHARAYAN**, his Minister, until recently Regent of Cowsamby.
**ROOMUNWATH**, Captain of his armies.
**ALURCA** young men of Vuthsa’s age, his friends and companions.
**VASUNTHA** panions.
**PARENACA**, the King’s door-keeper.
**CHUNDA MAHASEGN**, King of Avunthy.
**GOPALACA** his sons.
**VICURNIA**

**RÉBHA**, Governor of Ujjayiny, the capital of Avunthy.
**A CAPTAIN** of Avunthy.

**UNGÀRICÀ**, Queen of Avunthy.
**VÀSAVADUTTÀ**, daughter of Chunda Mahasegn and Ungarica.
**UMBÀ**, her handmaiden.
**MUNJOOLICÀ**, the servile name of Bundhumathie, the captive Princess of Sourashtra, serving Vasavadutta.
**A KIRÁTHA WOMAN**.
The action of the romance takes place a century after the war of the Mahabharata; the capital has been changed to Cowsamby; the empire has been temporarily broken and the kingdoms of India are overshadowed by three powers, Magadha in the East ruled by Pradyotha, Avunthy in the West ruled by Chunda Mahasegn who has subdued also the Southern kings, and Cowsamby in the Centre where Yougundharayan strives by arms and policy to maintain the house of Parikshith against the dominating power of Avunthy. Recently since the young Vuthsa has been invested with the regal power and appeared at [ ], Chunda Mahasegn, till then invincible, has suffered rude but not decisive reverses. For the moment there is an armed peace between the two empires.

The fable is taken from Somadeva’s Kathasaritsagara (the Ocean of the Rivers of Many Tales) and was always a favourite subject of Indian romance and drama; but some of the circumstances, a great many of the incidents and a few of the names have been altered or omitted and others introduced in their place. Vuthsa, the name of the nation in the tale, is in the play used as a personal name of the King Udaian.
Act I
Scene 1

A room in the palace in Ujjayiny.
Chunda Mahasegn, seated; Gopalaca.

MAHASEGN
Vuthsa Udaian drives my fortunes back.
Our strengths retire from one luxurious boy,
Defeated!

GOPALACA
I have seen him in the fight
And I have lived to wonder. O, heranges
As lightly through the passages of war
As moonbeam feet of some bright laughing girl,
Her skill concealing in her reckless grace,
The measures of a rapid dance.

MAHASEGN
If this portentous morning reach our gates,
My star is fallen. Yet I had great dreams.
Oudh and Cowsamby were my high-carved doors,
Ganges, Godavary and Nurmada
In lion race besprayed with sacred dew
My moonlit jasmines in my pleasure-grounds.
All this great sunlit continent lay sleeping
At peace beneath the shadow of my brows.
But they were dreams.

GOPALACA
Art thou not great enough
To live them?

MAHASEGN
O my son, many high hearts
Must first have striven, many must have failed
Before a great thing can be done on earth,
And who shall say then that he is the man?
One age has seen the dreams another lives.

GOPALACA
Look up towards the hills where Rudra stands,
His dreadful war-lance pointing to the east.
Is not thy spirit that uplifted spear?

MAHASEGN
It has been turned by Vishnu’s careless hand!

GOPALACA
Fear not the obstacles the gods have strewn.
Why should the mighty man restrain his soul?
Stretch out thy hand to seize, thy foot to trample,
A Titan’s motion.

MAHASEGN
Thou soarst the eagle’s height,
But with eyes closed to the tempest.

GOPALACA
Wilt thou sue
To foemen for the end of haughty strife?

MAHASEGN
That never shall be seen. The boy must fall.

GOPALACA
He is young, radiant, beautiful and bold.
But let him fall. We will not bear defeat.
MAHASEGN
Yet many gods stood smiling at his birth.
Luxmnie came breathing fortunate days; Vishnu
Poured down a radiant sanction from the skies
And promised his far stride across the earth;
Magic Saruswathie between his hands
Laid down her lotus arts.

GOPALACA
The austere gods
Help best and not indulgent deities.
The greatness in him cannot grow to man.
His hero hours are rare forgetful flights.
Excused from effort and difficult ascent
Birds that are brilliant-winged, fly near to earth.
Wine, song and dance winging his peaceful days
Throng round his careless soul. It cannot find
The noble leisure to grow great.

MAHASEGN
There lives
Our hope. Spy out, my son, thy enemy’s spirit,
Even as his wealth and armies! Let thy eyes
Find out its weakness and thy hand there strike.

GOPALACA
Thou hast a way to strike?

MAHASEGN
I have a way,
Not noble like the sounding paths of war.

GOPALACA
Take it; let us stride straight towards our goal.

MAHASEGN
Thy arm is asked for.
GOPALACA
It is thine to use.

MAHASEGN
Invent some strong device and bring him to us
A captive in Ujjayiny's golden groves.
Shall he not find a jailor for his heart
To take the miracle of its keys and wear them
Swung on her raiment's border? Then he lives
Shut up by her close in a prison of joy,
Her and our vassal.

GOPALACA
Brought to the eagle's nest
For the eagle’s child thou giv'st him her heart's prey
To Vasavadutta! King, thy way is good.
Garooda on a young and sleeping Python
Rushing from heaven I'll lift him helpless up
Into the skiey distance of our peaks.
Though it is strange and new and subtle, it is good.
Think the blow struck, thy foeman seized and bound.

MAHASEGN
I know thy swiftness and thy gathered leap.
Once here! his senses are enamoured slaves
To the touch of every beautiful thing. O, there
No hero, but a tender soul at play,
A soft-eyed, mirthful and luxurious youth
Whom all sweet sounds and all sweet sights compel
To careless ecstasy. Wine, music, flowers
And a girl's dawning smile can weave him chains
Of vernal softness stronger than can give
The unyielding iron. Two lips shall seal his strength,
Two eyes of all his acts be tyrant stars.

GOPALACA
One aid I ask of thee and only one.
My banishment, O King, from thy domains.

MAHASEGN
Gopalaca, I banish thee, my child.
Return not with my violent will undone.
Scene 2

A hall in the palace at Cousamby.
Yougundharayan, Roomunwath.

Yougundharayan
I see his strength lie covered sleeping in flowers;
Yet is a greatness hidden in his years.

Roomunwath
Nourish not such large hopes.

Yougundharayan
I know too well
The gliding bane that these young fertile soils
Cherish in their green darkness; and my cares
Watch to prohibit the nether snake who writhes
Sweet-poisoned, perilous in the rich grass,
Lust with the jewel love upon his hood,
Who by his own crown must be charmed, seized, change
Into a warm great god. I seek a bride
For Vuthsa.

Roomunwath
Wisely; but whom?

Yougundharayan
One only lives
So absolute in her charm that she can keep
His senses from all straying, the child far-famed
For gifts and beauty, flower born by magic fate
On a fierce iron stock.
ROOMUNWATH

Vasavadutta,
Avunthy’s golden princess! Hope not to mate
These opposite godheads. Follow Nature’s prompting,
Nor with thy human policy pervert
Her simple ends.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

Nature must flower into art
And science, or else wherefore are we men?
Man out of Nature wakes to God’s complexities,
Takes her crude simple stuff and by his skill
Turns things impossible into daily miracles.

ROOMUNWATH

This thing is difficult, and what the gain?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

It gives us a long sunlit time for growth;
For we shall raise in her a tender shield
Against that iron victor in the west,
The father’s heart taking our hard defence
Forbid the king-brain in that dangerous man.
Then when he’s gone, we are his greatness’ heirs
In spite of his bold Titan sons.

ROOMUNWATH

He must
Have fallen from his proud spirit to consent.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN

Another strong defeat and she is ours.

ROOMUNWATH

Blow then the conchs for battle.
YOUGUNDHARAYAN
I await
Occasion and to feel the gods inclined.
(to Vuthsa entering)
My son, thou comest early from thy breezes.

VUTHSA
The dawn has spent her glories and I seek
Alurca and Vasuntha for the harp
With chanted verse and lyric ease until
The golden silences of noon arrive.
See this strange flower I plucked below the stream!
Each petal is a thought.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
And the State’s cares,
King of Cowsamby?

VUTHSA
Are they not for thee,
My mind’s wise father? Chide me not. See now,
It is thy fault for being great and wise.
What thou canst fashion sovereignly and well,
Why should I do much worse?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
And when I pass?

VUTHSA
Thy passing I forbid.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Vuthsa, thou art
Cowsamby’s king, not Time’s, nor death’s.

VUTHSA
O, then,
The gods shall keep thee at my strong demand
To be the aged minister of my sons.
This they must hear. Of what use are the gods
If they crown not our just desires on earth?

YOGUNDHARAYAN
Well, play thy time. Thou art a royal child,
And though young Nature in thee dallies long,
I trust her dumb and wiser brain that sees
What our loud thoughts can never reason out,
Not thinking life. She has her secret calls
And works divinely behind play and sleep,
Shaping her infant powers.

VUTHSA
I may then go
And listen to Alurca with his harp?

YOGUNDHARAYAN
Thy will
In small things train, Udaian, in the great
Make it a wrestler with the dangerous earth.

VUTHSA
My will is for delight. They are not beautiful,
This State, these schemings. War is beautiful
And the bright ranks of armoured men and steel
That singing kisses steel and the white flocking
Of arrows that are homing birds of war.
When shall we fight again?

YOGUNDHARAYAN
When battle ripens.
And what of marriage? Is it not desired?

VUTHSA
O no, not yet! At least I think, not yet.
I’ll tell thee a strange thing, my father. I shudder,
I know it is with rapture, at the thought
Of women’s arms, and yet I dare not pluck
The joy. I think, because desire’s so sweet
That the mere joy might seem quite crude and poor
And spoil the sweetness. My father, is it so?

YOGUNDHARAYAN
Perhaps. Thou hast desire for women then?

VUTHSA
It is for every woman and for none.

YOGUNDHARAYAN
One day perhaps thou shalt join war with wedlock
And pluck out from her guarded nest by force
The wonder of Avunthy, Vasavadutta.

VUTHSA
A name of leaping sweetness I have heard!
One day I shall behold a marvellous face
And hear heaven’s harps defeated by a voice.
Do the gods whisper it? Dreams are best awhile.

YOGUNDHARAYAN
These things we shall consider.

PARENACA (entering)
Hail, Majesty!
A high-browed wanderer at the portals seeks
Admittance. Tarnished is he with the road,
Alone, yet seems a mighty prince’s son.

VUTHSA
Bring him with honour in. Such guests I love.
YOUGUNDHARAYAN
We should know first what soul is this abroad
And why he comes.

VUTHSA
We’ll learn that from his lips.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Hope not to hear truth often in royal courts.
Truth! Seldom with her bright and burning wand
She touches the unwilling lips of men
Who lust and hope and fear. The gods alone
Possess her. Even our profoundest thoughts
Are crooked to avoid her and from her touch
Crawl hurt into their twilight, often hating her
Too bright for them as for our eyes the sun.
If she dwells here, it is with souls apart.

VUTHSA
All men were not created from the mud.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
See not a son of heaven in every worm.
Look round and thou wilt see a world on guard.
All life here armoured walks, shut in. Thou too
Keep, Vuthsa, a defence before thy heart.

Parenaca brings in Gopalaca.

GOPALACA
Which is Udaian, great Cowsamby’s king?

VUTHSA
He stands here. What’s thy need from Vuthsa? Speak.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Roomunwath, look with care upon this face.
Hail, then, Cowsamby’s majesty, well borne
Though in a young and lovely vessel! Hail!

Thou art some great one surely of this earth
Who com’st to me to live guest, comrade, friend,
Perhaps much more.

I have fought against thee, king.

The better! I am sure thou hast fought well.
Com’st thou in peace or strife?

In peace, O king,
And as thy suppliant.

Ask; I long to give.

Know first my name.

Thy eyes, thy face I know.

I am Gopalaca, Avunthy’s son,
Once thy most dangerous enemy held on earth.

A mighty name thou speakest, prince, nor one
To supplications tuned. Yet ask and have.
GOPALACA
Thou hearest me well? I am thy foeman’s son.

VUTHSA
And therefore welcome more to Vuthsa’s heart. Foemen! they are our playmates in the fight And should be dear as friends who share our hours Of closeness and desire. Why should they keep Themselves so distant? Thou the noblest of them all, The bravest. I have played with thee, O prince, In the great pastime.

GOPALACA
This was Vuthsa, then!

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
And wherefore seeks the son of Mahasegn Hostile Cowsamby? or why suppliant comes To his chief enemy?

GOPALACA
I should know that brow. This is thy great wise minister? That is well. I seek a refuge.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
And thou sayst thou art Avunthy’s son?

GOPALACA
Because I am his son. My father casts me from him and no spot Once thought my own will suffer now my tread. Therefore I come. Vuthsa Udaian, king, Grant me some hut, some cave upon thy soil, Some meanest refuge for my wandering head. But if thy heart can dwell with fear, as do
The natures of this age, or feed the snake
Suspicion, over gloomier borders send
My broken life.

YOGUNDHARAYAN

Vuthsa, beware. His words
Strive to conceal their naked cunning.

VUTHSA

Prince,
What thou demandst and more than thou demandst,
Is without question thine. Now, if thou wilt,
Reveal the cause of thy great father's wrath,
But only if thou wilt.

GOPALACA

Because his bidding
Remained undone, my exile was embraced.

YOGUNDHARAYAN

More plainly.

GOPALACA

Ask me not. I am ashamed.
Nor should a son unveil his father's fault.
They, even when they tyrannise, remain
Most dear and reverend still, who gave us birth.
This, Vuthsa, know; against thee I was aimed,
A secret arrow.

VUTHSA

Keep thy father's counsel.
If he shoot arrows and thou art that shaft,
I'll welcome thee into my throbbing breast.
What thou hast asked, I sue to thee to take.
Thou seekst a refuge, thou shalt find a home:
Thou fleest a father, here a brother waits
To clasp thee in his arms.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Too frank, too noble!

VUTHSA
Come closer. Child of Mahasegn, wilt thou
Be king Udaian’s brother and his friend?
This proud grace wilt thou fling on the bare boon
That I have given thee? Is it much to ask?

GOPALACA
To be thy brother was my heart’s desire.
Shod with that hope I came.

VUTHSA
Clasp then our hands.
Gopalaca, my play, my couch, my board,
My serious labour and my trifling hours
Share henceforth, govern. All I have is thine.

GOPALACA
Thine is the noblest soul on all the earth.

VUTHSA
Frown not, my father. I obey my heart
Which leaped up in me when I saw his face.
Be sure my heart is wise. Gopalaca,
The sentinel love in man ever imagines
Strange perils for its object. So my minister
Expects from thee some harm. Wilt thou not then
Assure his love and pardon it the doubt?

GOPALACA
He is a wise deep-seeing statesman, king,
And shows that wisdom now. But I will swear,
But I will prove to thee, thou noble man,
That dearest friendship is my will to him
Thou serv'st and to work on him proudest love.
Is it enough?

VUTHSA
My father, hast thou heard?
A son of kings swears not to lying oaths.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
It is enough.

VUTHSA
Then come, Gopalaca,
Into my palace and my heart.

He goes into the palace with Gopalaca.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
O life
Besieged of kings! What snare is this? what charm?
There was a falsehood in the Avunthian’s eyes.

ROOMUNWATH
He has given himself into his foemen’s hands
And he has sworn. He is a prince’s son.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Yes, by his sire; but the pale queen Ungarica
Was to a strange inhuman father born
And from dim shades her victor dragged her forth.

ROOMUNWATH
There’s here no remedy. Vuthsa is ensnared
As with a sudden charm.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
I’ll watch his steps.
Keep thou such bows wherever these two walk
As never yet have missed their fleeing mark.

ROOMUNWATH
Yet was this nobly done on Vuthsa’s part.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
O, such nobility in godlike times
Was wisdom, but not to our fall belongs.
Sweet virtue now is mother of defeat
And baser, fiercer souls inherit earth.
Act II

Scene 1

_A room in the palace at Cowsamby. Alurca, Vasuntha._

**ALURCA**
He'll rule Cowsamby in the end, I think.

**VASUNTHA**
Artist, be an observer too. His eyes
Pursue young Vuthsa like a hunted prey
And seem to measure possibility,
But not for rule or for Cowsamby care.
To reign's his nature, not his will.

**ALURCA**
This man
Is like some high rock that was suddenly
Transformed into a thinking creature.

**VASUNTHA**
There’s
His charm for Vuthsa who is soft as Spring,
Fair like a hunted moon in cloud-swept skies,
Luxurious like a jasmine in its leaves.

**ALURCA**
When will this Vuthsa grow to man? Hard-brained
Roomunwath, deep Yougundharayan rule;
The State, its arms are theirs. This boy between
Like a girl’s cherished puppet stroked and dandled,
Chid and prescribed the postures it must keep,
Moves like a rhythmic picture of delight
And with his sunny smile he does it all.
Now in our little kingdom with its law
Of beauty and music this high silence comes
And seizes on him. All our acts he rules
And Vuthsa has desired one master more.

VASUNTHA
There is a wanton in this royal heart
Who gives herself to all and all are hers.
Perhaps that too is wisdom. For, Alurca,
This world is other than our standards are
And it obeys a vaster thought than ours,
Our narrow thoughts! The fathomless desire
Of some huge spirit is its secret law.
It keeps its own tremendous forces penned
And bears us where it wills, not where we would.
Even his petty world man cannot rule.
We fear, we blame; life wantons her own way,
A little ashamed, but obstinate still, because
We check but cannot her. O, Vuthsa’s wise!
Because he seeks each thing in its own way,
He enjoys. And wherefore are we at all
If not to enjoy and with some costliness
Get dear things done, till rude death interferes,
God’s valet moves away these living dolls
To quite another room and better play,—
Perhaps a better!

ALURCA
Yet consider this.
Look back upon the endless godlike line.
Think of Parikshith, Janaméjoya, think
Of Suthaneke, then on our Vuthsa gaze.
Glacier and rock and all Himaloy piled!
What eagle peaks! Now this soft valley blooms;
The cuckoo cries from branches of delight,
The bee sails murmuring its low-winged desires.

VASUNTHA
It was to amuse himself God made the world.
For He was dull alone! Therefore all things
Vary to keep the secret witness pleased.
How Nature knows and does her office well.
What poignant oppositions she combines!
Death fosters life that life may suckle death.
Her certainties are snares, her dreams prevail.
What little seeds she grows into huge fates,
Proves with a smile her great things to be small!
All things here secretly are right; all's wrong
In God's appearances. World, thou art wisely led
In a divine confusion.

ALURCA
    The Minister
Watches this man so closely, he must think
There is some dangerous purpose in his mind.

VASUNTHA
He is the wariest of all ministers
And would suspect two pigeons on a roof
Of plots because they coo.

ALURCA
    All's possible.
 Vuthsa enters with Gopalaca.

VUTHSA
Yes, I would love to see the ocean's vasts.
Are they as grand as are the mountains dumb
Where I was born and grew? Or is its voice
Like the huge murmur of our forests swayed
In the immense embrace of giant winds?
Act II, Scene 1

We have that in Cowsamby.

**GOPALACA**

Wilt thou show
Them to me, Vindhya’s crags where forests dimly
Climb down towards my Avunthy?

**VUTHSA**

We will go
And hunt together the swift fleeing game
Or with our shafts unking the beast of prey.

**GOPALACA**

If we could range alone wide solitudes,
Not soil them with our din, not with our tread
Disturb great Nature in her animal trance,
Her life of mighty instincts where no stir
Of the hedged restless mind has spoiled her vasts.

**VUTHSA**

It is a thing I have dreamed of. Alurca, tell
The Minister that we go to hunt the deer
In Vindhya’s forests on Avunthy’s verge.
That’s if my will’s allowed.

*Alurca goes out to the outer palace.*

**VASUNTHA**

He will, Vuthsa,
Allow thy will. Where does it lead thee, king?

**VUTHSA**

A scourge for thee or a close gag might help.

**VASUNTHA**

A bandage for my eyes would serve as well.
VUTHSA
Shall we awaken in Alurca’s hands
The living voices of the harp? Or willst thou
That I should play the heaven-taught airs thou lov’st
On the Gundhurva’s magical guitar
Which lures even woodland beasts? For the elephant
Comes trumpeting to the enchanted sound,
A coloured blaze of beauty on the sward
The peacocks dance and the snake’s brilliant hood
Lifts rhythmic yearning from the emerald herb.

GOPALACA
Vuthsa Udaian, suffer me awhile
To walk alone, for I am full of thoughts.

VUTHSA
Thou shouldst not be. Cannot my love atone
For lost Avunthy?

GOPALACA
Always; but a voice
Comes to me often from the haunts of old.

VASUNTHA
Returns no dim cloud-messenger to whisper
To thy great father’s longing waiting heart
Far from his banished son?

GOPALACA
Thy satire’s forced.

VASUNTHA
Thy earnest less?

VUTHSA
One hour, a long pale loss,
I sacrifice to thy thoughts. When it has dragged past,
Where shall I find thee?

**GOPALACA**
Where the flowers rain
Beneath the red boughs on the river’s bank.
There will I walk while thou hearst harp or verse.

**VUTHSA**
Without thee neither harp nor verse can charm.  
*Gopalaca goes.*

The harmony of kindred souls that seek
Each other on the strings of body and mind,
Is all the music for which life was born.
Vasuntha, let me hear thy happy crackling,
Thou fire of thorns that leapest all the day.
Spring, call thy cuckoo.

**VASUNTHA**
Give me fuel then,
Your green young boughs of folly for my fire.

**VUTHSA**
I give enough I think for all the world.

**VASUNTHA**
It is your trade to occupy the world.
Men have made kings that folly might have food;
For the court gossips over them while they live
And the world gossips over them when they are dead.
That they call history. But our man returns.

**ALURCA**
Do here and in all things, says the Minister,
Thy pleasure. But since upon a dangerous verge
This hunt will tread, thy cohorts armed shall keep
The hilly intervals, himself be close
To guard with vigilance his monarch’s life
Against the wild beasts and what else means harm.

**VUTHSA**
That is his care; what he shall do, is good.

**ALURCA**
To lavish upon all men love and trust
Shows the heart’s royalty, not the brain’s craft.

**VUTHSA**
I have found my elder brother. Grudge me not,
Alurca, that delight. Thou lov’st me well?

**ALURCA**
Is it now questioned?

**VUTHSA**
Then rejoice with me
That I have found my brother. Joy in my joy,
Love with my love, think with my thoughts; the rest
Leave to much older wiser men whose schemings
Have made God’s world an office and a mart.
We who are young, let us indulge our hearts.

**ALURCA**
Thou tak’st all hearts and givest thine to none,
Udaian. Yet is this prince Gopalaca,
This breed from Titans and from Mahasegn,
Hard, stern, reserved. Does he repay thy friendship
As we do?

**VUTHSA**
Love itself is sweet enough
Though unreturned; and there are silent hearts.

**VASUNTHA**
Suffer this flower to climb its wayside rock.
Oppose not Nature’s cunning who will not
Be easily refused her artist joys.
Fierce deserts round the green oasis yearn
And the chill lake desires the lily’s pomp.

VUTHSA
He is the rock, I am the flower. What part
Playst thou in the woodland?

VASUNTHA
A thorn beneath the rose
That from the heavens of desire was born
And men call Vuthsa.

VUTHSA
Poet, satirist, sage,
What other gifts keepst thou concealed within
More than the many that thy outsides show?

VASUNTHA
I squander all and keep none, not like thee
Who trad’st in honey to deceive the world.

VUTHSA
O, earth is honey; let me taste her all.
Our rapture here is short before we go
To other sweetness on some rarer height
Of the upclimbing tiers that are the world.
Scene 2

A forest-glade in the Vindhya hills.
Vicurna, a Captain.

Vicurna
The hunt rings distant still; but all the ways
Troops and more troops besiege. Where is Gopalaca?

Captain
Our work may yet be rude before we reach
Our armies on the frontier.

Vicurna
That I desire.
O whistling of the arrows! I have yet
To hear that battle music.

Captain
Someone comes,
For wild things scurry forth.
They take cover. Gopalaca enters.

Vicurna
Whither so swiftly?
You are near the frontier for a banished man,
Gopalaca.

Gopalaca
Why has my father sent
Thy rash hot boyhood here, imperilling
Both of his sons? I find not here his wisdom.
VICURNA
There will be danger? I am glad. None sent me;
I came unasked.

GOPALACA
And also unasking?

VICURNA
Right.

 GOPALACA
Trust me to have thee whipped. But since thou art here!
Where stand the chariots?

CAPTAIN
On our left they wait
Screened by the secret tunnel which the Boar
Tusked through the hill to Avunthy. Torches ready
And men in arms stand in the cavern ranked
They call the cavern of the Elephant
By giants carved. But all the forest passages
The enemy guards.

 GOPALACA
There are some he cannot guard.
I know the forest better than their scouts.
When I shall speak of you and clap my hands,
Surround us in a silence armed.

CAPTAIN
His men
Resisting?

 GOPALACA
No; we two shall be alone.
VICURNA
Fie! there will be no fighting?

GOPALACA
Goblin, off!
They take cover again. Gopalaca goes;
then arrive from another side Vuthsa
with Vasuntha and Alurca.

ALURCA
We lose our escort!

VASUNTHA
They lose us, I think.

ALURCA
What fate conspires with what hid treachery?
Our chariot broken, we in woods alone
And the night close.

VASUNTHA
Roomunwath guards the paths.

ALURCA
The night is close.

VUTHSA
Here I will rest, my friends,
Where all is green and silent; only the birds
And the wind's whisperings! Go, Alurca, meet
Our comrades of the hunt; guide their vague steps
To this green-roofed refuge.

ALURCA
It is the best, though bad.
I leave thee with unwarlike hands to guard.
Act II, Scene 2

VASUNTHA
I am no fighter; it is known. Run, haste.

Alurca hastens out.

And yet for all your speed, someone will worship
Great Shiva in Avunthy. I hear a tread.

Gopalaca returns.

VUTHSA
Where wert thou all this time, Gopalaca?

GOPALACA
Far wandering in the woods since a white deer
Like magic beauty drew my ardent steps
Into a green entanglement.

VASUNTHA
Simple!
You found there what you sought?

GOPALACA
No deer, but hunters,
Not of our troop. We spoke of this green glade
Where many wandering paths might lead the king.
In haste I came.

VASUNTHA
Greater the haste to go!

VUTHSA
Follow Alurca and come back with him.

VASUNTHA
What, cast myself into the forest’s hands
To wander and be eaten by the night?
Come here and bid me then a long farewell.
Are thy eyes open at least? Is it thou in this
Who movest? I should know that at least from thee,
If nothing more.

VUTHSA

Why ask when thou hast eyes?
Thou seest that mine are open and I walk;
For no man drives me.

VASUNTHA

Walk! but far away
From thy safe capital.

VUTHSA

What harm?

VASUNTHA

And with
This prince Gopalaca?

VUTHSA

Suspicions then?
Why not suspect at once it is my will
To visit Avunthy?

VASUNTHA

So?

VUTHSA

Not so, but if?

VASUNTHA

Oh, if! And if return were much less easy
Than the going?

VUTHSA

Who has talked of easy things?
With difficulty then I will return.
VASUNTHA
I go, King Vuthsa.

VUTHSA
But tell Yougundharayan
And all who harbour blind uneasy thoughts,
“Whatever seeks me from Fate, man or god,
Leave all between me and the strength that seeks.
War shall not sound without thy prince’s leave.
Vuthsa will rescue Vuthsa.”

VASUNTHA
I will tell,
But know not if he’ll hear.

VUTHSA
He knows who is
His sovereign.

VASUNTHA
King, farewell.

VUTHSA
I shall. Farewell.

_Vasuntha disappears in the forest._

We two have kept our tryst, Gopalaca.
Hang there, my bow; lie down, my arrows. Now
Of you I have no need. O this, O this
Is what I often dreamed, to be alone
With one I love far from the pomp of courts,
Not ringed with guards and anxious friendships round,
Free like a common man to walk alone
Among the endless forest silences,
By gliding rivers and over deciduous hills,
In every haunt where earth our mother smiles
Whispering to her children. Let me rest awhile
My head upon thy lap, Gopalaca,
Before we plunge into this emerald world.
Shall we not wander in her green-roofed house
Where mighty Nature hides herself from men,
And be the friends of the great skyward peaks
That call us by their silence, bathe in tarns,
Dream where the cascades leap, and often spend
Slow moonless nights inarmed in leafy huts
Happier than palaces, or in our mood
Wrestle with the fierce tiger in his den
Or chase the deer with wind-swift feet, and share
With the rough forest-dwellers natural food
Plucked from the laden bounty of the trees,
Before we seek the citied haunts of men?
Shall we not do these things, Gopalaca?

Gopalaca
Some day we shall.

Vuthsa
Why some day? why not now?
Have I escaped my guards in vain?

Gopalaca
Not vainly.

Vuthsa
This sword encumbers; take it from me, friend,
And fling it there upon the bank.

Gopalaca
It is far.
I keep my arms lest some wild thing invade
These green recesses.

Vuthsa
Keep thy arms and me.
O, this is good to be among the trees
With thee to guard me and no soul besides.

**Gopalaca**
Thyself thou hast given wholly into my hands.

**Vuthsa**
Yes, take me, brother.

**Gopalaca**
I shall use the trust
And yet deserve it.

**Vuthsa**
I love thee well, Gopalaca.
How dost thou love me?

**Gopalaca**
It was hard to speak,
Now I can tell it. As a brother might
Elder and jealous, as a mother loves
Her beautiful flower-limbed boy or grown man yearns
Over some tender girl, his sister, comrade, child,
In all these ways, but many more besides,
But always jealously.

**Vuthsa**
Why?

**Gopalaca**
Because, Vuthsa,
I’d have thee for my own and not as in
Thy city where a thousand shared thy rays
Who were strangers to me. In my own domain,
Part of a world that’s old and dear to me,
Where thou shalt be no king, but Vuthsa only
And I can bind with many dearest ties
Heaped on thee at my will. This, Vuthsa, I desired
And therefore I have brought thee to this glade.

**VUTHSA**
And therefore I have come to thee alone.

**GOPALACA**
Thou must go farther.

**VUTHSA**
Yes? Then haste. Was that
A clank of arms amid the silent trees?  
*He makes as if to rise, but  
Gopalaca restrains him.*

**GOPALACA**
Thy escort.

**VUTHSA**
Mine?

**GOPALACA**
My father sends for thee.
I seize upon thee, Vuthsa, thou art mine,
My captive and my prize. I'll bear thee far
As Heaven’s great eagle bore thy mother once
Rapt to his unattainable high hills.
*As he speaks the armed men appear.*
Swift, captain, swift! I hold the royal boy.
On to the tunnel of the Boar.

**CAPTAIN**
Haste, haste!
There is a growing rumour all around.

**GOPALACA**
Care not for that, but follow me and guard.
*They disappear among the trees.  
Vasuntha enters.*
Act II, Scene 2

VASUNTHA
The forest lives with sound; but here all’s empty. The stake is thrown; it cannot be called in Whatever happens.

Armed men break in from all sides; Yougundharayan, Roomunwath, Alurca.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Where is King Vuthsa? where? His bow hangs lonely! sword and arrows lie.

VASUNTHA (indifferently)
I cannot tell.

ALURCA
Not tell! but you were here, Were with him!

VASUNTHA
I was sent away like that. But for a guess he’s travelling far and fast To Shiva in Avunthy.

ALURCA
And thou laughst, Untimely jester!

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Impetuously pursue! The forest ways and mountain openings flood That flee to Avunthy. Over her treasonous borders Drive in your angry search.

VASUNTHA
Thy king commands thee To leave all twixt him and the strength that seeks Their quarrel; throw not armies in the balance. War shall not sound her conch; but Vuthsa only
Shall rescue Vuthsa.

ROOMUNWATH
This is a boy’s madness.
What lies behind this message?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Roomunwath, this. The lion’s cub breaks forth
Whom we so guarded, from our strict control
To measure with the large and perilous world
The bounding rapture of his youth and force.
He throws himself into his foeman’s lair
Alone and scorning every aid. I guess
His purpose and find it headlong, subtle, rash.
If he failed? This boy and iron Mahasegn!
We must obey.

ROOMUNWATH
There’s time to arrest their flight
This side our frontier. Hastily pursue.

He goes with Alurca and the armed men,
_all in a tumult of haste._

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
It will be vain. A perilous leap and yet
Heroic with the bold and antique scorn
Of common deeds and the safe guarded paths.
This is the spirit that smiled hidden in him
Waiting for birth! At least my spies shall enter
Their secret chambers, even in his prison
My help be timely and near. Back to Cowsamby!
Scene 3

Avunthy. A road on a wooded hill-side overlooking the plain.  
Gopalaca, Vuthsa in a chariot, surrounded by armed men.

Gopalaca
Arrest our wheels. Those are our army’s lights  
That climb to us like fire-flies from the plain.

Vuthsa (awakened from sleep)
Is this Avunthy?

Gopalaca
We have passed her bounds.

Vuthsa
So, thou dear traitor, this thou from the first  
Cam’st planning.

Gopalaca
This with more that follows it.

Vuthsa
Thou bearst me to thy father’s town?

Gopalaca
Where thou  
Shalt lie, a jewel guarded carefully,  
Beside the dearest treasure of our house.

Vuthsa
I must be cooped up in a golden cage  
As I was guarded in Cowsamby’s walls.
You foes and friends think me your wealth inert,
And all men hope to do their will with me.
But now I warn you all that I will have
My freedom and will do my own dear will
By fraud or violence greater than your own.

GOPALACA
Thou canst not. If thou hadst thy bow indeed!

VUTHSA
Thou hadst me for the taking. I will break forth
Almost as easily.

GOPALACA
Thou shalt find it hard,
Such keepers shall enring thy steps.

VUTHSA
But I will
And carry with me something costlier far
Than what thou stealest from Cowsamby’s realm.
For I will have revenge.

GOPALACA
No wealth we have
More precious than the thing I seize today.
Therefore thy boast is vain.

VUTHSA
That I will see.
Was it not thy brother rode behind our car?
He passes now; call him.

GOPALACA
Vicurna, here!
VUTHSA
Come near, embrace me, brother of Gopalaca,
Loved for his sake and for thy own desired
Since I beheld thee, son of Mahasegn.

VICURNA
Vuthsa Udaian, in the battle’s front
I had hoped to meet thee and compel thy praise
As half thy equal in the fight. But this
Is nearer, this is better.

VUTHSA
Thou art fair to see.
Thy father has two noble sons. Are there
No others of your great upspringing stock?

GOPALACA
Only a sister.

VUTHSA
The world has heard of her.

GOPALACA
Thou shalt behold.

VUTHSA
Oh then, it is pure gain
I go to in Avunthy. O the night
With all her glorious stars and from the trees
Millions of shrill cigalas peal one note,
A thunderous melody! Shall we be soon
In the golden city? But it will be night
And I shall hardly see her famous fanes.

GOPALACA
Dawn will have overtaken us in her skies
Passing our chariots long before Ujjayiny’s seen.
Our vanguard nears; unite with them; descend. Roomunwath's cohorts should tread close behind.

**VUTHSA**
They will not come. My fate must ride with me Unhindered to Avunthy.

**GOPALACA**
Hasten in front Towards my father fire-hooved messengers To cry aloud to him the prize we bring Richer than booty of his twenty wars. Shiva has smiled on us.

**VUTHSA**
Vishnu on me. Godheads, it is by strife that you grow one.
Act III

Avunthy. In the palace.

Scene 1

A room in the royal apartments.
Mahasegn, Ungarica.

MAHASEGN
I conquer still though not with glorious arms.
He’s seized! the young victorious Vuthsa’s mine,
A prisoner in my grasp.

UNGARICA (laughing)
Thou holdst the sun
Under thy arm-pit as the tailed god did.
What wilt thou do with it?

MAHASEGN
Make him my moon
And shine by him upon the eastern night.

UNGARICA
Thou canst?

MAHASEGN
Loved sceptic of my house, I can.
What thing desired has long escaped my hands
Since out of thy dim world I dragged thee conquered
Into our sun and breeze and azure skies
By force, my fortune?
UNGARICA
Yes, by force, but this
By force thou hast not done. Wilt thou depart
From thy own nature, Chunda Mahasegn,
And hop’st for victory?

MAHASEGN
Thou wert my strength, my fortune,
But never my counsellor! My own mind’s my seer.

UNGARICA
I do not counsel, but obey and watch.
That is enough for me in your strange world,
For in your light I cannot guide myself.
Man is a creature blinded by the sun
Who errs by seeing; but the world that to you
Is darkness,—they who walk there, they have sight.
Such am I, for the shades have reared my soul.

MAHASEGN
What dost thou see?

UNGARICA
That Vuthsa is too great
For thy greatness, too cunning for thy cunning. He
Will bend not to thy pressure.

MAHASEGN
Thou hast bent,
The Titaness. This is a delicate boy
Softer than summer dews or like the lily
That yields to every gentle, insistent wave.
A hero? yes: all Aryan boys are that.

UNGARICA
Thou thinkst thy daughter thy proud fortune’s wave,
He its bright flower,—a nursling reared by gods
Act III, Scene 1

Only to be thy servant?

MAHASEGN
Thou hast seen?
I kept my counsel hidden in my soul.

UNGARICA
It is good; it is the thing my heart desires.
My daughter shall have empire.

MAHASEGN
No, thy son.

UNGARICA
No matter which. The first man of the age
Will occupy her heart; the pride and love
That are her faults will both be satisfied.
She will be happy.

MAHASEGN
Call thy child, my queen.
For I will teach her what her charm must weave.

UNGARICA
Her heart’s her teacher. Call here, Vullabha,
The princess.

MAHASEGN
O, the heart, it is a danger,
A madness! Let the thinking mind prevail.

UNGARICA
We are women, king.

MAHASEGN
Be princesses! My daughter
Has dignity, pride, wisdom, noble hopes;
She will not act as common natures do.

UNGARICA
Love will unseat them all and put them down
Under his flower-soft feet.

MAHASEGN
Thou hast ever loved
To oppose my thoughts!

UNGARICA
That is our poor revenge
Who in our acts must needs obey.

Vasavadutta enters.

Let now
Thy princely cunning teach a woman’s brain
To use for statecraft’s ends her dearest thoughts.

MAHASEGN
My daughter Vasavadutta, my delight,
Now is thy hour to pay the long dear debt
Thou ow’st thy parents by whom thou wast made.
Vuthsa, Cowsamby’s king, my rival, foe,
My Fate’s high stumbling-block, captive today
Is brought to Avunthy. I mean he shall become
Thy husband, Vasavadutta, and my slave.
By thee he shall become my subject king.
Then shall thy father’s fate outleap all bounds,
Thy house and nation rule the prostrate world.
This is my will, my daughter; is it thine?

VASAVADUTTA
Father, thy will is mine, as it is fate’s.
Thou givest me to whom thou wilt; what share
In this have I except only to obey?
MAHASEGN
A greater part which makes thee my ally
And golden instrument; for thou, my child,
Must be, who only canst, my living sceptre,
Thou my ambassador to win his mind
And thou my viceroy over his subject will.

VASAVADUTTA
Will he submit to this?

MAHASEGN
Yes, if thou choose.

VASAVADUTTA
I choose, my father, since it is thy will.
That thou shouldst rule the world, is my desire;
My nation’s greatness is my dearest good.

MAHASEGN
Thou hast kept my proudest lessons; lose them not.
O, thou art not as feebler natures are!
Thou wilt not put thy own ambitions first,
Nor justify a blind and clamorous heart.

VASAVADUTTA
My duty to my country and my sire
Shall lead me.

MAHASEGN
I will not teach thy woman’s brain
How thou shalt mould this youth, nor warn thy will
Against the passions of the blood. The heart
And senses over common women rule;
Thou hast a mind.

VASAVADUTTA
Father, this is my pride,
That thou enoblest me to be the engine
Of thy great fortunes; that alone I am.

MAHASEGN
Thou wilt not yield then to the heart’s desire?

VASAVADUTTA
Let him desire, but I will nothing yield.
I am thy daughter; greatest kings should sue
And take my grace as an unhoped-for joy.

MAHASEGN
Thou art my pupil; statecraft was not wasted
Upon thy listening brain. Thou seest, my queen?

UNGARICA
As if this babe could understand! Go, go
And leave me with my child. I will speak to her
Another language.

MAHASEGN
Breathe no breath against
My purpose!

UNGARICA
Fearst thou that?

MAHASEGN
No; speak to her.
*He goes out from the chamber.*

UNGARICA (*taking Vasavadutta into her arms*)
Rest here, my child, to whom another bosom
Will soon be refuge. Thou hast heard the King;
Hear now thy mother. Thou wilt know, my bliss,
The fiercest sweet ordeal that can seize
A woman’s heart and body. O my child,
Thou wilt house fire, thou wilt see living gods,
And all thou hast thought and known will melt away
Into a flame and be reborn. What now
I speak, thou dost not understand, but wilt
Before many nights have kept thy sleepless eyes.
My child, the flower blooms for its flowerhood only,
To fill the air with fragrance and with bloom,
And not to make its parent bed more high.
Not for thy sire thy mother brought thee forth
But thy own nature's growth and heart's delight
And for a husband and for children born.
My child, let him who clasps thee be thy god
That thou mayst be his goddess; make your wedded arms
Heaven's fences; let his will be thine and thine
Be his, his happiness thy regal throne.
O Vasavadutta, when thy heart awakes
Thou shalt obey thy sovereign heart, nor yield
Allegiance to the clear-eyed selfish gods.
Do now thy father's will, the god awake
Shall do his own. Fear not, whatever threatens.
Thy mother watches over thee, my child.

\textit{She goes out.}

\textsc{Vasavadutta}
I love her best, but do not understand;
My mind can always grasp my father's thoughts.
If I must wed, it shall be one I rule.
Vuthsa! Vuthsa Udaian! I have heard
Only a far-flung name. What is the man?
A flame? a flower? High like Gopalaca
Or else some golden-fair and soft-eyed youth?
I have a fluttering in my heart to know.
Scene 2

The same.
Mahasegn, Ungarica, Gopalaca, Vuthsa.

GOPALACA
King of Avunthy, see thy will performed.
The boy who rivalled thy ripe victor years,
I bring a captive to thy house.

MAHASEGN
Gopalaca,
Thou hast done well, thou art indeed my son.
Vuthsa,—

VUTHSA
Hail, monarch of the West. We have met
In equal battle; it has pleased me to approach
Thy greatness otherwise.

MAHASEGN
Pleased thee, vain boy!
No, but thy fate indignant that thou strv’st
Against heaven-chosen fortunes.

VUTHSA
Think it so.
I am here. What is thy will with me or wherefore
Hast thou by violence brought me to thy house?

MAHASEGN
To serve me as earth’s sovereign and thy own
Assuming my great yoke as all have done
From Indus to the South.

VUTHSA

This is thy error.
Thou hast not great Cowsamby’s monarch here,
But Vuthsa only, Suthaneka’s son
Who sprang from sires divine.

MAHASEGN

And where then dwells
Cowsamby’s youthful majesty, if not
In thee its golden vessel?

VUTHSA

Where my vacant throne
In high Cowsamby stands. Thou shouldst know that.
There is a kingship which exceeds the king.
For Vuthsa unworthy, Vuthsa captive, slain,
This is not captive, this cannot be slain.
It far transcends our petty human forms,
It is a nation’s greatness. This, O King,
Was once Parikshith, this Urjoona’s seed,
Janam´ejoya, this was Suthaneke,
This Vuthsa; and when Vuthsa is no more,
This shall live deathless in a hundred kings.

MAHASEGN

Thou speakest like the unripe boy thou seemst,
With thoughts high-winging. Grown minds keep to earth’s
More humble sureness and prefer her touches.
I am content to have thy gracious body here,
This earth of kingship; with things sensible
I deal, for they are pertinent to our days,
And not with any high and unseen thought.

VUTHSA

My body? deal with it. It is thy slave
And captive by thy choice and by my own.
What thou canst do with Vuthsa, do, O King;
In nothing will I pledge Cowsamby's majesty,
But Vuthsa is a prisoner in thy hands.
Him I defend not from thy iron will.

MAHASEGN
My prisoner, thou shalt not so escape
My purpose.

VUTHSA
I embrace it. If escape
Were my desire, I should not now be here.
It is not bars and gates can keep me.

MAHASEGN
But I will give thee other jailors, boy,
Surer than my armed sentries, against whom
Thou dar'st not lift thy helpless hands.

VUTHSA
Find such;
I am satisfied.

MAHASEGN
Grow humbler in thy bearing.
Be Vuthsa or be great Cowsamby's king,
Know thyself only for a captive and a slave.

VUTHSA
I accept thy stern rebuke, as I accept
Whatever state the wiser gods provide
And bend my action to their mood and thought.

MAHASEGN
Thou knowst the law of the high sacrifice,
Where many kings as menials serve the one,
And this compelled have many proud lords done
Whose high beginnings disappear in time.
Now I will make my throned triumphant days
A high continual solemn sacrifice
Of kingship. There shalt thou, great Bharuth’s heir,
Dwell in my house a royal servitor,
And as most fitting thy yet tender years,
My daughter’s serf. She with her handmaidens
Shall be thy jailors whose firm gracious cordon
Thy strength disarmed stands helpless to transgress. To this
Thy pride must, forced, consent.

VUTHSA
Not only consent,
But welcome with a proud aspiring mind
Since to be Vasavadutta’s servitor
Is honour, happiness and fortune’s grace.
My greatness this shall raise, not cast it down,
King Mahasegn.

MAHASEGN
Lead now, Gopalaca,
Thy gift, her servant, to thy sister’s feet.
He has a music that the gods desire,
His brush leaves Nature wondering and his song
The luminous choristers of heaven have taught.
All this is hers to please her. Boy, thou smilest?

VUTHSA
What thou hast said, is merely truth. And yet
I smiled to see how strong and arrogant minds
Think themselves masters of the things they do.

Gopalaca goes out with Vuthsa
towards Vasavadutta’s apartments.

MAHASEGN
This is a charming boy, Ungarica,
Who vaunts and yields!

UNGARICA

What he has shown thee, King,
Thou seest.

MAHASEGN

Wilt thou lend next this graceful child,
Almost a girl in beauty, thoughts profound
And practised subtleties? I have done well,
Was deeply inspired.

He goes out.

UNGARICA

For him and her thou hast.
Our own ends seeking, Heaven’s ends are served.
Scene 3

A room in Vasavadutta’s apartments.
Vasavadutta, Munjoolica, Umba.

VASAVADUTTA
But hast thou seen him?

MUNJOOLICA
Yes!

VASAVADUTTA
Speak, perverse silence.
Thou canst chatter when thou wilt.

MUNJOOLICA
What shall I say
Except that thou art always fortunate.
Since first thy soft feet moved upon our earth,
O living Luxmie, beauty, wealth and joy
Run overpacked into thy days, and grandeurs
Unmeasured. Now the greatest king on earth
Becomes thy servant.

VASAVADUTTA
That’s the greatest king’s
Proud fortune and not mine; for nothing now
Can raise me higher than I am whose father
Is sovereign over greatest kings. Nothing are these
And what I long to know thou dost not tell.
What is he like?
MUNJOOLICA
I have seen the lord of love
Wearing a golden human body.

VASAVADUTTA (with a pleased smile)
So fair!

MUNJOOLICA
As thou art; yes, and more.

VASAVADUTTA
More!

MUNJOOLICA
Cry not out.
His eyes are proud and smiling like the god’s;
His voice is like the sudden call of Spring.

VASAVADUTTA
O dear to me even as myself, wear this!
She puts her own chain round her neck.

MUNJOOLICA
That is my happiness; keep thy gifts.

VASAVADUTTA
Think them
My love around thy neck. Thou hast spoken truly,
Not woven fictions to beguile my heart?
Then tell me more, tell tell, thou dearest one.
Not that I care for these things, but would know.

MUNJOOLICA
Let thy eyes care not then, but gaze.
Gopalaca comes, bringing in Vuthsa.
Act III, Scene 3

VASAVADUTTA

My brother!
Long thou wast far from me.

GOPALACA

For thy sake far.
Much have I flung, my sister, at thy feet
Nor thought my gifts were worthy of thy smile,
Not even Sourashtra’s captive daughter here,
The living flower and jewel of her race.
But now I give indeed. This is that famous boy,
Vuthsa Udaian, great Cowsamby’s king,
Brought by my hands to serve thee in our house.
Look on him; tell me if I have deserved.

VASAVADUTTA (looking covertly at Vuthsa)

Much love, dear brother; not that any prize
I value as of worth for such as we,
But thy love gives it price.

GOPALACA

My love for both.
My gift is precious to me, for my heart
Possessed him long before my hands have seized.
Then love him well, for so thou lov’st me twice.

VASAVADUTTA

Dear then and prized although a slave.

GOPALACA

Are we not all
Thy servants? The wide costly world is less,
My sister, than thy noble charm and grace
And beauty and the sweetness of thy soul
Deserve, O Vasavadutta.
VASAVADUTTA (smiling, pleased)
Is it so?

GOPALACA
My sister, thou wast born from Luxmie’s heart,
And we, thy brothers, feel in thee, not us,
Our father’s fate inherited; our warrings
Seek for thy girdle all the conquered earth.

VASAVADUTTA
I know it, brother.

GOPALACA
From thy childhood, yes,
Thou seem’dst to know, ruling with queenly eyes.
But since thou knowest, queen, assume thy fiefs
Cowsamby and Ayodhya for our house!

VASAVADUTTA (glancing at Vuthsa, then avoiding his eyes)
Since he’s my slave, they are already mine.

GOPALACA
No; understand me, sister; make them thine.
Thou, Vuthsa, serve thy mistress and obey.  

VASAVADUTTA
He is a boy, a marvellous golden boy.
I am surely older! I can play with him.
There is no fear, no difficulty at all.
(to Vuthsa)
What is thy name? I’ll hear it from thy lips.

VUTHSA
Vuthsa.
VASAVADUTTA
Thou tremblest, Vuthsa; dost thou fear?

VUTHSA
Perhaps. There is a fear in too much joy.

VASAVADUTTA (smiling)
I did not hear. My brother loves thee well. Take comfort. If thou serve me faithfully, Thou hast no cause for any grief at all. Thou art Cowsamby’s king—

VUTHSA
Men call me so.

VASAVADUTTA
And now my servant.

VUTHSA
That my heart repeats.

VASAVADUTTA (smiling)
I did not hear. Cowsamby’s king, my slave, What canst thou do to please me?

VUTHSA
Dost thou choose
To know the songs that shake the tranquil gods
Or hear on earth the harps of heaven? dost thou Desire such lines and hues of living truth
As make earth’s shadows pale? or wilt thou have
The infinite abysmal silences
Made vocal, clothed with form? These things at birth
The Kinnarie, Vidyadhir and Gundhurva
Around me crowding on Himaloy dumb
Gave to the silent god that lived in me
Before my outer mind held thought. All these
I can make thine.

**VASAVADUTTA**

Vuthsa, I take all these,
All thy life’s ornaments that thou wearst, for mine
And am not satisfied.

**VUTHSA**

Dost thou desire
The earth made thine by my victorious bow?
Send me then forth to battle; earth is thine.

**VASAVADUTTA**

I take the earth and am not satisfied.

**VUTHSA**

Say then what thing shall please thee in thy slave,
What thou desir’st from Vuthsa.

**VASAVADUTTA**

Do I know?
Not less than all thou canst and all thou hast, —
*(hesitating a little)*
And all thou art.

**VUTHSA**

All’s thine.

**VASAVADUTTA**

I speak and hear
And know not what I say, nor what thou meanst.

**VUTHSA**

The deepest things are those thought seizes not;
Our spirits live their hidden meaning out.
Act III, Scene 3

VASAVADUTTA (after a troubled silence in which she tries to recover herself)
I know not how we passed into this strain.
Such words are troubling to the mind and heart;
Leave them.

VUTHSA
They have been spoken.

VASAVADUTTA
Let them rest.
Vuthsa, my slave who promisest me much,
Great things thou offerest, small things I'll demand
From thee, yet hard. Since he's my prisoner,
Munjoolica and Umba, guard this boy;
You are his jailors. When I need him near me
Bring him to me. Go, Vuthsa, to thy room.
Vuthsa falls at her feet which he touches.
What dost thou? It is not permitted thee.

VUTHSA
Not this? That's hard.

VASAVADUTTA (troubled and feigning anger)
Thou art too bold a slave.

VUTHSA
Let me be earth beneath thy tread at least.

VASAVADUTTA
O, take him from me; I have enough of him.
Thou, Umba, see he bribes thee not or worse.

UMBA
I will be bribed to make thee smart for that.
Where shall we put him? In the turret rooms
Beside the terrace where thou walkst when moonlight
Sleeps on the sward?

**VASAVADUTTA**
There; it is nearest.

**UMBA** *(taking Vuthsa's hand)*
Come.

*They go out, leaving Vasavadutta alone.*

**VASAVADUTTA**
Will he charm me from my purpose with a smile?
How beautiful he is, how beautiful!
There is a fear, there is a happy fear.
But he is mine, his eyes confessed my yoke.
Surely I shall do all my will with him.
I sent him from me, his words troubled me
And yet delighted. They have a witchery,—
No, not his words, but voice. 'Tis not his voice,
Nor yet his face, his smile, his flower-soft eyes,
And yet it is all these and something more.

*(shaking her head)*
I fear it will be difficult after all.
Scene 4

_The tower-room beside the terrace._
_Vuthsa on a couch._

**VUTHSA**
All that I dreamed or heard of her, her charm
Exceeds. She’s mine! she has shuddered at my touch;
Thrice her eyes faltered as they gazed in mine.

  _He lies back with closed eyes;_
  _Munjoolica enters and contemplates him._

**MUNJOOLICA**
O golden Love! thou art not of this earth.
He too is Vasavadutta’s! All is hers,
As I am now and one day all the earth.
Vuthsa, thou sleepest not, then.

**VUTHSA**
Sleep jealous waits
Finding another image in my eyes.

**MUNJOOLICA**
Thou art disobedient. Wast thou not commanded
To sleep at once?

**VUTHSA**
Sleep disobedys, not I.
But thou too wakest, yet no thoughts should have
To keep thy lids apart.

**MUNJOOLICA**
How knowst thou that?
I am thy jailor and I walk my rounds.

**VUTHSA**
Bright jailor, thou art jealous without cause.
Who would escape from heaven’s golden bars?
Thy name’s Munjoolica? So is thy form
A bower of the graceful things of earth.

**MUNJOOOLICA**
I had another name but it has ceased,
Forgotten.

**VUTHSA**
Thou wast then Sourashtra’s child?

**MUNJOOOLICA**
I am still that royalty clouded, even as thou
Captive Cowsamby. Me Gopalaca
In battle seized, brought a disdainful gift
To Vasavadutta.

**VUTHSA**
Since our fates are one,
Should we not be allies?

**MUNJOOOLICA**
For what bold purpose?

**VUTHSA**
How knowest thou I have one?

**MUNJOOOLICA**
Were I a man!

**VUTHSA**
Wouldst thou have freedom? wilt thou give me help?
MUNJOOLICA
In nothing against her I love and serve.

VUTHSA
No, but conspire to serve and love her best
And make her queen of all the Aryan earth.

MUNJOOLICA
My payment?

VUTHSA
Name it thyself, when all is ours.

MUNJOOLICA
Content; it will be large.

VUTHSA
However large.

MUNJOOLICA
Now shall I be avenged upon my fate!
What thy heart asks I know; too openly
Thou carriest the yearning in thy eyes.
Vuthsa, she loves thee as the half-closed bud
Thrills to the advent of a wonderful dawn
And like a dreamer half-awake perceives
The faint beginnings of a sunlit world.
Doubt not success more than that dawn must break;
For she is thine.

VUTHSA
Take my heart’s gratitude
For the sweet assurance.

MUNJOOLICA
I am greedy. Only
Thy gratitude?
VUTHSA
What wouldst thou have?

MUNJOOLICA
The ring
Upon thy finger, Vuthsa, for my own.

VUTHSA (putting it on her finger)
It shall live happier on a fairer hand.

MUNJOOLICA
Since thou hast paid me instantly and well,
I will be zealous, Vuthsa, in thy cause.
But my great bribe is in the future still.

VUTHSA
Claim it in our Cowsamby.

MUNJOOLICA
There indeed.
Sleep now.

VUTHSA
By thy good help I now shall sleep.  
_Munjoolica goes out._

Music is sweet; to rule the heart’s rich chords
Of human lyres much sweeter. Art’s sublime
But to combine great ends more sovereign still,
Accepting danger and difficulty to break
Through proud and violent opposites to our will.
Song is divine, but more divine is love.
Scene 5

A room in Vasavadutta's apartments.

VASAVADUTTA
I govern no longer what I speak and do.
Is this the fire my mother spoke of? Oh,
It is sweet, is sweet. But I will not be mastered
By any equal creature. Let him serve
Obediently and I will load his lovely head
With costliest favours. He's my own, my own,
My slave, my toy to play with as I choose,
And shall not dare to play with me. I think he dares;
I do not know, I think he would presume.
He's gentle, brilliant, bold and beautiful.
I'll send for him and chide and put him down;
I'll chide him harshly; he must not presume.
O, I have forgotten almost my father's will;
Yet it was mine. Before I lose it quite,
I will compel a promise from the boy.
Will it be hard when he is all my own?
(she calls)
Umba! Bring Vuthsa to me from his tower.
His music is a voice that cries to me,
His songs are chains he hangs around my heart.
I must not hear them often; I forget
That I am Vasavadutta, that he is
My house's foe and only Vuthsa feel,
Think Vuthsa only, while my captive heart
Beats in world-Vuthsa and on Vuthsa throbs.
This must not be.

Umba brings in Vuthsa and retires.
Go, Umba. Vuthsa, stand
Before me.

VUTHSA
It is my sovereign’s voice that speaks.

VASAVADUTTA
Be silent! Lower thy eyes; they are too bold
To gaze on me, my slave.

VUTHSA
Blame not my eyes;
They follow the dumb motion of a heart
Uplifted to adore thee.

VASAVADUTTA (with a shaken voice)
Dost thou really
Adore me, Vuthsa?

VUTHSA
Earth’s one goddess, yes.

VASAVADUTTA (mildly)
But, Vuthsa, men adore with humble eyes
Upon their deity’s feet.

VUTHSA
Oh, let me so
Adore thee then, thus humble at thy feet,
Their sleeping moonbeams in my eyes, and place
My hands in Paradise beneath these flowers
That bless too oft the chill unheeding earth.
Let this not be forbidden to thy slave.
So let me worship and the carolling of thy speech
So listen.

VASAVADUTTA
Vuthsa, thou must not presume.
VUTHSA
O even when faint thy voice, thy every word
Reaches my soul.

VASAVADUTTA
Wilt thou not let me free?

VUTHSA
Yes, if thou bid; but do not.

VASAVADUTTA (bending down to caress his hair)
If really
And as my slave thou adorest, nothing more,
I will not bid.

VUTHSA
What more, when this means all?

VASAVADUTTA
But if thou art such, is not all thou hast
Mine, mine? Why dost thou, Vuthsa, keep from me
My own?

VUTHSA
Take all; claim all.

VASAVADUTTA (collecting herself)
Cowsamby first.

VUTHSA
It shall be thine, a jewel for thy feet.

VASAVADUTTA
Thy kingdom, Vuthsa, for my will to rule.

VUTHSA
It shall be thine, the garden of thy pomp.
VASAVADUTTA
Shall?

VUTHSA
Is it not far? We must go there, my queen, Thou to receive and I to give.

VASAVADUTTA
I wish
To be there. But, Udaian, thou must vow,
And the word bind thee, that none else shall be Cowsamby’s queen and thou my servant live Vowed to obedience underneath my throne.

VUTHSA
Thou only shalt be over my heart a queen, Yes, if thou wilt, the despot of my thoughts, My hopes, my aims, but I will not obey If thou command disloyalty to thee, My sweet, sole sovereign.

VASAVADUTTA (smiling)
This reserve I yield.

(hesitatingly)
But Vuthsa, if as subject of my sire, High Chunda Mahasegn, I bid thee rule?

VUTHSA
My queen, it will be void.

VASAVADUTTA
Void? And thy vow?

VUTHSA
Would it not be disloyalty in me, To serve another sovereign?
VASAVADUTTA (vexed, yet pleased)
    O, thou playst with me.

VUTHSA
No, queen. What’s wholly mine, that wholly take.
But this belongs to many other souls.

VASAVADUTTA
To whom?

VUTHSA
Their names are endless. Bharuth first,
Who ruled the Aryan earth that bears his name,
And great Dushyanta and Pururavus’
Famed warlike son and all their peerless line,
Urjoona and Parikshith and his sons
Whom God descended to enthrone, and all
Who shall come after us, my heirs and thine
Who choosest me, and a great nation’s multitudes,
And the Kuru ancestors and long posterity
Who all must give consent.

VASAVADUTTA
    Thy thoughts are high.
But if thy life must fade a prisoner here?
My father is inflexible and stern.

VUTHSA
Dost thou desire this really in thy heart?
Vuthsa degraded, art thou not degraded too?

VASAVADUTTA
My rule thou hast vowed?

VUTHSA
    To obey thee in all things
Throned in Cowsamby, not as here I must,
Thy father's captive. There I shall be thine.

VASAVADUTTA
Leave, Vuthsa, leave me. Take him, Umba, from me.

UMBA (entering, in Vasavadutta's ear)
Who now is bribed? We are all traitors now.

She goes out with Vuthsa.

VASAVADUTTA
O joy, if he and all were only mine.
O greatness, to be queen of him and earth.
I grow a rebel to my father's house.
Act IV

Scene 1

A room in the royal apartments.
Ungarica, Vasavadutta.

UNGARICA
Thou singest well; a cry of Vuthsa’s art
Has stolen into thy song.

She takes Vasavadutta on her lap.

Look up at me,
My daughter, let me gaze into thy eyes
And from their silence learn thy treasured thoughts.
Thou knowest I can read twixt human lids
The secrets of the throbbing heart? I search
In Vasavadutta’s eyes by what strange skill
Vuthsa has crept into my daughter’s voice.
Thou keepest thy lashes lowered? thou wilt not let me look?
But that too I can read.

VASAVADUTTA
O mother, mother mine,
Plague me not; thou knowest all things; comfort me.

UNGARICA
Thou needest comfort?

VASAVADUTTA
Yes, against myself
Who trouble my own heart.
UNGARICA
Why? though I know.
Thou wilt not speak? I'll speak then for thee.

_Vasavadutta alarmed puts her hand over Ungarica's mouth._

Off!

It is because thou canst not here control
What thy immortal part with rapture wills
And the mortal longingly desires; for yet
Thy proud heart cannot find the way to yield.

VASAVADUTTA
If thou knewst, mother.

UNGARICA
No, thou hast the will
But not the art, Love's learner. O my proud
Sweet ignorance, 'tis he shall find the way
And thou shalt know the joy of being forced
To what thy heart desires.

VASAVADUTTA
O mother!

_She hides her face in Ungarica's bosom._

UNGARICA
Thou hast done thy father's will?
Thy husband shall be vassal to thy sire?

VASAVADUTTA
Have I a father or a house? O none,
O none, O none exists but only he.

UNGARICA
Let none exist for thee but the dear all thou lov'st.
I charge thee, Vasavadutta, when thou rul'st
In far Cowsamby, let this be thy reign
To heap on him delight and seek his good. 
Raise his high fortunes, shelter from grief his heart, 
Even with thy own tears buy his joy and peace, 
Nor let one clamorous thought of self revolt 
Against him.

VASAVADUTTA 
Mother, thou canst see my heart; 
Is this not there? Can it do otherwise, 
Being thus conquered, even if it willed?

UNGARICA 
Child, 'tis my care to give thy heart a voice 
And bind it to its nobler loving self. 
Let this be now thy pride.

VASAVADUTTA 
It is, it is. 
But, mother, it is very sweet to rule, 
And if I rule him for his good, not mine?

UNGARICA 
Thou canst not be corrected! Queenling, rule. 
Go now; thy brother comes. 

Vasavadutta escapes towards her own apartments; 
Vicurna enters from the outer door. 
Why is thy brow
A darkness?

VICURNA 
Wherefore was King Vuthsa brought 
Into Ujjayin? why is captive kept?

UNGARICA 
Thy father's will, who knows.
VICURNA  

But I would know.

UNGARICA  

Him ask.

VICURNA (taking her face between his hands)  

I ask thee; thou must answer.

UNGARICA  

To wed  

Thy sister.

VICURNA  

Let him wed and be released.  
Our fame is smirched; the city murmurs. War  
Threatens from Vuthsa’s nation and our cause  
Is evil.

UNGARICA  

Wedding her he must consent  
To be our vassal.

VICURNA  

Thus are vassals made?  
Thus empires built? This is a shameful thing.  
Release him first, then with proud war subdue.

UNGARICA  

Thou knowest thy father’s stern, unbending will  
Whom we must all obey.

VICURNA  

Not I, or not  
In evil things.
UNGARICA
Respect thy father! He
Will not, unsatisfied, release his foe.
Demand not this.

VICURNA
I will release him then.

UNGARICA
Him by what right who is thy house’s peril?

VICURNA
He is a hero and he is my friend.

UNGARICA
Didst thou not help to bring him captive here?

VICURNA
For Vasavadutta. I will bear them both
Out from the city in my chariot far
Into the freedom of the hills. I will hew down
All who oppose me.

UNGARICA
Rash and violent boy,
So wilt thou make bad worse. Await the hour
When Vuthsa shall himself demand thy aid.

VICURNA
The hour will come?

UNGARICA
He will be free.

VICURNA
Then soon,
Or I myself will act.

He goes out.
This too is well
And most that the proud chivalries of old
Are not yet dead in all men's hearts. O God
Shiva, thou mak'st me fortunate in my sons.
Scene 2

Vasavadutta’s chamber.
Vuthsa, Vasavadutta.

VUTHSA
Thy hands have yet no cunning with the strings.
’Tis not the touch alone but manner of the touch
That calls the murmuring spirit forth, — as thus.

VASAVADUTTA
I cannot manage it; my hand rebels.

VUTHSA
I will compel it then. He takes her hand in his.
Thou dost not chide.

VASAVADUTTA
I am weary of chiding; and how rule a boy
Who takes delight in being chidden? And then
’Twas only my hand. What dost thou?
Vuthsa takes her by the arms and draws her towards him.

VUTHSA
What thy eyes
Commanded me and what for many days
My heart has clamoured for in hungry pain.

VASAVADUTTA
Presumptuous! wilt thou not immediately
Release me?
VUTHSA
Not till thy heart’s will is done.

He draws her down on his knees, resisting.

VASAVADUTTA
What will? I did not bid. What will? Vuthsa!
Vuthsa! I did not bid. This is not well.

He masters her and holds her on his bosom.
Her head falls on his shoulder.

VUTHSA
O my desire, why should we still deny
Delight that calls to us? Strive not with joy,
But yield me the sweet mortal privilege
That makes me equal with the happiest god
In all the heavens of fulfilled desire.
O on thy sweet averted cheek! My queen,
My wilful empress, all in vain thou striv’st
To keep from me the treasure of thy lips
I have deserved so long.

VASAVADUTTA
Vuthsa! Vuthsa!

He forces her lips up to his and kisses her.

VUTHSA
O honey of thy mouth! The joy, the joy
Was sweeter. I have drunk in heaven at last,
Let what will happen.
Vasavadutta escapes and stands
quivering at a distance.

VASAVADUTTA
Stand there! approach me not.

VUTHSA
I thought ’twould be enough for many ages;
But 'tis not so.

VASAVADUTTA  
Go from me, seek thy room.

VUTHSA  
Have I so much offended? I will go.  
*He pretends to go.*

VASAVADUTTA  
Vuthsa, I am not angry; do not go.  
Sit; I must chide thee. Was this well to abuse  
My kindness, to mistake indulgence? — No,  
I am not angry; thou art only a boy.  
I have permitted thee to love because  
Thou saidst thou couldst not help it. This again  
Thou must not do, — not thus.

VUTHSA  
Then teach me how.

VASAVADUTTA (*with a troubled smile*)  
I never had so importunate a slave.  
I must think out some punishment for thee.  
*She comes to him suddenly, takes him to her*  
*bosom and kisses him with passion.*

VUTHSA  
O if 'tis this, I will again offend.  
*She clings to him, kisses him again,*  
*then puts him away from her.*

VASAVADUTTA  
Go from me, go. Wilt thou not go? Munjoolica!

VUTHSA  
She is not here to help thee against thy heart.
But I will go; thou wiltst it.

VASAVADUTTA

Wilt thou leave me?

VUTHSA

Never! thus, thus into my bosom grow,

O Vasavadutta.

VASAVADUTTA

O my happiness!

O Vuthsa, only name that's sweet on earth

I have murmured to the silence of the hours,

Give me delight, let me endure thy clasp

For ever. O loveliest head on all the earth!

VUTHSA

If we could thus remain through many ages,

Nor Time grow weary ever of such bliss,

O Vasavadutta!

VASAVADUTTA

I have loved thee always

Even when I knew it not. Was't not the love

Secret between us, drew thee here by force,

Vuthsa?

VUTHSA

Thou wilt not now refuse thy lips?

VASAVADUTTA

Nothing to thee.

VUTHSA

Yes, thou shalt be my queen

Surrendered henceforth, I thy slave enthroned.

Give me the largess of thyself that I may be
Act IV, Scene 2

The constant vassal of thy tyrant eyes
And captive of thy beauty all my days
And homage pay to thy sweet sovereign soul.
Thus, thus accept me.

VASAVADUTTA
I accept, my king,
Thy service and thy homage and thy love.
If in return the bounty of myself
I lavish on thee, will it be enough?
Can it hold thy life as thou wilt fill all mine?

VUTHSA
Weave thyself into morn and noon and eve.
We will not be as man and woman are
Who are with partial oneness satisfied,
Divided in our works, but one large soul
Parted in two dear bodies for more bliss.
For all my occupations thou shalt rule,
And those that take me from thy blissful shadow
Still with thy sweet remembrance shall inspired
Be done by thee.

VASAVADUTTA
If thy heart strays from me, —

VUTHSA
Never my heart.

VASAVADUTTA
If thy eyes stray from me,
O Vuthsa, —

VUTHSA
If I view all beautiful things
With natural delight, thou wilt pardon that
Because thou wilt share the joy.
VASAVADUTTA Then must I find Thy beauty there.

VUTHSA Tonight, my love, my love, Shall we not linger heart on heart tonight?

VASAVADUTTA Ah, Vuthsa, no.

VUTHSA Does not thy heart cry, yes? Are we not wedded? Shall we dally, love, Upon heaven’s outskirts, nor all Paradise This hour compel?

VASAVADUTTA (faintly) Munjoolica!

VUTHSA Beloved, thy eyes Beseech me to overcome thee with my will.

Munjoolica entering, Vuthsa releases Vasavadutta.

MUNJOOLICA Princess!

VASAVADUTTA Munjoolica! Why camest thou?

MUNJOOLICA Call’dst thou not?

VASAVADUTTA ’Tis forgotten. Oh, I remember. ’Twas to lead Vuthsa to his prison. (low) Smile,
Act IV, Scene 2

And I will beat thee! It was all thy fault.

Munjoolica
Oh, very little. Come, the hour is late;  
The Princess’ maidens will come trooping in.  
Turn not reluctant eyes behind but come.

She takes Vuthsa by both wrists  
and leads him out.

Vasavadutta
There is a fire within me and a cry,  
My longings have all broken in a flood  
And I am the tossed spray! O my desire  
That criest for the beauty of his limbs  
And to feel all his body with thyself  
And lose thy soul in his sweet answering soul,  
Wilt thou not all this night be silent? I  
Will walk upon the terrace in moonlight;  
Perhaps the large, silent night will give me peace.  
For now ’twere vain to sleep. O in his arms!  
His arms about me and the world expunged!
Scene 3

*The tower-room by the terrace.*
*Vuthsa asleep on a couch; Munjoolica.*

**MUNJOOLICA**
He sleeps and now to lure my victim here.
You! princess! Vasavadutta!

**VASAVADUTTA (appearing at the doorway)**
Didst thou call?

**MUNJOOLICA**
Yes, to come in from moonlight to the moon.
Thou hast never seen him yet asleep.

**VASAVADUTTA**
He sleeps!

**MUNJOOLICA**
His curls are pillowed on one golden arm
Like clouds upon the moon. Wilt thou not see?

**VASAVADUTTA**
I dare not. I will stand here and will see.

**MUNJOOLICA**
Thou shalt not. Either pass or enter in.

**VASAVADUTTA**
Thou playst the tyrant? I will stand and see.
MUNJOOLICA (pushing her suddenly in)
In with thee!

VASAVADUTTA
Munjoolica!

MUNJOOLICA
Hush, wake him not!
She draws her to the couch-side.
Is he not beautiful?
She draws back and after a moment goes quietly out and closes the door.

VASAVADUTTA
Oh, now I feel
My mother’s heart when over me she bowed
Wakeful at midnight! He has never had
Since his strange birth a mother’s, sister’s love.
O sleeping soul of my belovèd, hear
My vow, that while thy Vasavadutta lives,
Thou shalt not lack again one heart’s desire,
One tender bodily want. All things at once,
Wife, mother, sister, lover, playmate, friend,
Queen, comrade, counsellor I will be to thee.
Self shall not chill my heart with wedded strife,
Nor age nor custom pale my fire of love.
I have that strength in me, the strength to love of gods.

A tress of her hair falls on his face and awakes him.

VUTHSA
O Vasavadutta, thou hast come to me!

VASAVADUTTA
It was not I! Munjoolica dragged me in.
O where is she? The door!

She hastens to the door and finds it bolted from outside.
Munjoolica!
What is this jest? I shall be angry. Open.

MUNJOOLICA (outside, solemnly)
Bolted.

VASAVADUTTA
For pity, sweet Munjoolica!

MUNJOOLICA
I settle my accounts. Be happy. I
Am gone.

VASAVADUTTA
Go not, go not, Munjoolica.

VUTHSA (coming to her)
She’s gone, the thrice-blessed mischief, and tonight
This happy prison thou gav’st me is thine too.
Goddess! thou art shut in with thy delight.
Why wouldst thou flee then through the doors of heaven?

VASAVADUTTA
O not tonight! Be patient! I will ask
My father; he will give me as thy wife.

VUTHSA
Thou thinkst I’ll take thee from thy father’s hands
Like a poor Brahmin begging for a dole?
Not so do heroes’ children wed, nor they
Who from the loins of puissant princes sprang.
With the free interchange of looks and hearts
Nobly self-given, heaven for the priest
And the heart’s answers for the holy verse,
They are wedded or by wished-for violence torn
Consenting, yet resisting from the midst
Of many armèd men. So will I wed thee,
O Vasavadutta, so will bear by force
Out of the house and city of my foes
Breaking through hostile gates. By a long kiss
I'll seal thy lips that vainly would forbid.
Let thy heart speak instead the word of joy,
O Vasavadutta.

VASAVADUTTA
Do with me what thou wilt, for I am thine.
Act V

Scene 1

A room in Vasavadutta’s apartments.
Vasavadutta, Munjoolica.

VASAVADUTTA
So thou hast dared to come.

MUNJOOLICA
I have. Thou, dare
To look me in the eyes. Thou canst not. Then?

VASAVADUTTA
Hast thou no fear of punishment at all?

MUNJOOLICA
For shutting thee in with heaven? none, none at all.

VASAVADUTTA
How didst thou dare?

MUNJOOLICA
How didst thou dare, proud girl,
To make of kings and princesses thy slaves?
How dare to drag Soursashtra’s daughter here,
To keep her as thy servant and to load
With gifts, caresses, chidings and commands,
The puppet of thy sweet imperious will?
Thinkst thou my heart within me was not hot?
But now I am avenged on thee and all.
Act V, Scene 1

VASAVADUTTA
Vindictive traitress, I will beat thee.

MUNJOOLICA
Do
And I will laugh and ask thee of the night.

VASAVADUTTA
Then take thy chastisement.

She seizes and beats her with the
tassels of her girdle.

MUNJOOLICA
Stop! I'll bear no more.
Art not ashamed to spend thy heart in play
Knowing what thou hast done and what may come?
Think rather of what thou wilt do against
Thy dangerous morrow.

VASAVADUTTA
See what thou hast done!
How shall I look my father in the eyes?
What speak? what do? my Vuthsa how protect?

MUNJOOLICA
Thy father must not know of this.

VASAVADUTTA
Thou thinkst
My joy can be shut in from every eye?
Besides thee I have other serving-girls.

MUNJOOLICA
None who'ld betray thee. This thing known, his wrath
Would strike thy husband.
VASAVADUTTA
Me rather. I will throw
My heart and body, twice his shield, between.

MUNJOOLICA
You will be torn apart and Vuthsa penned
In some deep pit or fiercer vengeance taken
To soothe the stern man’s outraged heart.

VASAVADUTTA
Alas!
Thou hast a brain; give me thy counsel. The ill
Thyself hast done, must thou not remedy?

MUNJOOLICA
If thou entreat me much, I will and can.

VASAVADUTTA
I shall entreat thee!

MUNJOOLICA
Help thyself, proud child.

VASAVADUTTA
O, if I have thee at advantage ever!
Stay! I beseech thee, my Munjoolica, —

MUNJOOLICA
More humbly!

VASAVADUTTA
Oh!

She kneels.

I clasp thy feet. O friend,
In painful earnest I beseech thee now
To think, plan, spend for my sake all thy thought.
Remember how I soothed thy fallen life
Which might have been so hard. O thou my playmate,
Joy, servant, sister who hast always been,
Help me, save him, deceive my father’s wrath,
Then ask from me what huge reward thou wilt.

MUNJOOLICA
Nothing at all. Vengeance is sweet enough
Upon thy father and Gopalaca.
I’m satisfied now. First give me a promise;
Obey me absolutely in all things
Till Vuthsa’s free.

VASAVADUTTA
I promise. Thou art my guide
And I will walk religiously thy path.

MUNJOOLICA
Then think it done.

VASAVADUTTA (smiling on Vuthsa who enters)
Vuthsa, I asked not for thee.

VUTHSA
Thou didst. I heard thy heart demand me.

MUNJOOLICA
Hark!
What is this noise and laughter in the court?
See, see, the hunchbacked laughable old man!
What antics!

VUTHSA
Surely I know well those eyes.
Munjoolica, this is a friend. He must
Be brought here to me.
MUNJIOOLICA Princess, let us call him.
It is an admirable buffoon.

VASAVADUTTA Fie on thee!
Is this an hour for jests and antics?

MUNJIOOLICA (looking significantly at her)
Yes.

VASAVADUTTA Call him.

MUNJIOOLICA And thou go in.

VASAVADUTTA How, in!

MUNJIOOLICA This girl!
Hast thou not promised to obey me?

VASAVADUTTA Yes.

She goes in. Munjoolica descends.

VUTHSA Yougundharayan sends him. O, he strikes
The hour as if a god had planned all out.
This world's the puppet of a silent Will
Which moves unguessed behind our acts and thoughts;
Events bewildered follow its dim guidance
And flock where they are needed. Is't not thus,
O Thou, our divine Master, that Thou rulest,
Nor car'st at all because Thy joy and power
Are seated in Thyself beyond the ages?

*Munjoolica returns bringing in Vasuntha disguised.*

Who is this ancient shape thou bringest?

**Munjoolica**

I'd know

If he has a tongue as famous as his hump
And as preposterous; that to learn I bring him.

**Vasuntha**

Where is the only lady of the age?
Princes or else domestics, —

**Munjoolica**

Something, sir, of both.

**Vasuntha**

O masters then of princes, think not that I scorn
Your prouder royalty; but now if any
Will introduce my hungry old hunchback
To Avunthy’s far-famed paragon of girls,
He shall have tithe of all my golden gains.

**Munjoolica**

Why not to Avunthy’s governor and a prison,
Yougundharayan’s spy?

**Vasuntha (looking at Vuthsa)**

What’s this? what’s this?

**Munjoolica**

Strong tonic for a young old man.

**Vuthsa**

Speak freely
Thy message; there are only friends who hear.
VASUNTHA (to Vuthsa, with a humorous glance at Munjoolica)

Thy hours were not ill-spent. But thou hast nearly
Frighted these poor young hairs to real grey,
My sportive lady. Hear now why I crouch
Beneath the hoary burden of this beard
And the insignia of a royal hump,—
And an end to jesting. Vuthsa, in thy city
The people clamour; they besiege thy ministers
Railing at treason and demanding thee;
Nor can their rage be stilled. Do swiftly then
Whatever thou must do yet, swiftly break forth
Or war will seek thee clamouring round these doors.
To bear thy message back to him I come,
Upon Avunthy’s mountain verge who lurks,
Or else to aid thee if our help thou needest.

VUTHSA
Let him restrain my army forest-screened
Where the thick woodlands weave a border large
To the ochre garment round Avunthy’s loins
Nearest Ujjayiny. Under the cavern-hill
Of Lokanatha let him lie, but never
Transgress that margin till my chariot comes.

VASUNTHA
’Tis all?

VUTHSA
In my own strength all else I’ll do.

VASUNTHA
Good; then I go?

VUTHSA
Yes, but with gold, thy fee,
To colour thy going. Bring him gold, dear friend,
Or take from Vasavadutta gem or trinket
That shall bear out his mask to jealous eyes.

*Munjoolica goes into the inner chamber.*

**VASUNTHA**
Leave that to me.

**VUTHSA**
Thou hast adventured much
For my sake.

**VASUNTHA**
Poor Alurca cried to come,
But this thing asked for brains and he had only
Blunt courage and a harp. The danger’s nothing,
But oh, this hump! I shall not soon walk straight,
Nor rid myself of all the loyal aches
I bear for thee.

**VUTHSA**
Pangs fiercer would have chased them,
Hadst thou been caught, my friend. I shall remember.

*Munjoolica returns with gold and a trinket.*

Take now these gauds; haste, make thy swiftest way,
For I come close behind thee.

*Vasuntha goes.*

**MUNJOOILICA**
Tell me thy plan.

**VUTHSA**
These chambers are too strongly kept.

**MUNJOOILICA**
But there’s
The pleasure-ground.
VUTHSA
Let Vasavadutta call
Her brothers on an evening to the park
And wine flow fast. The nights are moonlit now.
How many gates?

MUNJOOLICA
Three, but the southern portal
Nearest the ramparts.

VUTHSA
There, how many guard?

MUNJOOLICA
Three armed Kiratha women keep the gate.

VUTHSA
I cannot hurt them. Thou must find a way.

MUNJOOLICA
They shall be drowned in wine. The streets outside?

VUTHSA
A chariot, — find one for me. I cannot fight
With Vasavadutta on my breast.

MUNJOOLICA
I think
That I shall find one.

VUTHSA
Do it. The rest is easy,
To break the keepers of the city-gate
In one fierce moment and be out and far.
There are arms enough in the palace?
MUNJOOLICA

The armoury
I use sometimes.

VUTHSA

Conceal them in the grounds.
No, in the chariot let them wait for me.

MUNJOOLICA

Thou wilt need both thy hands in such a fight.
Vuthsa, I'll be thy charioteer.

VUTHSA

Thou canst?

MUNJOOLICA

Hope not to find a better in thy realms.

VUTHSA

My battle-comrade then! Words are not needed
Between us.

He goes out.

MUNJOOLICA

More than that before all's done
I will be to thee. Good fortune makes hard things
Most easy; for the god comes with laden hands.
If the strange word the queen half spoke to me
Means anything, Vicurna's car shall bear
His sister to her joy and sovereign throne.
Scene 2

The pleasure-groves of the palace in Ujjayiny.
Gopalaca, Vuthsa, Vicurna; at a distance under the trees
Ungarica, Vasavadutta and Umba.

Gopalaca

Vuthsa, the wine is singing in my brain,
The moonlight floods my soul. These are the hours
When the veil for eye and ear is almost rent
And we can hear wind-haired Gundhurvas sing
In a strange luminous ether. Thou art one,
Vuthsa, who has escaped the bars and walks
Smiling and harping to enchanted men.

Vuthsa

It was your earthly moonlight drew me here
And thou, Gopalaca, and Vindhya's hills
And Vasavadutta. Thou shalt drink with me
In moonlight in Cowsamby.

Gopalaca

Vuthsa, when?
What wild and restless spirit keeps thy feet
Tonight, Vicurna?

Vicurna

'Tis the wine. I wait.

Gopalaca

For what?
VICURNA *(with a harsh laugh)*
Why, for the wine to do its work.

GOPALACA
Where’s Vasavadutta? Call her to us here.
We are not happy if she walks apart.

VICURNA
There with the mother underneath the trees.

GOPALACA
Call them. Thou, Vuthsa, she and I will drink
One cup of love and pledge our hearts in wine
Never to be parted. Thou deceiv’st the days,
O lax and laggard lover.

VUTHSA
’Tis the last.
Tomorrow lights another scene.

GOPALACA
’Tis good
That thou inclin’st thy heart. My father grows
Stern and impatient. This done, all is well.

VUTHSA
All in this poor world cannot have their will;
Its joys are bounded. I submit, it seems.
Wilt thou incline thy heart, Gopalaca?

GOPALACA
To what?

VUTHSA
To this fair moonlit night’s result
And all that follows after.
 GOPALACA
Easily
I promise that.

VUTHSA
All surely will be well.

Munjoolica arrives from the gates; Vicurna
returning from the trees with Ungarica, Vasavadutta
and Umba, goes forward to meet her.

VICURNA
Is’t done?

MUNJOOLICA
They sprawl half-senseless near the gate.

VICURNA
Whole bound and gagged were best. Give Vuthsa word.

UNGARICA
Munjoolica, is it tonight?

MUNJOOLICA
What, madam?

UNGARICA (striking her lightly on the cheek)
Vicurna rides tonight?

MUNJOOLICA
He rides tonight.

UNGARICA
Let him not learn, nor any, that I knew.

She returns to the others.
GOPALACA
Come, all you wanderers. Mother, here’s a cup
That thou must bless with thy fair magic hands
Before we drink it.

UNGARICA
May those who drink be one
In heart and great and loving all their days
Favoured by Shiva and by Luxmie blest
Until the end and far beyond.

GOPALACA
Drink, Vuthsa.
Three hearts meet in this cup.

UNGARICA
Who drinks this first,
He shall be first and he shall be the bond.

GOPALACA
Drink, sister Vasavadutta, queen of all.

UNGARICA
Queen thou shalt be, my daughter, as in thy heart,
So in thy love and fortunes.

GOPALACA
Mine the last.

UNGARICA
Thou sayest, my son, yet first mid many men.

GOPALACA
Whatever place, so in this knot ’tis found.

UNGARICA (embracing Vasavadutta closely)
Forget not thy dear mother in thy bliss.
Gopalaca, attend me to the house,
I have a word for thee, my son.

**GOPALACA**
I come.

*They go towards the palace.*

**VUTHSA**
Is it the moment?

**MUNJOOLICA**
Yonder lies the gate.

**VUTHSA**
Love! Vasavadutta.

**VASAVADUTTA**
Vuthsa! Vuthsa! speak.
What has been quivering in the air this night?

*He takes her in his arms.*

**VUTHSA**
Thy rapt and rapture far away, O love.
Look farewell to thy father’s halls.

**VASAVADUTTA**
Alas!
What is this rashness? Thou art unarmed; the guards
Will slay thee.

**VUTHSA**
Fear not! Thou in my arms,
Our fates a double shield, thou hast no fear,
Nor anything this night to think or do
Save in the chariot lie between my knees
And listen to the breezes in thy locks
Whistling to thee of far Cowsamby’s groves.
He bears her towards the gate, Vicurna crossing him in his return.

Vicurna
Haste, haste! all's ready.

Munjoolica
Umba! Umba! here!

Umba (who comes running up)
Oh, what is this?

Vicurna
Should not this girl be bound?

Umba
Give rather thy commands.

Munjoolica
Thou'lt face the wrath?

Umba
O, all for my dear mistress. If the King slays me, I shall have lived and died for her for whom I was born.

Munjoolica
Hide in the groves until thou hearest a rumour growing from the walls, then seek the house and save thyself. Till then let no man find thee.

Umba
I will lose myself in the far bushes. O come safely through. Could you not have trusted me in this?
MUNJOOLICA  
Weep not!
I'll have thee to Cowsamby if thou live.

VICURNA
Come, follow, follow. He is near the gates.

MUNJOOLICA
I to my freedom, she her royal crown!
Scene 3

Vasavadutta’s apartments.
Mahasegn, Ungarica, Umba bound, armed women.

MAHASEGN
She is not here. O treachery! If thou
Wert privy to this, thou shalt die impaled
Or cloven in many pieces.

UMBAM
I am resigned.

UNGARICA
Thou’llt stain thy soul with a woman’s murder, King?

MAHASEGN
’Tis truth; she is too slight a thing to crush.
Are not the gardens searched? Who are these slaves
Who dare to loiter? If he’s seized, he dies.

UNGARICA
Wilt thou make ill much worse, — if this be ill?

MAHASEGN
How sayst thou? ’Tis not ill? My house is shamed,
My pride downtrodden; all the country laughs
Already at the baffled Mahasegn
Whose daughter was plucked out by one frail boy
From midst his golden city and his hosts
Unnumbered. Who shall honour me henceforth?
Who worship? who obey? who fear my sword?
UNGARICA
Cowsamby's king has kept the Aryan law,
Nor is thy daughter shamed at all in this,
But taken with noblest honour.

MAHASEGN
'Tis a law
I spurn. My will is trodden underfoot,
My pride which to preserve or to avenge
Is the warrior's righteousness. Udaian dies.
Or if he reach his capital, my hosts
Shall thunder on and blot it into flame,
A pyre for his torn dishonoured corpse.

UNGARICA
Hast thou forgotten thy daughter's heart? Her good,
Her happiness are nothing then to thee?

MAHASEGN
Is she my daughter? She'll not wish to live
Her sire's dishonour.

UNGARICA
Thickest thou he seized her,
Her heart consenting not?

MAHASEGN
If it be so
And she thus rebel to my will and blood,
Let her eyes gaze upon their sensuous cause
Of treason mocked with many marring spears.

UNGARICA
Art thou an Aryan king and threatenest thus?
Thy daughter only for thyself was loved?
MAHASEGN
Silence, my queen! Chafe not the lion wroth.

UNGARICA
The tiger rather, if this mood thou nurse.

A Kiratha woman enters.

MAHASEGN
Thou com’st, slow slave!

KIRATHIE
King, all the grounds are searched.
The guards lie gagged below the southern gate;
All's empty.

MAHASEGN
Where’s Gopalaca? He too
Has leisures!

KIRATHIE
There’s a captain from the walls.

MAHASEGN
Ha! bring him.

The Kirathie brings in the Avunthian captain.
Well!

CAPTAIN
Vuthsa has broken forth.
The wardens of the gate are maimed or dead;
Triumphant, bearing Vasavadutta, far
Exults his chariot o’er the moonlit plains.

MAHASEGN
O bitter messenger! Pursue, pursue!
CAPTAIN
Rebha with his armed men and stern-lipped speed
Is hot behind.

MAHASEGN
Let all my force that keeps
Ujjayiny, be hurled after them, one speed.
Call, call Vicurna; let the boy bring back
First fame of arms today in Vuthsa slain,
His sister’s ravisher.

CAPTAIN
Let not my words
Offend my king. ‘Twas Prince Vicurna’s car
Bore forth his sister and Vicurna’s self
Rode as her guard.

MAHASEGN (after an astonished pause)
Do all my house, my blood
Revolt against me?

CAPTAIN
The princess Bundhumathie,
Thy daughter’s serving-maiden, at Vuthsa’s side
Controlled his coursers.

MAHASEGN
Her I do not blame,
Yet will most fiercely punish. Captain, go;
Gather my chariots; let them gallop fast
Crushing these fugitives’ new-made tracks.

As the captain departs, Gopalaca enters.
Gopalaca,

Head, son, my armies; bear thy sister back
Before irrevocable shame is done,
Nor with thy father’s greatness unavenged return.
Act V, Scene 3

GOPALACA
My father, hear me. Though quite contrary
To all our planned design this thing has fallen,
Yet no dishonour tarnishes the deed,
But as a hero with a hero’s child
Has Vuthsa seized the girl. We planned a snare,
He by a noble violence answers us.
We sought to bribe him to a vassal’s state
Dangling the jewel of our house in front;
He keeps his freedom and enjoys the gem.
Then since we chose the throw of dice and lost,
Let us be noble gamblers, like a friend
Receive God’s hostile chance, nor house blind wounded thoughts
As common natures might. Sanction this rapt;
Let there be love twixt Vuthsa’s house and us.

MAHASEGN
I see that in their hearts all have conspired
Against my greatness. Thou art Avunthy’s prince,
My second in my cares. Hear then! if twixt
Ujjayiny and my frontiers they are seized,
My fiercer will shall strike; but if they reach
Free Vindhya, thou thyself shalt make the peace.
Take Vasavadutta’s household and this girl,
Take all her wealth and gauds; lead her thyself
Or follow to Cowsamby, but leave not
Till she is solemnised as Vuthsa’s queen.
Sole let her reign throned by Udaian’s side;
Then only shall peace live betwixt our realms.

GOPALACA
And I will fetch Vicurna back.

MAHASEGN
Son, never.
I exile the rebel to his name and house.
Let him with Vuthsa whom he chooses dwell,
My foeman’s servant.

He goes out, followed by the guards.
Gopalaca unbinds Umba.

UNGARICA
If we give his rage its hour,
’Twill sink. His pride will call Vicurna back,
If not the father’s heart.

GOPALACA
Haste, gather quickly
Her wealth and household. I would make earliest speed,
Lest Vuthsa by ill hap be seized for ill.

UNGARICA
Fear not, my son. The hosts are not on earth
That shall prevail against these two in arms.
Scene 4

_The Avunthian forests; moonlight._

_Vuthsa, Vasavadutta, Munjoolica._

**VUTHSA**
Thou hast held the reins divinely. We approach
Our kingdom’s border.

**MUNJOOLICA**
But the foe surround.

**VUTHSA**
We will break through as twice now we have done.
Vicurna comes.

_Vicurna arrives ascending._

**VICURNA**
Vuthsa, yon Rebha asks
For parley; is it given? I’d hold him here
While by a long masked woodland breach I know
Silent we pass their cordon.

**VUTHSA**
Force is best.

**VICURNA**
Vuthsa, to my mind more; but I would spare
Our Vasavadutta’s heart these fierce alarms.
Though she breathe nothing, yet she suffers.

**VUTHSA**
Good!
We’ll choose thy peaceful breach.  

Vicurna descends.

VASAVADUTTA

Vuthsa, if I
Stood forth and bade their leader cease pursuit
Since of my will I go, he must desist.

VUTHSA

It would diminish, love, my victory
And triumph which are thine.

VASAVADUTTA

Then let it go.
I would not stain thy fame in arms, though over
My house’s head its wheels go trampling.

MUNJOOLICA (yawning)

Ough!
If we could parley a truce for sleep. This fighting
Makes very drowsy.

Vicurna returns with Rebha.

VUTHSA

Well, captain, thy demand!

REBHA

Vuthsa, thou art environed. Dost thou yield?

VUTHSA

Thou mockst! Return; we’ll break the third last time
Thy fragile chain. Are thy dead counted?

REBHA

The living
Outnumber their first strength; more force comes on
Fast from Ujjayiny. Therefore yield the princess.
Thyself depart a freeman to thy realms.

VUTHSA
Knowst thou thy offer is an insolence?

REBHA
Then, Prince, await the worst. Living and bound
Or else a corpse we'll bring thee back to our city.
Three times around thee is my cordon passed,
Thy steeds are spent, nor hast thou Urjoon’s quiver.
The dawn prepares; think it thy last.

VUTHSA
At noon
I give thee tryst within my borders.  

Rebha goes.

VICURNA
Swift!
Before he reach his men and back ascend,
We must be far. Munjoolica, mount my horse,
Ride to Yougundharayan, bid him bring on
His numbers; for I see armies thundering towards us
With angry speed o’er the Avunthian plains.
I’ll guide the car.

MUNJOOLICA
The horse?

VICURNA
Bound in yon grove.
Rein lightly; he’s high-mettled.

MUNJOOLICA
Teach me not.
There is no horse yet foaled I cannot ride.
Which is my way through all this leafy tangle?
Vicurna
Thou canst not miss it; for yon path leads only
To Lokanatha’s hill beyond our borders.
Now on!

Vuthsa
The moonlight and the glad night-winds
Have rustled luminously among the leaves
And sung me wordless paeans while I fought.
Now let them fall into a rapturous strain
Of silence, while I ride with thee safe-clasped
Upon my bosom.

Vasavadutta
If I could hold thee safe at last!
Scene 5

On the Avunthian border. Roomunwath, Youngndharayan, Alurca, soldiers.

ROOMUNWATH
The dawn with rose and crimson crowned the hills, 
There was no sign of Vuthsa’s promised wheels. 
Another noon approaches.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Two days only 
Vasuntha’s here. Yet is Udaian swift 
With the stroke he in a secret sloth prepares.

ROOMUNWATH
We learned that though too late. A secret rashness, 
A boy’s wild venture with his life for stake 
And a kingdom! Dangerously dawns this reign.

ALURCA
See, see, a horseman over Avunthy’s edge 
Rides to us. He quests forward with his eyes.

ROOMUNWATH
Whoe’er he be, he has travelled far. His beast 
Labours and stumbles on.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
This is no horseman; 
It is a woman rides though swift and armed.
ALURCA
She has seen us and dismounts.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
A woman rides!
My mind misgives me. Is’t some evil chance?
Comes she a broken messenger of grief?
She runs as if pursued.

ALURCA
She’s young and fair.

Munjoolica arrives.

MUNJOOLICA
Art thou King Vuthsa’s captain?

ROOMUNWATH
I am he.

MUNJOOLICA
Gather thy force; for Vuthsa drives here fast,
But hostile armies surge behind his wheels.
Fast, fast, into the woods your succour bring,
Lest over his wearied coursers and spent quiver
Numbers and speed prevail.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Roomunwath, swift.

Roomunwath goes.

But who art thou or where shall be my surety
That thou art no Avunthian sent to lure
Our force into an ambush?

MUNJOOLICA
This is surely
Yougundharayan of the prudent brain.
Thy question I reply; the rest resolve
But swiftly, lest Fate mock thy wary thoughts. My name is Bundhumathie and my father Sourashtra held; but I, his daughter, taken Served in Avunthy Vasavadutta. Knowest thou This ring?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
'Tis Vuthsa's.

MUNJOOLICA
Young Vicurna’s bay I rode, who guards his sister’s ravisher Against the angry rescuers. Will these riddles, Wisest of statesmen, solve thy cautious doubt?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Thy tale is strange; but thou at least art true.

MUNJOOLICA
Thou art not prudent only!

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Forward then. Roomunwath’s camp already is astir.
Scene 6

Near the edge of the forest in Avunthy.
Roomunwath, Yougundharayan, Alurca, Munjoolica, forces.

ROOMUNWATH
Stay, stay our march; 'tis Vuthsa’s car arrives.
The tired horses stumble as they pause.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
There is a noise of armies close behind
And out of woods the Avunthian wheels emerge.
There arrive Vuthsa, Vicurna, Vasavadutta.

VUTHSA
My father, all things to their hour are true
And I bring back my venture. Am I pardoned
Its secrecy?

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
My pupil and son no more,
But hero and monarch! Thou hast set thy foot
Upon Avunthy’s head.

VUTHSA
Yet still thy son.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Hail, Vasavadutta, great Cowsamby’s queen.

VASAVADUTTA (smiling happily on Vuthsa)
My crown was won by desperate alarms.
It was a perilous race and in the end
Fate won by a head. Were it not the difficult paths
Baffled their numbers, we were hardly here,
So oft we had to pause and rest our steeds.
But in less strength they dared not venture on.

They range their battle now.

Speak thou to them.

War must not break.

Demand a parley there.

If we must fight, it shall be for defence
Retreating while we war unless they urge
Too far their violent trespass.

Rebha comes.

Ye are suitors for a parley?

Rebha, with beaten men?

Because you had your sister in the car
Our shafts were hampered.
VICURNA

Nor could with swords prevail
Against two boys so many hundred men.

REBHA

O Prince Vicurna, what thou hast done today
Against thy name and nation, I forbear
To value. 'Tis thy first essay of arms.

VICURNA

Well dost thou not to weigh thy better's deeds.

YOUUGUNDHARAYAN

Rebha, wilt thou urge vainly yet this strife?
What hitherto was done, was private act
And duel; now if thou insist on fight,
Two nations are embroiled; and to what end?

REBHA

I will take Vuthsa and the Princess back.
It is my king's command.

YOUUGUNDHARAYAN

The impossible
No man is bound to endeavour. While we fight,
King Vuthsa with the captive princess bounds
Unhindered to his high-walled capital.

REBHA

It is my king's command. I am his arm
And not his counsellor; nor to use my brain
Have any right, save for the swift way to fulfil
His proud and absolute mandate.

YOUUGUNDHARAYAN

If there came
Word from Ujjayiny, then pursuit must cease?
Act V, Scene 6

REBHA
Then truly.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Send a horseman, Rebha, ask.
All meanwhile shall remain as now it stands.

REBHA
I'll send no horseman; I will fight.

YOUGUNDHARAYAN
Then war!

REBHA
We fear it not. This is strange insolence
To stand in arms upon Avunthian ground
And issue mandates to the country’s lords.

ROOMUNWATH
Rebha, yet pause! No messenger thou needst.
Look where yon chariot furious-bounding comes
And over it streams Avunthy's royal flag.

REBHA
It is the prince Gopalaca. Of this I am glad.

VASAVADUTTA
O if my brother comes, then all is well.

VUTHSA
For thou art Luxmie. Thou beside me, Fate
And Fortune, peace and battle must obey
The vagrant lightest-winged of my desires.

Gopalaca arrives; with him Umba.
 GOPALACA
Hail, Vuthsa! peace and love between our lands!

VUTHSA
I hold them here incarnate. Welcome thou,
Their strong achiever.

 GOPALACA
As earnest and as proof
Receive this fair accomplice of thy flight
Unpunished. Sister, take her to thy arms.

VASAVADUTTA
O Umba, thou com’st safe to me!

 GOPALACA
And all
My sister’s household and her wealth comes fast
Behind me. Only one claim Avunthy keeps;
My sister shall sit throned thy only queen,—
Which, pardon me, my eyes must witness done
With honour to our name.

VUTHSA
Cowsamby’s majesty
Will brook not even in this, Gopalaca,
A foreign summons. Surely my will and love
Shall throne most high, not strong Avunthy’s child,
But Vasavadutta; whether alone, her will
And mine, the nation and the kingdom’s good
Consenting shall decide. Therefore this claim
Urge not, my brother.

 GOPALACA
Let not this divide us.
The present’s gladness is enough: the future’s hers
And thine, Udaian, nor shall any man
Compel thee. Boy, thy revolt was rash and fierce
Wronging thy house and thy high father's will.
Exiled must thou in far Cowsamby dwell
Until his wrath is dead.

Vicurna

I care not, brother.
I have done my will, I have observed the right.
Near Vuthsa and my sister's home enough
And I shall see new countries.

Vuthsa

Follow behind,
Gotalaca; thy sister's household bring
And all the force thou wilt. We speed in front.
Ride thou, Alurca, near us; let thy harp
Speak of love's anthems and her golden life
To Vasavadutta. Love, the storm is past,
The peril o'er. Now we shall glide, my queen,
Through green-gold woods and between golden fields
To float for ever in a golden dream,
O earth's gold Luxmic, till the shining gates
Eternal open to us thy heavenly home.