

PLAY

AUTUMN-FESTIVAL

Rabindranath Tagore



CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

SANYASI, *Emperor Vijayaditya in disguise*

THAKURDADA

LUCKESWAR

UPANANDA

RAJAH

BOYS

MINISTERS, COURTIER, etc.

ACT

Scene. *The forest near the river Vetasini.*

LUCKESWAR and UPANANDA.

LUCKESWAR : Have you brought me the money which is long overdue?

UPANANDA : My master died last night.

LUCKESWAR : Died! Absurd! That trick won't do. What about the money?

UPANANDA : He hasn't left anything except the vina which was his only means of paying off your debt.

LUCKESWAR : Only the vina! That's a consoling piece of news to bring to me.

UPANANDA : I haven't come to give you news. There was a time when I was a beggar in the street; he sheltered me and allowed me to share his food, which was scanty enough. I have come to offer my service till his debt is fully paid.

LUCKESWAR : Indeed! Now that he is no more you have come to share my food, which is not overabundant. I am not such an ass as to be taken in by you. However let me first know what you can do.

UPANANDA : I can copy manuscripts and illuminate them. Food I won't take in your house. I shall earn it and also pay off the debt.

LUCKESWAR : [*Aside*] The vina player was a big fool and he has moulded this boy in his own pattern. This vagabond is pining to take up some voluntary burden to be crushed to death. For some creatures this is the only natural death.—Good, I agree. But you must pay me the money on the third day of each month, otherwise—

UPANANDA : Otherwise what! Your threats are of no use. In memory of my dear master I take this up. But no threats for me, I warn you.

LUCKESWAR : Don't take offence, my child. You are made of gold, every inch of you: you are a jewel. You know I have my god in the temple, his worship depends upon my charity. If, owing to any irregularity in your payment, I have to curtail the temple expenses, the sin will be on your head. [*Upananda moves away to another side of the forest.*] Who's that! It must be my own boy prowling about this place. I am sure the rogue is seeking for the place where I keep my treasure hidden. Simply out of fear of these prying noses I have to remove it from place to place.—Dhanapati, why on earth are you here?

DHANAPATI : If you give me leave, I can have my game here this morning with the other boys.

LUCKESWAR : [*Aside.*] I know their game. They have got scent of that big pearl which I hid near this spot. [*To Dhanapati*] No, that won't do! Come at once to your multiplication table.

DHANAPATI : But, Sir, it is a beautiful day—

LUCKESWAR : What do you mean by the day being beautiful! Come at once!

[*Drags him away.*]

Enter BOYS with THAKURDADA.

FIRST BOY : You belong to our party, Thakurdada!

SECOND BOY : No, to ours.

THAKURDADA : Children, I don't sell myself in shares. I must remain undivided. Now for the song. [*They sing.*] Over the green and yellow rice fields sweeps the shadows of the autumn clouds followed by the swift-chasing sun. The bees forget to sip their honey; drunken with light they foolishly hover and hum. The ducks in the islands of the river clamour in joy for nothing.

Enter another group of boys.

THIRD BOY : Was it fair? Why didn't you call us when you came out?

THAKURDADA : It is your part to call me out. Don't quarrel, Finish the song. [*They sing.*] Let none go back home, brothers, this morning, let none go to work. Let us take the blue sky by storm and plunder space as we run. Laughter floats in the air like foam on the flood. Brothers, let us squander our morning infutile songs.

FIRST BOY : Look there Thakurdada, a sanyasi is coming.

SECOND BOY : It's grand! We shall have a game with the sanyasi. We shall be his followers.

THIRD BOY : We shall follow him to the end of the earth and nobody will be able to find us out.

THAKURDADA : Hush, he has come.

THE BOYS : [*Shouting*] Sanyasi Thakur! Sanyasi Thakur!

THAKURDADA : Stop that noise! The father will be angry.

FIRST BOY : Sanyasi Thakur, will you be angry with us?

SECOND BOY : We shall become your followers for this morning.

SANYASI : Excellent! When you have had your turn, I shall be your followers. That will be splendid fun!

THAKURDADA : My salutation. Who are you, father?

SANYASI : I am a student.

THAKURDADA : Student!

SANYASI : I have come out to fling to the four winds my books.

THAKURDADA : I understand. You want to be lightened of your learning, to follow the path of wisdom unburdened.

FIRST BOY : Thakurdada is wasting time with talk, and our holiday will come to its close.

SANYASI : You are right, my boys. My holidays are also near their end.

THE BOYS : Have you long holidays?

SANYASI : Oh! No, extremely short. My school-master is already after me.

FIRST BOY : You frighten us! Even you have school-masters?

SANYASI : What boy is that under the shade of that tree, merged in his manuscripts?

BOYS : He is Upananda.

FIRST BOY : Upananda, we are Sanyasi Thakur's followers, come and become our chief.

UPANANDA : Not today. I have my work.

SECOND BOY : No work. You must come!

UPANANDA : I must Finish copying manuscripts.

THIRD BOY : Father, you ask him to come. He won't listen to us.

SANYASI : [*To Upananda.*] What work have you, my son? Today is not meant for work.

UPANANDA : I know it is our holiday. But I have my debt to pay and I must work.

THAKURDADA : Upananda, your debt! To whom?

UPANANDA : My master has died, he is in debt to Luckeswar. I must pay it off.

THAKURDADA : Alas! That such a boy as you must pay your debts, and on such a day! The first breath of the autumn has sent a shiver through the white crest of flowering grass and the *shiuli* blossoms have offered their fragrance to the air, as if in the joy of reckless sacrifice, and it pains me to see that boy sitting in the midst of all this, foiling to pay his debts.

SANYASI : Why, this is as beautiful as all these flowers,—his paying his debts. He has made this morning glorious, sitting in its centre. Baba, you go on writing, let me watch you. Every line you finish brings you freedom, and thus you fill your holiday with truth. Give me one of your manuscripts and let me help you.

THAKURDADA : I have my spectacles with me, let me also sit down to this work.

FIRST BOY : We shall also write. This is great fun!

SECOND BOY : Yes, yes, let us try.

UPANANDA : But it will be such a great trouble to you, father.

SANYASI : That is why I join you. We shall take trouble for fun. What do you say to that, boys?

THE BOYS : [*Clapping hands.*] Yes, yes.

FIRST BOY : Give me one of the books.

SECOND BOY : And me also.

UPANANDA : But are you sure you can do it.

THE BOYS : O! Yes!

UPANANDA : You won't be tired?

SECOND BOY : Never.

UPANANDA : You will have to be very careful.

FIRST BOY : Try us.

UPANANDA : There must be no mistakes.

SECOND BOY : Not a bit.

SANYASI : Baba Upananda, what was your master's name?

UPANANDA : Surasen.

SANYASI : Surasen, the vina player?

UPANANDA : Yes, father. Was he known to you?

SANYASI : I came to this place with the one hope of hearing him.

UPANANDA : Had he such fame?

THAKURDADA : Was he such a master, that a *sanyasi* like yourself should have come all this way to hear him? Then we must have missed knowing him truly.

SANYASI : But the Rajah of this place?

THAKURDADA : The Rajah never even saw him. But where could you have heard him play?

SANYASI : I suppose you know that there is a Rajah whose name is Vijayaditya.

THAKURDADA : We may be very provincial, but surely you don't expect us not even to know him.

SANYASI : Very likely. Surasen played the vina in his court, where I was present. The Rajah tried hard to keep him permanently in his capital, but he failed.

THAKURDADA : What a pity that we did not honour him.

SANYASI : But that neglect has only made him all the greater. God has called him to His own court. Upananda, how did you come to know him?

UPANANDA : At my father's death I came to this town seeking shelter. It was at the end of July and the rain was pouring down in torrents. I was trying to find a corner in Lokanath temple, when the priest came and drove me out, expecting me to be of a low caste. My master was playing the vina in the temple. At once he came up and putting his arms round my neck asked me to come to his house. From that day he brought me up suffering calumny for my sake.

SANYASI : How did you learn illuminating manuscripts?

UPANANDA : At first I asked him to teach me to play the vina, so that I could earn something and be useful to him. He said, 'Baba, this art is not for filling one's stomach.' And so he taught me how to use paints for copying books.

SANYASI : Though Surasen's vina is silent, I hear the undying music of his life through you. My boy go on with your writing.

THE BOYS : [*Starting up*] There he comes, Lucki's owl! We must run away.

[*They go.*]

Enters LUCKESWAR.

LUCKESWAR : Horror! Upananda is sitting exactly on the spot where the pearl is hidden. I was simple to think he was a fool seeking to pay off other people's debts. He is cleverer than he looked. He is after my pearl. I see he has captured a sanyasi to help him. Upananda!

UPANANDA : What's the matter!

LUCKESWAR : Get up from that spot at once! What business have you to be sitting there!

UPANANDA : And what business have you to be shouting at me like that! Does this place belong to you?

LUCKESWAR : It is no concern of yours, if it does or does not. You are cunning! The other day this fellow came to me, looking innocent as a babe whose mother's milk had hardly dried on his lips. And I believed him when he said that he came to pay his master's debts. Of course, it is in the King's statute also,—

UPANANDA : I sat down to my work here for that very purpose.

LUCKESWAR : That very purpose! How old am I do you think? Only born overnight?

SANYASI : But why do you suspect him and of what?

LUCKESWAR : As if you know nothing! False Sanyasi!

UPANANDA : [*Getting excited.*] Won to just smash his teeth with this pestle of mine!

[*Luckeswar hides himself behind the Sanyasi.*]

SANYASI : Don't be excited. Luckeswar knows human nature better than any of you here. Directly he sets his eyes upon me, I am caught,—a sanyasi false from his matted hair to his bare foot. I have passed through many countries and everywhere they believed in me, but Luckeswar is hard to deceive.

LUCKESWAR : [*Aside*] I am afraid I am mistaken. It was rash on my part. He may curse me. I still have three boats on the sea. [*Taking the dust off Sanyasi's feet.*] My salutation to you, father! I did make a blunder. Thakurdada, you had better take our Sanyasi to our house. I'll give him some alms. But you go First; don't delay, I shall be there in a minute.

THAKURDADA : You are excessively kind. Do you think that father come crossing hills and seas to accept a handful of rice from you?

SANYASI : Why not Thakurdada! Where that handful of rice is so very dear, I must claim it. Come Luckeswar!

LUCKESWAR : I shall follow you. Upananda, you get up first! Get up, I say, with your books and other nonsense.

UPANANDA : Very well, I get up. Than I cut off all connection with you for good.

LUCKESWAR : That will be a great relief to me. I was getting on splendidly before I had any connection with you.

UPANANDA : My debt is paid with this insult that I suffer from your hands.

[Goes.

LUCKESWAR : My God! Sepoys riding on horses are coming this way! I wonder if our Rajah also—I prefer Upananda to him. [*To Sanyasi*] Father, by your holy feet I entreat you, sit on this spot, just on this spot; no, slightly to the left, slightly more. Yes, now it is all right. Sit Firmly on this plot of grass. Let the Rajah come or the Emperor, don't you budge an inch. If you keep my words, I'll satisfy you later on.

THAKURDADA : What is the matter with Luckeswar? Has he gone mad?

LUCKESWAR : Father, the very sight of me suggests money to my Rajah. My enemies have falsely informed him that I keep my treasure hidden underground. Since this report, our Rajah has been digging an enormous number of wells in this kingdom. When asked for reasons, he said it was to remove the scarcity of water from this land. And now I can't sleep at nights because of the fear that a sudden fit of his generosity might lead him to remove the water scarcity from the floor of my own dwelling.

Enters the King's MESSENGER.

MESSENGER : Father, my salutation! You are Apurva-Ananda?

SANYASI : Some people know me by that name.

MESSENGER : The rumour is abroad of your extraordinary powers. Our Rajah is desirous of seeing you.

SANYASI : He will see me whenever he sets his eyes on me.

MESSENGER : If you would kindly—

SANYASI : I have given my word to somebody that I shall remain immovable in this place.

MESSENGER : The King's garden is close by.

SANYASI : All the less trouble for him to come.

MESSENGER : I shall make known to him your wishes.

[Goes.

THAKURDADA : Since an irruption of Rajahs is apprehended, I take my leave.

SANYASI : Do you gather my scattered friends together and keep them ready for me.

THAKURDADA : Let disasters come in the shape of Kings or of anarchy firmly hold by you.

[Goes.

Enters LUCKESWAR.

LUCKESWAR : I have overheard all. You are the famous Apurva Ananda! I ask your pardon for the liberties I have taken.

SANYASI : I readily pardon you for your calling me a sham sanyasi.

LUCKESWAR : But, father, mere pardon does not cost much. You cannot dismiss Luckeswar with that. I must have a boon,—quite a substantial one.

SANYASI : What boon do you ask?

LUCKESWAR : I must confess to you, father, that I have piled up a little money for myself, though not quite to the measure of what people imagine. But the amount does not satisfy me. Tell me the secret of some treasure, which may lead me to the end of my wanderings.

SANYASI : I am also seeking for this.

LUCKESWAR : I can't believe it.

SANYASI : Yes, it is true.

LUCKESWAR : Then you are wider awake than we are.

SANYASI : Certainly.

LUCKESWAR : [*Whispering*] Have got on the track?

SANYASI : Otherwise I shouldn't be roving about like this.

LUCKESWAR : [*Touching his fret.*] Do make it a little plain to me. I swear I shall keep it secret from everybody else.

SANYASI : Then listen. I am on the quest of the golden lotus on which Lakshmi keeps her feet.

LUCKESWAR : How bold! This takes my breath away. But, do you think you can find it unaided? It means expense. Do one thing, let us go shares in it.

SANYASI : In that case you will have to be a sanyasi, never touching gold for a long time.

LUCKESWAR : That is hard.

SANYASI : You can only prosper in this business if you give up all others.

LUCKESWAR : That sounds very much like bankruptcy. But all the same I do believe in you—which astounds even myself. There comes our Rajah! Let me hide behind this tree.

[*Hides himself.*]

Enters the RAJAH.

RAJAH : My salutation!

SANYASI : Victory to you! What is your desire?

RAJAH : Surely you can divine it already. My desire is to rule over a kingdom which is supreme.

SANYASI : Then begin by giving up what is small.

RAJAH : The over lordship of Vijayaditya has become intolerable to me.

SANYASI : To tell you the truth he is growing too much even for me.

RAJAH : Is that so?

SANYASI : Yes. All my practices are to bring him under control.

RAJAH : Is that why you have become a sanyasi?

SANYASI : Yes.

RAJAH : Do you think your charms will be potent enough to bring you success?

SANYASI : It is not impossible.

RAJAH : In that case do not forget me.

SANYASI : I shall bring him to your court.

RAJAH : Yes, his pride must be brought low.

SANYASI : That will do him good.

RAJAH : With your leave I take my departure.

[Goes.

[Returning] Father, I am sure you know Vijayaditya personally is he as great as the people make him out to be?

SANYASI : He is like an ordinary person,—it is his dress which gives him a false distinction.

RAJAH : Just what I thought. Quite an ordinary person!

SANYASI : I want to convince him that he is very much so. I must free his mind from the notion that he is a different creature from others.

RAJAH : Yes, yes, let him feel it. Fools puff him up and he believes them, being the greatest of their kind. Pull down his conceit to the dust.

SANYASI : I am engaged in that difficult task.

[The Rajah goes.

Enters UPANANDA.

UPANANDA : Father, the burden is not yet off my mind.

SANYASI : What is it that troubles you, my son?

UPANANDA : In my anger, at the insult offered to me, I thought I was right in disowning my debt to him. Therefore I went back home. But just as I was dusting my master's vina its strings struck up a chord and it sent a thrill through my heart. I felt that I must do something super-human for my master. If I can lay down my life to pay his debts for him, this beautiful day of October will then have its full due from me.

SANYASI : Baba, what you say is true.

UPANANDA : Father, you have seen many countries, do you know of any great man who is likely to buy a boy like me for a thousand kahan. That is all that I need for the debt.

SANYASI : What do you say to trying Vijayaditya, who used to be so fond of your master?

UPANANDA : Vijayaditya? But he is our emperor.

SANYASI : Is that so?

UPANANDA : Don't you know that?

SANYASI : But what if he is your emperor?

UPANANDA : Do you think he will care to pay any price for a boy like myself?

SANYASI : I can assure you, that he will be ashamed of his full treasury, if he does not pay your debt.

UPANANDA : Is that possible, father?

SANYASI : Do you think in God's world Luckeswar is the only possibility?

UPANANDA : But I must not idly wait for chances. In the meanwhile, let me go on with my work and pay off in small parts what I owe.

SANYASI : Yes, my boy, take up your burden.

UPANANDA : I feel ever so much stronger, for having known you. Now I take my leave.

[Goes.

Enters LUCKESWAR.

LUCKESWAR : I give it up. It is not in my power to be your follower. With an infinite struggle I have earned what I have done. To leave all that, at your bidding, and then to repent of my rashness till the end of my days, would be worse than madness; it would be so awfully unlike myself. Now then, father, you must move from your seat.

SANYASI : [*Rising*] Then I have got my release from you?

LUCKESWAR : [*Taking out a jewel case from under some turf and dry leaves.*] For this tiny little thing I have been haunting this place, like a ghost from the morning. You are the first human being to whom I have shown this. [*Holding it up to him and then hastily withdrawing it.*] No, impossible! I fully trust you, yet I have not the power to put it into your hands even for a moment. Merely holding it in the light makes my heart palpitate. Can you tell me, father, what kind of man is Vijayaditya? If I try to sell it to him, are you sure he won't take it away by force? Can you trust him?

SANYASI : Not always.

LUCKESWAR : Well, that does not sound promising. I suspect, after all, this will lie underground, and after my death nobody will be able to find it.

SANYASI : Neither Kings nor Emperors, but the dust will claim it as its final tribute.

LUCKESWAR : Let it; that does not trouble me. But my anxiety is lest someone should discover it, when I am no more... However, father, I shall never forget about that golden lotus. I feel sure you will get it someday; but all the same I cannot be your follower.

[Goes.

Enters THAKURDADA.

SANYASI : After long days I have learnt one thing at last, and that I must tell you.

THAKURDADA : Father, you are very kind to me.

SANYASI : I know why this world is so beautiful,—simply because it is ever paying back its debt. The rice field has done its utmost to earn its fulfilment and the Betasini River is what it is because it keeps nothing back.

THAKURDADA : I understand, father. There is One Who has given Himself in creation in his abundance of joy. And Creation is every moment working to repay the gift, and this perpetual sacrifice is blossoming everywhere in beauty and life.

SANYASI : Wherever there is sluggishness, there accumulates debt, and there it is ugly.

THAKURDADA : Because where there is a lacking in the gift, the harmony is broken in the eternal rhythm of the payment and repayment.

Enters LUCKESWAR.

LUCKESWAR : What are you two people conspiring about?

SANYASI : About that golden lotus.

LUCKESWAR : Have you already given away your secret to Thakurdada? You hope to be successful when you do your business in such a manner? But is Thakurdada the proper man to help you? How much capital has he, do you think?

SANYASI : You don't know the secret. He has quite a big amount, though he does not show it.

LUCKESWAR : [*Slapping Thakurdada on the shoulder.*] You are deep. I never thought of that. And yet people only suspect me and not you, not even the Rajah himself—Father, I can't bear Thakurdada to steal a march on me. Let all three of us join in this business. Look there, a crowd of people is coming this way. They must have got news that a Swami is here. Father, they will wear out your feet up to the knees taking the dust of them. But I warn you, father, you are too simple. Don't take anybody else into your confidence... But, Thakurdada, you must know business is not mere child's play. The chances of loss are eleven to one—keep that in mind. I give it up. But no, I must take time to decide.

[*Goes.*

Enter VILLAGERS.

FIRST VILLAGER : Where is the sanyasi they talked about?

SECOND VILLAGER : Is this the man?

THIRD VILLAGER : He looks like a fraud. Where is the real one.

SANYASI : A real one is difficult to find. I am playing at Sanyasi to amuse boys.

FIRST VILLAGER : But we are not boys.

SANYASI : I know the distinction.

SECOND VILLAGER : Then why did someone say, that some swami is somewhere about?

FIRST VILLAGER : But your appearance is good. Have you learnt some charms?

SANYASI : I am willing to learn. But who is to teach me?

SECOND VILLAGER : There is a proper man. He lives in Bhairabpur. He has control over some spirits, and there is no doubt of that. Only the other day a boy was about to die. And what do you think this man did? He simply let the boy's life-spark fly

into the inside of a panther. You won't believe it, but I can assure you, that panther is still alive, though the boy died. You may laugh, but my own brother-in-law has seen the panther with his own eyes. If anybody tries to injure it, the father rushes at him with his big stick. The man is quite ruining himself by offering kids twice a day to this beast. If you must learn charms, this is the man for you.

THIRD VILLAGER : What is the use of wasting time? Didn't I tell you in the beginning, that I didn't believe a word about this sanyasi. There are very few people in these days who have magic powers.

SECOND VILLAGER : That is true. But I was told by Kalu's mother that her nephew knew a Sanyasi who overturned his pipe of ganja and there came out a skull and a full pot of liquor.

THIRD VILLAGER : But did he see it with his own eyes?

SECOND VILLAGER : Yes, with his very own eyes.

[They go.]

Enters LUCKESWAR.

LUCKESWAR : I can't stand this. You must take away your charm from me. My accounts are all getting wrong. My head is in a muddle. Now I feel quite reckless about that golden lotus, and now it seems pure foolishness. Now I am afraid Thakurdada will win, and now I say to myself let Thakurdada go to the dogs. But this doesn't seem right. It is sorcery for the purpose of kidnapping. No, no, that will never do with me. What is there to smile about? I am pretty tough, and you shall never have me for your disciple.

[Goes.]

Enter BOYS.

FIRST BOY : We are ready for the autumn festival. What must we do?

SANYASI : We must begin with a song.

[Sings.

The breeze has touched the white sails, the boat revels in the beauty of its dancing speed.

It sings of the treasure of the distant shore, it lures my heart to the voyage of the perilous quest.

The captain stands at his helm with the sun shining on his face and the rain-clouds looming behind.

My heart aches to know how to sing to him of tears and smiles made one in joy.

SANYASI : Now you have seen the face of the autumn.

FIRST BOY : But where is it, father?

SANYASI : Don't you see those white clouds sailing on?

SECOND BOY : Yes, yes.

THIRD BOY : Yes, I can see them.

SANYASI : The sky fills up.

FIRST BOY : With what?

SANYASI : With light. And don't you feel the touch of the dew in the air?

SECOND BOY : Yes.

SANYASI : Only look at that Betasini River—what headlong rush to spend herself. And see the shiver in the young shoots of rice. Thakurdada, let the boys sing the welcome song of the autumn and go round the forests and hills yonder.

[Thakurdada sings and the Boys join him.

I have spread my heart in the sky and found your touch in my dreams.

Take away that veil from your face, let me see your eyes.

*There rings your welcome at the doors of the forest fairies;
Your anklet bells sound in all my thoughts filling my work with music.
[The Boys go out singing.*

Enters LUCKESWAR.

THAKURDADA : Hallo! Our Luckeswar in a sanyasi's garb!

LUCKESWAR : I have become your disciple at last father. Here is my pearl-case, and here are the jewel caskets. Take care of them.

SANYASI : Why has this sudden change come over you?

LUCKESWAR : The Emperor Vijayaditya's army is marching towards this town. Nobody will dare touch you, so you are the safest man to whom I can entrust my treasure.—I am your devoted follower,—protect me!

Enters the RAJAH.

RAJAH : Father!

SANYASI : Sit down. You seem to be out of breath. Rest awhile.

RAJAH : No time for rest. I am informed that Vijayaditya is almost upon us. His flag has been seen.

SANYASI : Very likely. He must be feeling eager to acquire new dominions.

RAJAH : What do you say? New dominions?

SANYASI : Why do you take offence at it, my son? You also had a similar idea.

RAJAH : Oh! No, that was quite different. But whatever that might be, I ask for your protection. Some mischief-makers must have carried tales to him. Please tell him,

they are all lies. Am I mad, that I should want to be the Emperor? Have I got the power.

SANYASI : Thakurdada!

THAKURDADA : Yes, my master!

SANYASI : Simply with this rag upon my back and a few boys as my followers, I was fully successful in making this day glorious. But look at this wretched man,—this emperor,—he has power only to ruin it.

RAJAH : Hush! Somebody may overhear you!

SANYASI : I must fight it out with that—

RAJAH : I won't allow it. You are becoming dangerous. Can't you keep your sentiments to yourself?

SANYASI : But I already had a discussion about this with you, haven't I?

RAJAH : What an awful man you are! Luckeswar, why are you here? Leave this place at once.

LUCKESWAR : Sire, I can tell you, it is not for the pure pleasure of your presence that I am here. I should be only too glad to get away, but I am fixed to this spot. I have not the power to move.

Enter VIJAYADITYA'S MINISTER and courtiers.

MINISTER : Victory to the Emperor Vijayaditya! [*They all bow.*]

RAJAH : Stop that stupid jest! I am not Vijayaditya. I am his most unworthy servant—Somapal.

MINISTER : [*To the Sanyasi*] Sire, the time has come for you to come back to your capital.

THAKURDADA : My master, is this a dream?

SANYASI : Whether your dream or theirs is true who can tell.

THAKURDADA : Then—

SANYASI : Yes, these people happen to know me as Vijayaditya.

THAKURDADA : But this new situation has made things critical for me.

LUCKESWAR : And for me also. I surrendered myself to the Sanyasi. In order to be saved from the Emperor. But I do not know in whose hands I am now.

RAJAH : Sire, did you come to try me?

SANYASI : And also myself.

RAJAH : What is to be my punishment?

SANYASI : To leave you to your memory.

Enters UPANANDA.

UPANANDA : Who are these people? Oh! Here is the Rajah. [*About to leave.*

SANYASI : Upananda, do not go! Tell me what you had come to say.

UPANANDA : I came to tell you that I had earned this three Kahans by my day's work.

SANYASI : Give them to me. They are too valuable to go for clearing Luckeswar's debt. I take these for myself.

UPANANDA : Must you take these, father?

SANYASI : Yes, I must. Do you think I have mastered my greed, because I have become a sanyasi? These tempt me beyond anything else.

LUCKESWAR : This sounds ominous! I am undone!

SANYASI : Where is my treasurer?

TREASURER : Here I am.

SANYASI : Let this man have a thousand Kahan from my treasury.

UPANANDA : Then does he buy me?

SANYASI : You are mine. [*To the Inister*] You were troubled, because no son had been born to my house. But I have earned my son, by my merit, and here he is.

LUCKESWAR : How unlucky for me that I am too old for such adoption!

SANYASI : Luckeswar!

LUCKESWAR : Command me!

SANYASI : I have protected your jewels from the grasp of Vijayaditya. Now they are given back to you.

LUCKESWAR : If the Maharajah had given them back in secret, I could feel secure. Who is to save them now?

SANYASI : That is my business. But Luckeswar, something is due to me from you.

LUCKESWAR : [*Aside*] Curse me! I knew it would come at last.

SANYASI : Thakurdada is witness to my claim.

LUCKESWAR : [*Aside*] There will be no lack of false witnesses for him now.

SANYASI : You wanted to give me alms. You owe me a handful of rice. Do you think you will be, able to fill an Emperor's hand?

LUCKESWAR : But, Sire, it was a sanyasi's hand which gave me courage to propose what I did.

SANYASI : Then I free you from your promise.

LUCKESWAR : With the Maharajah's leave I take my departure. Everybody's eyes seem to be turned upon these caskets.

[*He goes.*]

Enter the BOYS.

BOYS : [*Shouting*] Sanyasi Thakur! [*They suddenly stop and are about to run away.*]

THAKURDADA : Boys, do not go.

SANYASI : Rajah, leave me.

[*Rajah goes.*

[*They go.*