

PLAY

THE WATERFALL

Rabindranath Tagore



ACT I

Scene. A mountainous country, with a road leading to the temple of Bhairava. The scene remains the same throughout the play.

In the background is represented the upper framework of a big iron machine; opposite to this is the spire of the Bhairava temple, with its trident.

Ranajit, the king of Uttarakut, has his royal tent in the mango grove by the side of the road. He is resting there on the way to celebrate the evening festival, on the dark night of the moon. After twenty-five years of strenuous effort, his royal engineer, Bibhuti, has succeeded in building up an embankment across the waterfall called Muktheadhara.

The inhabitants of Uttarakut are seen visiting the temple with their offerings and preparing to hold in the temple court-yard the festival, which is to celebrate the achievement of the royal engineer, Bibhuti.

The temple devotees of Bhairava are in the foreground. They are seen making a long circuit in religious procession round the temple. As they sing the praises of the god Bhairava, some are swinging their censers, some are beating the gongs, some are blowing the conch shells.

[The Devotees sing, in procession,]

Victory to Him, the Terrible,

THE WATERFALL

The Lord of Destruction,
The uttermost Peace,
The Breaker of fetters,
Who carries us beyond all conflicts,
The Terrible, the Terrible!
[They go in.

A STRANGER comes with his offerings of worship and meets a CITIZEN of Uttarakut.

STRANGER : What's that there put up against the sky? It is frightful!

CITIZEN : Don't you know? You're a stranger, I see, It's the Machine.

STRANGER : Machine! What Machine?

CITIZEN : The Royal Engineer, Bibhuti, has been working at it for the last twenty-five years. It's just been finished. A festival is now being held in honour of the occasion.

STRANGER : What's the object of the Machine?

CITIZEN : It has bound up the waterfall of Muktheadhara.

STRANGER : What a monster! It looks like a dragon's skull with its fleshless jaws hanging down! The constant sight of it would make the life within you withered and dead.

CITIZEN : The life within us has got a thick hide to protect it! You needn't have any fear for us!

STRANGER : All the same, this isn't a thing to put up nakedly before the sun and stars. Can't you see how it seems to irritate the whole sky by its obtrusion?

CITIZEN : But aren't you going to attend the evening worship of Bhairava?

STRANGER : Yes, I've come out for that object. Every year I bring my offering at this time. But I've never seen such a monstrous obstruction in the sky before. Don't you think it's a sacrilege to allow it to overtop the spire of the Temple?

[He goes.

Enters a woman named AMBA, with a white veil which covers her head and body and trails in the dust.

AMBA : My Suman! My Suman! Won't my son Suman come back to me? You've all returned, but where is he?

CITIZEN : Who are you?

AMBA : I'm Amba of Janai village. Suman, my son, 's the light of my eyes, the breath of my life, my Suman!

CITIZEN : What's happened to him?

AMBA : I don't know where they've taken him. I'd gone to worship Bhairava, in the Temple; and when I came back, I found that he had been taken away.

CITIZEN : Then he must have been recruited for the work of building up the embankment.

AMBA : I've heard that they've taken him along this road to the west of the Hill of Gauri; and my eyesight doesn't reach so far. I can't see the way across it.

CITIZEN : What's the use of grieving! We're going to the Temple. It's a great day for us. You also must come.

AMBA : No, no! From that day, when I lost my son, I've dreaded going to the Temple. Let me tell you our worship never reaches Him. Someone filches it away, as it's carried to the shrine.

CITIZEN : Who's that?

AMBA : The one who's taken my Suman away from me! I don't know who it is, Suman! My Suman! My darling!

[They go.

The MESSENGER from Abhijit, the Crown Prince of Uttarakut, meets BIBHUTI, while he is on his way to the Temple.

MESSENGER : Bibhuti! The Crown Prince has sent me to you.

BIBHUTI : What is his wish?

MESSENGER : You have been for a long time building up an embankment across the waterfall of Muktheadhara. Over and over again it gave way, and men perished smothered with sand and earth; and others got washed away by the flood at last, today.

BIBHUTI : My object is accomplished and the sacrifice of their lives has met with its fulfilment.

MESSENGER : The inhabitants of Shiu-tarai are still ignorant of this fact. They cannot believe, that any man can deprive them of the water, which has been to them the gift of God.

BIBHUTI : God has given them the water; but He has given me the power to bind that water.

MESSENGER : They don't know that, within a week, their fields.

BIBHUTI : Why talk about their fields? What have I to do with their fields?

MESSENGER : Wasn't it your object to devastate their fields with drought?

BIBHUTI : My object was to make Man triumphant over the sands and water and stones, which conspired against him. I had not the time to trouble my mind about what would happen to some wretched maize fields of some wretched cultivator in some place or other.

MESSENGER : The Crown Prince asks you, if the time has not come at last for you to trouble your mind about it.

BIBHUTI : No! My mind is occupied with the contemplation of the majesty of the Machine.

MESSENGER : Cannot the cry of hunger interrupt that contemplation?

BIBHUTI : No! the pressure of water cannot break my embankment; the cry of hunger cannot sway my Machine.

MESSENGER : Aren't you afraid of curses?

BIBHUTI : Curses? When labourers became scarce in Uttarakut, I had all the young men of over eighteen years of age from every house of Pattana village brought out by the King's command, and a great number of them never returned to their homes. My Machine has triumphed against the storm of mothers' curses. He who fights God's own power, is not afraid of man's male-diction.

MESSENGER : The Crown Prince says that you have already attained the glory of a creation; and now it is time for you to attain a greater glory by demolishing that creation.

BIBHUTI : So long as my work remained unfinished, it was mine. But now that it is finished, it belongs to all Uttarakut. I have no longer the right to demolish it.

MESSENGER : The Crown Prince declares, that he will take this right into his own hands.

BIBHUTI : Are these words from our own Crown Prince himself? Does he not belong to us?

MESSENGER : He says, that it has yet to be proved, whether God's Will has found its entrance into the Government of Uttarakut; the Machine must not stand between.

BIBHUTI : It is my mission to prove, by the force of the Machine, that God's throne is ours. Tell the Crown Prince, that no road is left open to make the Machine slacken its grip.

MESSENGER : The God, who breaks, does not need the broad road for his passage. The smallest holes, which escape our notice, are enough for him.

BIBHUTI : Holes! What do you know about them?

MESSENGER : Nothing. But He knows, who makes use of them.

[Messenger goes.

CITIZENS of Uttarakut, on their way to the Temple, meet BIBHUTI.

FIRST CITIZEN : Engineer, you're a wonderful fellow! We never noticed when you got ahead of us!

SECOND CITIZEN : That's ever been his habit. Nobody knows how he wins in the race. That shaven-headed Bibhuti of our Chabua village got his ears pulled along with ourselves at the village school. And yet he's done such wonders, surpassing us all!

THIRD CITIZEN : Hallo, Gobru! why'd you stand there, basket in hand, with your mouth wide open? Is this the first time you've seen Bibhuti? Bring out the garlands. Let's garland him.

BIBHUTI : No, no! What's the use of doing that?

THIRD CITIZEN : Why do you say 'no'? If the length, of your neck could keep pace with your greatness, it'd grow like a camel's and we'd load it up to the tip of your nose with garlands.

SECOND CITIZEN : Harish, our drummer, hasn't yet arrived.

FIRST CITIZEN : That man's the very prince of the sluggards! He needs a good beating on the drum of his back.

THIRD CITIZEN : Nonsense, he can beat the drum far better than we can.

FOURTH CITIZEN : The idea came to me, that we might borrow the chariot from Samanta, to drive Bibhuti on it to the Temple. But we hear that the king himself 11 go walking to the temple. Let's carry him on our shoulders.

BIBHUTI : No, no! This is too much!

FIFTH CITIZEN : Not at all! You were born in the lap of Uttarakut, and now you've got to be raised on its shoulders.

[They all take him up and sing.

THE SONG OF THE MACHINE

We salute the Machine, the Machine!

Loud with its rumbling of wheels,

Quick with its thunder flame,

Fastening its fangs

into the breast of the world.

Hurling against obstructions

its fiery defiance

That melts iron, crushes rocks,

And drives the inert from its rest.

We salute the Machine, the Machine!

Now stolidly stable, with timber and stones.

Now light and free, like a storm cloud.

Sailing across earth, water and sky.

The Machine, whose claws wrench bare.

The entrails of the earth.

Whose magic net captures in its meshes.

The elements elusive and subtle.

We salute the Machine, the Machine!

[They all go out.

Enter King RANAJIT and his MINISTER from the Camp.

RANAJIT : You ever failed thoroughly to subdue our subjects in Shiu-tarai. And now, Bibhuti has made it possible at last by controlling the waterfall, Muktheadhara. But how is it, that you do not show any sign of elation? Is it jealousy!

MINISTER : Pardon me, Your Majesty. It is not our business to wrestle with the clay and stones by the help of spades and pickaxes. Our weapon is diplomacy. We deal with men's minds. It was I who advised you to send the Crown Prince to Shiu-tarai; and the embankment, which could have been built up by this policy, would have controlled a turbulent force with greater security and permanence than this one before us.

RANAJIT : Yet what was the result? They have not paid taxes for two years. Famines are not unusual among them, yet in former days they had never left their dues unpaid.

MINISTER : Something more valuable than taxes was being realized at the very moment when you ordered the Crown Prince back. It is not a sound policy to despise the small. When things are intolerable, then the small becomes great with the power of their suffering.

RANAJIT : You change the tune of your advice, time after time. I distinctly remember how you have often said to me that it is easiest to put pressure upon those, who are down below you, from the vantage ground of the higher position; and that foreign subjects must always be under that pressure.

MINISTER : Yes, I did say that; but the circumstances then were different; therefore my advice was timely. But now,

RANAJIT : It was against my wish to send the Crown Prince to Shiu-tarai.

MINISTER : Why, Sire?

RANAJIT : Distance has its dignity. Familiarity diminishes it. You can win the hearts of your own people through love; but aliens must be won over by fear.

MINISTER : You forget, Sire, what was the real reason for sending the Crown Prince to Shiu-tarai. For some days, we had noticed in him a spirit of restlessness, had we suspected that, by some chance, he had come to know that he was not born to the royal house, but picked up near the source of this waterfall. Therefore in order to keep his mind engaged,

THE WATERFALL

RANAJIT : Yes, I know. He began to visit the source of the waterfall alone, in the night. Once I surprised him, and asked him what was the matter, and why he was there. He said, I find my mother's tongue in the murmurs of this water.

MINISTER : Once I asked him what had come over him, and why he was so often absent from the palace. He answered, that he had come into the world to open out roads: this was the inner meaning of his life, which he must fulfil.

RANAJIT : The prophecy, that he would be the ruler of a great empire, is no longer credible.

MINISTER : But, Sire, it was the gum of your gum who came here especially for the purpose of telling you this. He made that prediction.

RANAJIT : He must have been mistaken. The Crown Prince, in all his moods, has always made me suffer loss. By his last fit of folly, wantonly destroying the wall across the Nandi Pass, he has undone the work in a few days which our forefathers took years to complete. And now there will be nothing to prevent the wool and other products of Shiu-tarai from finding their outlet in markets beyond our own kingdom. This will raise the price of food and clothing in Uttarakut.

MINISTER : You must remember that he is young and takes an one-sided view of his duty, having only the good of Shiu-tarai in view.

RANAJIT : But that is what I call rebellion against his own people. I am sure that Vairagi Dhananjai, of Shiu-tarai, whose business it is to incite our subjects against us, must have had a hand in this business. We must throttle this man with his own rosary. We must capture him.

MINISTER : I dare not contradict. But I am sure you know, that there are dangers which are better left free, than captured.

RANAJIT : You need not trouble yourself about it.

MINISTER : No Sire! I want you to trouble about it.

Enters WARDER.

THE WATERFALL

WARDER : Sire, your uncle, Viswajit, of Mohangarh, has come.

RANAJIT : There is another of them! He is the worst of all those, who have acted their part in spoiling the Crown Prince. The man, who is a relation and yet an alien, is like a hump on the back of a bunch-back. It always follows you. You cannot cut it off, and yet it is a trouble to bear it. What is that?

MINISTER : The devotees have come out, and are going round the temple in procession.

[The Devotees come and sing the rest of their song.]

Victory to the fearful flame.

That tears the heart of darkness,

That burns to ashes things that are dead,

Victory to him, whose voice thunders forth truth,

Whose right arm smites the unrighteous,

Whose guidance leads mortals across death.

The Terrible!

[They go away.]

VISWAJIT, the uncle of RANAJIT, enters.

RANAJIT : My greeting to you! I never expected the good fortune of your coming and joining with us tonight in our worship.

VISWAJIT : I have come to warn you that the God Bhairava will reject the worship you bring to him tonight.

RANAJIT : Such words from you are an insult to our great Festival.

VISWAJIT : Festival? For what? For shutting up the water, that has ever poured forth from the cup of the God of Gods, so that all who thirst may drink? Why did you do it?

RANAJIT : To defeat our enemies!

VISWAJIT : Are you not afraid of making an enemy of your God himself?

RANAJIT : Our victory is His. He is the Patron God of Uttarakut. Therefore. He has allowed His own boon to be withdrawn for our sake. He will bring Shiu-tarai to the feet of Uttarakut, piercing its heart with the spear of thirst.

VISWAJIT : If that is true, then the worship you offer to Him is no worship at all, but merely wages.

RANAJIT : Uncle, you are partial to the outsiders, and against your own kith and kin. It is through your lessons that Abhijit has failed fully to accept the duties of the kingdom of Uttarakut which are to be his hereafter.

VISWAJIT : Through my lessons! Was there not a time when I belonged to your party? After your actions had caused a rebellion in Pattana, was it not I who crushed it, desolating the whole place? Then came that boy Abhijit into my heart. He came like a flash to light; and those whom I had struck, blinded by the darkness of my heart I could see them for the first time in their full humanity. You accepted him into your home, because you found in him the signs of a World Emperor; and now you try to keep him tied to the limits of the throne of Uttarakut.

RANAJIT : I am sure that it was you who divulged to him the secret, it was you, who told him that he was a foundling picked up at the source of the waterfall, Muktheadhara.

VISWAJIT : Yes, I did. It was on the night of the Lamp Festival in my palace I found him standing alone in the balcony, gazing at the summit of Gauri. I asked him, what he was looking at. He said that he saw the vision of the roads of the future, the roads which had not yet been built across the difficult passes of the mountains; the roads that would bring the distant near. When I heard him, I said to myself, that nothing could keep such a child captive, whom some homeless mother had given birth to near the waterfall, which seeks its home in the Unknown. I could not contain myself and I said to him, 'My child, that bare mountain accepted you in its arms when you were born by the roadside. The welcome music of the home was not for you at your birth.'

RANAJIT : Now, I understand.

VISWAJIT : What do you understand?

RANAJIT : Abhijit has lost his feeling? attachment for our royal house ever since the time he heard this news from you. In order to show this disaffection the first thing he did was to break the wall of the fort of Nandi and open out the road of Nandi Pass.

VISWAJIT : What harm was there in that? The open road belongs to all,—as much to Uttarakut as to Shiu-tarai.

RANAJIT : Uncle, I have borne with you for long, but no more of this! You must leave my kingdom!

VISWAJIT : I have not the power to leave you. But if you leave me, I shall merely suffer it. [Goes.

Enters AMBA.

AMBA : Who are you there? The sun is about to set, but my Suman hasn't yet come back.

RANAJIT : Who are you?

AMBA : I'm nobody. He, who was my all in all, has been taken away from me along this path. And has this path no end? Does my Suman walk and ever walk on, into the West, across the peak of Gauri, where the sun is sinking, the light is sinking, and everything is sinking?

RANAJIT : [To his Minister.] It seems that—

MINISTER : Yes, Sire, it must be connected with the building up of the embankment.

RANAJIT : [To Amba.] Set your mind free from all grief. I assure you, your son has received the last great gift of life.

AMBA : If that were true, he would have brought it to my hands in the evening. For I'm his mother.

RANAJIT : He will bring it. That evening time has not yet come.

THE WATERFALL

AMBA : May your words turn out to be true! I shall wait for him on this road leading to the temple.

[She goes.

A SCHOOLMASTER enters, with a group of BOYS.

SCHOOLMASTER : These wretched boys are in for a good caning, I can see. Shout, with your loudest voices boys: 'Salve Imperator.'

BOYS : 'Salve Im'

SCHOOLMASTER : 'perator!'

BOYS : 'perator!'

SCHOOLMASTER : 'Salve Imperator Imperatorum!'

BOYS : 'Salve Imperatorum!'

SCHOOLMASTER : 'Imperatorum!'

BOYS : 'Imperatorum!'

RANAJIT : Where are you going?

SCHOOLMASTER : Your Majesty is about to confer special honour on the Royal Engineer, Bibhuti; and I am taking my boys to the festival, in order to share in the rejoicing. I do not want my boys to miss any opportunity of participating in the glory of Uttarakut.

RANAJIT : Do these boys know what Bibhuti has done?

THE BOYS : [Clapping their hands and jumping.] Yes! Yes! We know. He has shut up the drinking water of the Shiu-tarai people!

RANAJIT : Why has he shut it up?

BOYS : To give them a good lesson.

RANAJIT : What for?

BOYS : To make them smart!

RANAJIT : Why?

BOYS : Because they are bad!

RANAJIT : Why bad?

BOYS : Oh they are terribly bad. Everybody knows it!

RANAJIT : Then, you do not know why they are bad?

SCHOOLMASTER : Certainly, they know it, Your Majesty. [To the Boys] What's happened to you, you blockheads? Haven't you Haven't you, in your books? Haven't you in your books? [In a low voice, whispering] Their religion is rotten!

BOYS : Yes! Yes! Their religion is rotten!

SCHOOLMASTER : And they are not like us, come, answer, boys, don't you remember [Pointing to his nose.

BOYS : Yes, they haven't got high-bridged noses.

SCHOOLMASTER : Good! Of course you know what has been proved by our Professor. What does a high-bridged nose denote?

BOYS : The greatness of the race!

SCHOOLMASTER : Good! Good! And what is the mission of the greater races? Speak out! They conquer speak out! They conquer, the world, for themselves. Is not that so?

BOYS : Yes! They conquer the world for themselves.

SCHOOLMASTER : Is there a single case in which Uttarakut has been defeated in a war?

BOYS : No, never!

SCHOOLMASTER : You all know how the grandfather of our king, with only 293 soldiers, put to flight 31, 700 barbarians from the South. Isn't that true, boys?

BOYS : Yes!

THE WATERFALL

SCHOOLMASTER : Your Majesty may rest assured that these very boys will one day be a terror to all those who have the misfortune to be born outside our boundaries. I shall be false to my vocation as a schoolmaster if this does not happen. I never allow myself to forget for one moment the great responsibility which we teachers have. We build up men! Your statesmen merely use them. And yet Your Majesty should take the trouble to compare the pay which they draw, with what we get.

MINISTER : But those very students are your best reward.

SCHOOLMASTER : Wonderfully uttered! Indeed, they are our best reward! Beautiful! But, Sir, food is becoming so dear now-a-days. For instance, the butter from cow's milk was once

MINISTER : You needn't go on. I shall ponder over this question of the butter from cow's milk. Now you may take your leave.

[The Schoolmaster, with his Boys, departs.

RANAJIT : Inside the skull of this schoolmaster of yours, there is nothing but the butter made of cow's milk.

MINISTER : Nevertheless, Sire, such people are useful. He loyally repeats the lesson, day after day, according to the instruction that he has received. If he had more brains, such a thing as this would not be possible.

RANAJIT : What is that in the sky?

MINISTER : Have you forgotten about it? That is the top of Bibhuti's Machine.

RANAJIT : I have never seen it so clear as it is today.

MINISTER : The storm this morning has cleared the sky. That is why it is so distinct.

RANAJIT : Don't you see how the sun from behind it looks red with anger, and the Machine appears like the menacing fist of a giant. It has not been at all proper to raise it so high.

MINISTER : The thing appears like a spasm of agony in the heart of the sky.

RANAJIT : It is time for us to go to the temple.

[They go.

A second group of CITIZENS of Uttarakut enters.

FIRST CITIZEN : Don't you notice, how Bibhuti seeks to evade us now-a-days? He tries to rub off from his skin the fact that he was bred up along with ourselves. One day he'll realize, that it's not good for the sword to grow longer than the sheath.

SECOND CITIZEN : Whatever you may say, Bibhuti has upheld the reputation of Uttarakut.

FIRST CITIZEN : Stop that nonsense! You're making too much of him! This embankment, which has cost him all his resources, has given way ten times at least.

THIRD CITIZEN : Who knows that it won't give way once again?

FIRST CITIZEN : Have you noticed the mound on the northern side.

SECOND CITIZEN : What about it?

FIRST CITIZEN : Don't you know? Everybody, who has seen it, says—

SECOND CITIZEN : What? Tell me.

FIRST CITIZEN : You are a simpleton! Don't you know, that from one end to the other, it's Oh, rubbish!

SECOND CITIZEN : Do explain it to me a little more clearly.

FIRST CITIZEN : Wait a while. It'll explain itself, when all of a sudden—

[Ends with a gesture.

SECOND CITIZEN : Terrible! All of a sudden?

FIRST CITIZEN : Yes! Jagru will be able to tell you all about it. He has measured every inch of it.

SECOND CITIZEN : That's the best thing about Jagru. He has a wonderfully cool head. When everybody's delirious with admiration, he quietly brings out his measuring tape.

THIRD CITIZEN : Some people say that all the science of Bibhuti

THE WATERFALL

FIRST CITIZEN : Yes, yes! It's stolen from Benkot Varma. He was a great man, indeed! Yes indeed, he was great! There was nobody like him. What brains! What prodigious brain power! And yet Bibhuti gets all the rewards, and that poor man,— he actually died of starvation.

THIRD CITIZEN : Only of starvation?

FIRST CITIZEN : Whether from starvation or from some food from some hand, who knows? But what's the use of discussing it? Someone may overhear what we 're saying. There are all kind of scandal-mongers in this land. Our people can't bear to hear good of others.

SECOND CITIZEN : Whatever you may say, he's a—

FIRST CITIZEN : What wonder is there in that. Just consider in what soil he flourished. That Chabua village of ours, don't you realize, it has given birth to my great grandfather? Of course you, know his name.

SECOND CITIZEN : Of course! Everybody in Uttarakut knows him. He's that what do you call it?

FIRST CITIZEN : Bhaskar. There was none in the whole kingdom of Uttarakut, who could come near to him in making snuff. The great Rajah Satrujit couldn't pass a day without buying snuff from him.

THIRD CITIZEN : Let's hurry to the temple now. We belong to the same village as Bibhuti. Our place will be on his right side.

[Batu from behind the screen cries out: 'Don't go, friend! Don't go! Turn away from this path!']

SECOND CITIZEN : There he is, old Batu!

BATU enters with a torn blanket on his back and a crooked stick in his hand.

FIRST CITIZEN : Where are you going, Batu?

BATU : I warn you, friends! Don't take that path! Go back, while there's time!

SECOND CITIZEN : Why?

BATU : They'll sacrifice, sacrifice human beings! They've taken away by force two of my grandsons, who never returned.

THIRD CITIZEN : Sacrifice? Before whom?

BATU : Before the Demon Thirst!

SECOND CITIZEN : Who's that?

BATU : The Demon whose dry tongue grows and grows, like a flame of fire fed by the oil.

FIRST CITIZEN : Madman! We're going to Bhairava's temple. Where's your Demon Thirst there?

BATU : Haven't you heard the news? They're going to dethrone Bhairava today, and the Demon Thirst will occupy his altar.

SECOND CITIZEN : Hold your tongue madman! The people of Uttarakut will cut you to pieces, if they hear you talk like this.

BATU : They're throwing mud at me, and the children are pelting me with stones. Everybody's saying, that my grandsons were fortunate in being able to give up their lives.

FIRST CITIZEN : That's true!

BATU : True? If the offer of life does not bring life in return, if with death you gain death itself, then Bhairava will never allow such an utter loss! I warn you, friends, never take that path!

[He goes.

SECOND CITIZEN : I must confess his words seem to send a shiver of cold through my blood.

FIRST CITIZEN : Ranju, you're a great coward. Let's go!

[They all go.

Enter the Crown Prince ABHIJIT and the Prince SANJAY.

SANJAY : I cannot understand why you are leaving our palace.

ABHIJIT : You will not fully understand it. For how are you to know that my life is a stream which must have its free course over the stones of the king's house.

SANJAY : We all have noticed that you have been feeling restless for some time past. It seemed as if the bond that kept you tied to us was slackening every day. Has it snapped at last?

ABHIJIT : Sanjay! Look at that image of the sunset over the peak of Gauri. Some bird of fire has spread its wings and is flying towards the night, the setting sun has drawn in the sky the picture of my own life's adventure.

SANJAY : To me the picture is different. Look how the top of that Machine has pierced the heart of this evening. It seems like a stricken bird falling head foremost into the valley of night! I do not like this omen! Now is the time for rest. Come into the palace.

ABHIJIT : Where there is an obstruction, there can be no rest.

SANJAY : How have you discovered, after all these days, this obstruction of which you are speaking?

ABHIJIT : I discovered it when I heard that they had bound the waters of Muktheadhara.

SANJAY : I do not understand the meaning of these words.

ABHIJIT : Every man has the mystery of his inner life somewhere written in the outer world. The secret of my own life has its symbol in that waterfall of Muktheadhara. When I saw its movements shackled I received a shock at the very root of my being; I discovered that this throne of Uttarakut is an embankment built up across my own life's current. And I have come out into the road to set free its course.

SANJAY : Take me with you as your companion!

ABHIJIT : 'No! You have to find out your own course. If you follow me, then I shall only obscure it your own true path.

SANJAY : Do not be so hard! You hurt me!

ABHIJIT : You know my heart; and you will understand me even when I pain you.

SANJAY : I do not wish to question you as to the source from which your call has come. But, Prince, now it is evening, and the music of the nightfall comes floating from the palace tower. Has not this also its call? All that is stern and strenuous may have its glory. But all that is sweet has also its value.

ABHIJIT : The pursuit of the hard is for paying the price of the sweet.

SANJAY : Do you remember, the other day, you were surprised to find a white lotus before your seat, where you have your prayer? Someone had gathered that lotus early in the morning before you were awake, and you were not told who it was. Can you ignore, at a moment like this, the divine gift, which lies hidden in the heart of that little incident? Does not the face of that timid creature haunt your memory, who hid herself, but not her worship?

ABHIJIT : Yes, it does! And for the sake of that very love, which is in this world, I cannot tolerate this hideousness. It kills the music of the earth, and laughs its sinister laughter, displaying its rows of steel teeth in the sky. Because I love the paradise of the gods, I am ready to fight the Titans who menace it.

SANJAY : Cannot you see the picture of an infinite sorrow in the twilight glow, clinging to that purple hill?

ABHIJIT : Yes, my heart fills with tears. I never boast of harshness as heroic. Look at that tiny bird, sitting on the topmost branch of the pine tree, all alone. I do not know whether it will go to its nest, or take its journey across the night to a distant forest; but the sight of that lonely bird gazing at the last ray of the setting sun fills my heart with a sadness which is sweet. How beautiful is this world! Here is my salutation to all that has made my life sweet.

Enters BATU.

BATU : They wouldn't let me go on, but turned me back with blows.

ABHIJIT : What has happened to you, Batu? There is a wound on your forehead, from which blood flows.

BATU : I came out to warn them; I cried out to them to leave that path and go back.

ABHIJIT : Why?

BATU : Don't you know, Prince? They're going to install, upon the altar of the Machine, the Demon Thirst. They will sacrifice human beings to this Demon.

SANJAY : What is this wild talk?

BATU : They're already poured out the blood of my own two grandsons at the foundation of this altar. I'd hoped that this shrine of sin would break into pieces with its own load of evil. But that has not yet come to pass; and the God Bhairava has not yet awakened out of sleep.

ABHIJIT : Yes, the shrine will break in pieces. The time has come!

BATU : [Coming close to him, whispers.] Then you must have heard, heard the call of Bhairava?

ABHIJIT : Yes, I have heard.

BATU : Then there is no escape for you?

ABHIJIT : No escape for me!

BATU : Don't you see how the blood flows from my wound? Will you be able to bear it, Prince, when your heart bleeds?

ABHIJIT : By the grace of Bhairava, I shall bear it.

BATU : When everybody becomes your enemy? When your own people renounce you?

ABHIJIT : I must bear it!

BATU : Then there's no fear!

ABHIJIT : No fear for me.

THE WATERFALL

BATU : Good! Keep me in your mind I'm also bound for that path. You'll be able to recognize me, even in the dark, by this mark of blood, which Bhairava Himself has painted on my forehead.

[Batu goes.

Enters the King's Guard, UDDHAB.

UDDHAB : [To the Crown Prince.] Sire, what made you open out the road along the Nandi Pass?

ABHIJIT : To save the people of Shiu-tarai from perpetual famine.

UDDHAB : Our King is kind! Is he not always ready to help them?

ABHIJIT : When the right hand in its miserliness shuts out the path of plenitude the generosity of the left hand is no help at all. For this I have freed the passage of provisions in Shiu-tarai. I have no respect for that mercy, which keeps poverty dependent on it.

UDDHAB : The King says, that you have taken the bottom out of Uttarakut's food vessel by breaking down the fort of the Nandi Pass.

ABHIJIT : I have set Uttarakut free from remaining for all time a parasite of Shiu-tarai.

UDDHAB : It was extremely rash of you. the King has heard the news. I dare not say any more. Leave this place at once, if you can do so. It's not safe for me to be seen talking with you on the road. [Uddhab goes.

Enters AMBA.

AMBA : Suman, my darling! Have none of you followed that path, along which they took my Suman?

ABHIJIT : Have they taken your son away?

AMBA : Yes, towards the West, where the sun sinks, where the days come to their end.

ABHIJIT : My journey is also along that path.

AMBA : Then remember an unfortunate woman like me. When you meet him, tell him that mother is waiting.

ABHIJIT : Yes, I shall tell him.

[Amba goes out.

[The Devotees of Bhairava enter singing.]

Victory to Him, who is Terrible!

The Lord of Destruction!

The uttermost Peace!

The Dissolver of doubts,

The Breaker of fetters!

Who carries us beyond all conflicts.

The Terrible! The Terrible!

[They go.

Enters a General, BIJAYPAL.

BIJAYPAL : Princes, accept my humble salutation. I come from the King.

ABHIJIT : What is his command?

BIJAYPAL : I must tell it to you in secret.

SANJAY : [Holding Abhijit by his hand.] Why in secret? Secret even from me?

BIJAYPAL : Such is my instruction. I beg you, Crown Prince, to enter the tent.

SANJAY : I must accompany him. [Attempts to do so.

THE WATERFALL

BIJAYPAL : No! That will be against the wishes of the King.

SANJAY : Then I shall wait for him at this road side.

[Abhijit, followed by Bijaypal, goes towards the tent.

Enters a FLOWER-SELLER.

FLOWER-SELLER : [To Sanjay.] Sir, who is this man, Bibhuti, of Uttarakut?

SANJAY : Why do you seek him?

FLOWER-SELLER : I'm a stranger coming from Deotali, and I've heard that they are throwing flowers on his path in Uttarakut. He must be some saint. So I've brought these flowers from my own garden to offer to him.

SANJAY : He is not a saint, but a clever man.

FLOWER-SELLER : What has he done?

SANJAY : He has bound up our waterfall.

FLOWER-SELLER : Is all this worship for that? Will the binding of the waterfall serve God's purpose?

SANJAY : No. It will fetter God's own designs.

FLOWER-SELLER : I don't understand.

SANJAY : It is good for you not to understand it. Go back again! [She starts to go.] Stay, hear me! Will you sell that white lotus to me?

FLOWER-SELLER : I can't sell this flower, which I had already offered in my mind to some saint.

SANJAY : The saint, whom I venerate more than anyone else, shall have this.

FLOWER-SELLER : Then take it. [He offers money.] No! No price for this! Give the Father my salutation, and tell him that I'm the poor woman of Deotali, who sells flowers.

THE WATERFALL

[She goes.

Enters BIJAYPAL.

SANJAY : Where is the Crown Prince?

BIJAYPAL : He is a captive in the tent.

SANJAY : The Crown Prince a captive! What arrogance!

BIJAYPAL : Here is the warrant from the King.

SANJAY : Whose conspiracy is this? Let me go to him for a moment.

BIJAYPAL : Pardon me, I cannot.

SANJAY : Then arrest me, also! I am a rebel!

BIJAYPAL : I have not the instructions.

SANJAY : I go myself to force from him the instructions. [He goes some way, and then returns.] Give this white lotus to the Crown Prince, in my name.

[They go out.

Enters the Bairagi, DHANANJAY of Shiu-tarai with CITIZENS who are his followers from Shiu-tarai.

DHANANJAY : [To one of his followers.] You look as pale as a ghost! Why? What's the matter?

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Master, the blows from Chandapal, the King's brother-in-law, have become intolerable!

The Shiu-tarai Leader, GANESH, enters.

GANESH : Father, give me your orders! Let me snatch away the baton from that scoundrel, Chandapal, and prove to him what a blow can really mean.

DHANANJAY : You had better try to prove what a 'no blow' can really mean! The helm's not for beating the waves, but for conquering them by keeping itself steady.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Then, what's your wish?

DHANANJAY : Raise your head! Say that nothing hurts you, and then the hurt will receive its death blow.

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : It's difficult to say that nothing hurts me!

DHANANJAY : The true man within us is a flame of Fire. He consumes all hurts in light. Only the brute beast is hurt. The brute beast is flesh, and it goes whining when it is struck. Why do you stand with your mouths gaping wide open? Cannot you follow my words!

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Father, we understand you! It doesn't matter if we fail to understand your words.

DHANANJAY : Then it's past cure.

GANESH : It takes a most tedious time to understand words. But when we understand you, we are saved at once.

DHANANJAY : Saved at once? But what about later on?

GANESH : We know that we must come to you for our shelter, and that shows that we understand.

DHANANJAY : No, not in the least. That's why your eyes are still red with passion, and your voice lacks music. Shall I give you the proper tune? [He sings.

Let your hurts come upon me, Master!

More, if you wish, and yet more!

You cowards! In order to avoid being hurt, you either hurt others, or else run away. Both are the same. Both are for the brute beasts. [He sings again.

I hide myself, I run away.

I try to avoid you in fear.

Capture me, and take all that I have.

Look here, children! I am going to make my final reckoning with the great god,
Mrityunjay the Conqueror of death

I want to say to him, 'Try me, and see if blows hurt me, or not.'

I must not in this voyage burden my boat with those who fear and those who
frighten others.

[He sings again.

May this be my last stake at the game.

Let me see whether I win or thou!

In the markets, in the highways, among the crowds,

I had my mirth and I laughed.

Let me see if at last you can make me weep!

ALL : [Crying out together] Bravo, Father 'Let me see if at last you can make me
weep.'

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Tell us where are you going?

DHANANJAY : To the King's Festival.

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : But the King's Festival is not for you. Why do you go
there at all?

DHANANJAY : I must make my name known in the King's Court.

FOURTH SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : When once he catches you then he'll. But, no! that
must never be!

DHANANJAY : Let it be, man! Let it be to the full!

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : You're not afraid of the King, Master. But we dread him!

DHANANJAY : That's only because, in your secret hearts, you want to hurt. But I don't want to hurt, and therefore never fear.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Very well then. We also shall accompany you!

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Yes! We shall go to the King's Court.

DHANANJAY : What will you ask the King?

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : There are so many things to ask. But the question is, which of them will be granted.

DHANANJAY : Why not ask for the kingdom?

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Father, you're joking!

DHANANJAY : Not at all! If the kingdom belonged to the king alone and not also to the subjects, then the hopping about of that one-legged kingdom might make you jump with fright; but it would bring tears to the eyes of God! You must claim the kingdom for the sake of the king himself.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : But when they come to push us out?

DHANANJAY : The push from the king will come back upon the king himself, if your claim has truth. [He sings.

I forget, and forget again, my Lord,

That Thou callest us to Thine own seat.

Shall I tell you the truth, children? So long as you don't recognize the seat to be His, your claim to the throne will be futile.

[He sings again.

Thy door-keepers do not know us,

They shut the gate against our face. We stand outside Thy house.

How are the door-keepers to recognize us? The dust has settled upon the mark of royalty on our foreheads. We can show nothing to prove our claim.

[He sings once more.

Thou hast given us life with Thine own hand,
And with it Thy crown of honour, But greed, fear and shame smudge it with grimy touch,
And Thy gift is obscured day by day.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Whatever you may say, we don't understand why you're going to the King's Court.

DHANANJAY : Shall I tell you why? It's because I have misgivings in my mind about you.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Why, Father?

DHANANJAY : The more you cling to me, while trying to swim, the more you forget your lessons in swimming, and also keep dragging me down. I must take my leave of you and go where nobody follows me.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : But the king won't easily let you go!

DHANANJAY : Why should he let me go?

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : We can never remain quiet, if they molest you!

DHANANJAY : If He, to whom I have dedicated this body of mine, chooses to suffer through me, you also will have to be patient.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Very well, then, Father! Let us also go, and then let happen what may!

DHANANJAY : You must wait here for me. This is a strange place and I must get to know something about the neighbourhood.

[He goes.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Have you noticed the features of these men of Uttarakut? They look as if the Creator, when He made them, had begun with a big lump of flesh and had had no time to finish His work.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : And do you see how they dress themselves in tight clothes.

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : They pack themselves up tightly in bundles as though to prevent the least leakage.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : They're born to drudgery. They spend their lives in going from market to market, and from one landing place to another.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : They've no culture worth speaking of. The books that they have are worth nothing.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Nothing at all. Haven't you noticed the letters in them like lines of white ants creeping across the page.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Well said! White ants indeed! Their culture gnaws everything to pieces.

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : And heaps up earth mounds. They kill life with their arms and destroy mind with their books.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Sin! Sin! Our guru says that even to cross their shadow is a sin. Do you know why?

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Tell me, why.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : After the nectar had been churned up by the Gods and Titans from the sea, some drops of it were spilt from the Gods' cups. From the clay thus formed the ancestor of the Shiu-tarai was made. And when the Titans licked the nearly empty cups of the Gods and threw them into the ditch, the broken pieces of the cups were fashioned into the ancestor of the Uttarakut people. That's why they are so hard, and faugh! so unclean!

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Where did you learn all this?

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : From our own guru.

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : [Reverently bowing his head.] Guru, you're truth itself!

A group of UTTARAKUT CITIZENS enters.

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Everything has passed off so happily, excepting the admission of that blacksmith, Bibhuti into the Kshatriya order by our king.

SECOND UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : That's all a domestic question. We shall deal with that, later on. Meanwhile let's cry 'Long live the Royal Engineer, Bibhuti.'

THIRD UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : He who has united the Kshatriya's weapons with the tools of the Vaishya! 'Long live Bibhuti.'

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Hallo! There are some men from Shiu-tarai.

SECOND UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : HOW d'you know?

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Don't you see their ear-cups. How queer they look! They seem like people suddenly thumped on the head and thus stopped in their growth.

SECOND UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Of all head dresses, why have they chosen this? Do they think that ears are a mistake of the Creator?

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : They have put an embankment over their ears, lest the precious little intelligence which they have should ooze out.

THIRD UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : No, it's rather to prevent any commonsense entering in to trouble them.

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Some ear-pulling ghost of Uttarakut might haunt them!
[They all laugh.

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Hallo! You clodhoppers from Shiu-tarai! What's the matter with you?

THIRD UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Don't you know that today's our festival? Come and join us in our cry 'Long live the Royal Engineer Bibhuti!'

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Are your throats dry? Shout 'Long live Bibhuti.'

GANESH : Why should we cry 'Long live Bibhuti'? What has he done?

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Just hark at him! 'What has he done?' The tremendous news has not reached them yet! That's all the result of their ear-caps!

[The Uttarakut Citizens laugh.

THIRD UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Do you ask what he has done? Why! The water to quench your thirst is in his hands! If he withholds it, then you will dry up, like toads in a time of drought!

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Our water in Bibhuti's hands! Has he suddenly become a God?

SECOND UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : He has dismissed God from service. He'll take up God's work himself.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Is there any specimen of his work?

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Yes! That embankment across Muktheadhara.

[Shiu-Tarai Citizens laugh loudly.

SECOND UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : D'you take this to be a joke?

GANESH : Why! What else can it be? That son of a blacksmith to snatch away from us the gift that comes from Bhairava Himself!

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : See with your own eyes there in the sky!

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Great heavens! What on earth is that?

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Good God! It looks like a gigantic grasshopper just going to jump towards the stars!

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : That grasshopper is going to stop, with his legs, your water supply!

GANESH : Leave off that foolery, won't you? Some day you will be saying that the son of this blacksmith is riding the grasshopper in order to catch the moon!

FIRST UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : That's the beauty of their ear-caps. They refuse to listen and thus they perish!

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : We refuse to perish!

THIRD UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : That sounds well! But who is to save you?

GANESH : Haven't you seen our God, our Vairagi Dhananjay? One of his bodies is in the temple, and one outside.

THE WATERFALL

THIRD UTTARAKUT CITIZEN : Listen to these men with their ear-caps on! Nobody can save them from utter destruction.

[The Uttarakut Citizens go out.

Enters DHANANJAY.

DHANANJAY : Fools! What have you been saying? Is it in my hand to save you from death? Then you're dead thrice over!

GANESH : The Uttarakut people said to us that Bibhuti has stopped the water of Muktheadhara.

DHANANJAY : Did they say that an embankment had been raised?

GANESH : Yes, Father!

DHANANJAY : You haven't listened to them carefully!

GANESH : It is not worth listening to!

DHANANJAY : Have you kept all your ears with me alone? Must I hear for all of you?

THIRD SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : What is there to hear at all. Father?

DHANANJAY : Is it a small thing, to control the turbulent power, whether it is outside us or within us?

GANESH : That may be; but what about this stoppage of

DHANANJAY : That's a different matter; and Bhairava will never suffer it to be done. I must go and find out all about it. This world is full of voices. To stop listening to them is to perish.

[Dhananjay goes out.

Another CITIZEN from Shiu-tarai enters.

FOURTH SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Bishan, what's the news?

BISHAN : The Crown Prince has been recalled from Shiu-tarai.

ALL : Impossible!

BISHAN : What are you to do?

ALL : We shall take him back.

BISHAN : HOW?

ALL : By force.

BISHAN : What about our King?

ALL : We deny him.

Enter King RANAJIT and MINISTER.

RANAJIT : Whom do you defy?

ALL : [To the King.] Long live your Majesty!

GANESH : We have come to you with our prayer.

RANAJIT : What is it?

ALL : We want the Crown Prince for ourselves.

RANAJIT : You are modest in your demand.

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Yes, we must take him back to Shiu-tarai.

RANAJIT : And then triumphantly forget to pay the taxes?

ALL : But we're starving.

RANAJIT : Where is your leader?

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : [Pointing to Ganesh.] Here's our leader, Ganesh.

RANAJIT : No. Where is the Vairagi.

GANESH : There he comes.

Enters DHANANJAY.

RANAJIT : It is you who make these people forget themselves.

DHANANJAY : Yes, Sir. And I forget myself also.

RANAJIT : Don't parry words with me! Tell me, are you for paying taxes?

DHANANJAY : No, Sir! Decidedly no!

RANAJIT : You are insolent.

DHANANJAY : I must not give you what is not yours.

RANAJIT : Not mine?

DHANANJAY : A part of our excess food belongs to you, but not the food which belongs to our hunger.

RANAJIT : Do you prevent my people from paying me my dues?

DHANANJAY : Yes, they are timid and ready to submit. But I tell them. 'Give your life only to Him, whose gift it is.'

RANAJIT : Their timidity you merely repress with your own assurance; but when that bloated assurance is pricked somewhere, the fear will burst out with double force, and then they will be lost. You have trouble written on the tablet of your fate.

DHANANJAY : I have taken that tablet to my heart. There dwells He, who is above all trouble.

RANAJIT : [To Shiu-Tarai Citizens] All of you go back to your place, and the Vairagi will remain here.

ALL : No, that cannot be!

DHANANJAY : [Sings.]

“Remain!” You cry.

But, strain hard as you may,

Only that will remain which must.

King! You can keep nothing by straining.

He who gives all, keeps all.

That which your greed tries to keep, is a stolen thing.

It will have to be given up.

[Sings.]

You are wilful, you are strong, in the injuries you inflict,

There is one who suffers, And only what he chooses to bear, shall he borne.

You make a mistake. King, when you think that the world, which you take by force
is your world.

What you keep free, you gain. But seize it, and it eludes you!

[Sings.]

You dream that you make the world dance, to the tune of your own desire;

Suddenly your eyes open; you see,

That things happen which you never wish.

RANAJIT : Minister, keep this Vairagi under custody.

MINISTER : Sire, [Pauses.]

RANAJIT : This command of mine is not agreeable to you?

MINISTER : A terrible engine of punishment is made ready. You merely weaken it,
by trying to add to its fierceness.

SHIU-TARAI CITIZENS : We shall never allow this.

DHANANJAY : Leave me, I tell you! Leave me and go!

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Haven't you heard, Father, that we have also lost our Crown Prince?

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Who is there to sustain our strength if we lose both of you?

DHANANJAY : I am defeated! Let me retire.

ALL : Why, Father?

DHANANJAY : You rejoice to think, that you gain me, and take no heed that you lose yourself! I cannot make good that loss! You put me to shame!

FIRST SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Don't say that! We shall do whatever you wish.

DHANANJAY : Then leave me and go.

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : But have you the heart to keep away from us? Do you not love us?

DHANANJAY : It is better to love you and keep you free, than to love you and smother you by my love. Go! No more of this! Go, and leave me!

SECOND SHIU-TARAI CITIZEN : Very well, Father, we go. But

DHANANJAY : No but! Hold your heads high and go!

ALL : Very well, father, we go! [They move slowly away.

DHANANJAY : Is that hat you call going? Quick! Begone!

GANESH : As you wish. But you must know, that all our hopes and thoughts remain with you. [They go.

RANAJIT : What are you thinking of, Vairagi? Why are you so silent?

DHANANJAY : They have made me anxious, King!

RANAJIT : For what?

DHANANJAY : I am afraid that I have succeeded in doing what your own Chandapal has failed to accomplish with his baton.

RANAJIT : What makes you think so?

DHANANJAY : Once I chuckled to myself and said,—‘I am strengthening their hopes and thoughts.’ But today they brutally threw it in my face, that it was I who had robbed them of their hopes and thoughts.

RANAJIT : How has that been made possible?

DHANANJAY : The more I excited them, the less I matured their minds. By making people run and rush, you do not lighten their load of debts.—They believe me to be greater even than their Providence, and to have the power to write off the debt, which they owe to their God. And therefore they shut their eyes and cling to me with all their might.

RANAJIT : They have taken you to be their God.

DHANANJAY : And thus they stop at me, and never reach their true God. He, who could have guided them from within, has been obscured by me, who forced them from outside.

RANAJIT : You prevent them, when they come to pay their dues to their king. But do not you suffer in your mind, when they come to pay you the offering which is for their God?

DHANANJAY : I do indeed! I feel as if I could sink through the ground. They become bankrupt in their minds by spending on me all their worship. The responsibility for their debt will be mine; and I shall not be able to escape from it.

RANAJIT : What is your duty now?

DHANANJAY : To remain away from them. If it is true that I have raised an embankment across the freedom of their minds, then I am afraid the God Bhairava will take both your Bibhuti and me to account at the same time.

RANAJIT : Then why delay? Why not move away?—[To Uddhab] Take this Vairagi to my tent and keep him there.

[Uddhab takes Dhananjay to the tent.]

THE WATERFALL

RANAJIT : Minister! Go and see Abhijit in the guard house. If you find him in a repentant mood, then-

MINISTER : Sire, is it not right, that you yourself should personally—

RANAJIT : No, no! He is a traitor against his own people. I shall not see his face, until he confesses his guilt I go back to my palace. Send me the news there! [The King goes.

Enter the DEVOTEES, who sing.

Victory to the fearful Flame,
That tears the heart of Darkness
That burns to ashes things which are dead
Victory to Him, whose voice thunders forth Truth
Whose right arm smites the unrighteous
Whose guidance leads mortals across Death
[They go.

UDDHAB re-enters.

UDDHAB : What is this? The King goes away without seeing the Crown Prince!

MINISTER : He was afraid, lest his resolution should fail him. He was prolonging his talk with the Vairagi, because the conflict was going on in his mind. He could not decide to go into the tent or to leave the tent. I must go and see the Crown Prince.
[They go out.

Some CITIZENS from Uttarakut enter.

FIRST CITIZEN : We must be firm. Let's go to the King.

SECOND CITIZEN : What's the good of it? The Crown Prince is the jewel of his heart. We will never be able to judge him; he will only be angry with us.

FIRST CITIZEN : That doesn't matter. We must give him a piece of our mind, whatever may happen after. The Crown Prince made uch a fine display of his love for us, and is this the end? Shiu-tarai has become greater in importance to him than Uttarakut.

SECOND CITIZEN : If this can come to pass, then there's no justice in the world!

THIRD CITIZEN : It's impossible to trust anybody merely by his appearance.

FIRST CITIZEN : If our king doesn't punish him, we must do it ourselves.

SECOND CITIZEN : What will you do?

FIRST CITIZEN : He'll not find his place here. He must be sent off along the very path he has opened out at Nandi Pass.

THIRD CITIZEN : But that man at Chabua village says. that he's not at Shiu-tarai at this moment. And he cannot be found in the palace here.

FIRST CITIZEN : I am sure that our King has been hiding him from us.

THIRD CITIZEN : Hiding him? We'll break down the palace walls and drag him out!

FIRST CITIZEN : We'll set fire to the palace.

Enter the MINISTER and UDDHAB.

FIRST CITIZEN : [To the Minister.] Don't you try to play the game of hide and seek with us! Bring out the Crown Prince!

MINISTER : Who am I, to bring him out?

SECOND CITIZEN : It must have been by your advice. But, I tell you it won't do! We'll drag him out from his hiding place.

THE WATERFALL

MINISTER : Then take the reins of this government in your own hands, and release him from the King's prison.

THIRD CITIZEN : From the King's prison!

MINISTER : The King has imprisoned him.

ALL : Long live the King! Victory to Uttarakut!

SECOND CITIZEN : Come, let's go to the prison, and there

MINISTER : What?

SECOND CITIZEN : We'll take the flowers from the garland that Bibhuti has cast off, and put the string of it on the Crown Prince's neck.

MINISTER : The Crown Prince is guilty, you say, because he has broken the Fort. But is there no guilt in it, when you break the laws of the realm?

SECOND CITIZEN : That's altogether a different affair.

THIRD CITIZEN : But if we do break the laws?

MINISTER : You may jump into the void because you are not in love with the ground underneath your feet. But I can assure you, that you won't find yourself in love with that void.

THIRD CITIZEN : Then let's go and stand before the Palace and shout, 'Long live the King.'

FIRST CITIZEN : Look there! The sun has set, and the sky's growing dark. But that framework of Bibhuti's machine is still glowing. It looks as if it had got red with drunkenness.

SECOND CITIZEN : And on that trident, the last sinking light of the day is held aloft. It looks a kind of, I don't know how to describe it. [The Citizens of Uttarakut go out.

MINISTER : Now I understand, why the King has kept the Crown Prince captive in his own camp.

UDDHAB : Why?

MINISTER : To save him from the hands of his people. But things look ugly. The excitement is growing wilder every moment.

Enters SANJAY.

SANJAY : I dare not show my eagerness to the King, because that only helps to make his determination stronger.

MINISTER : Prince, try to keep quiet. Do not add to the complications which are already too great.

SANJAY : I went to talk to the people. I knew that they loved the Crown Prince more than life itself; that they would not tolerate his imprisonment. But I found them flaming with anger at the news of the opening out of Nandi Pass.

MINISTER : Then you ought to understand, that the Crown Prince's safety lies in his imprisonment itself.

SANJAY : I have ever followed him, from my childhood. Let me follow him into the prison.

MINISTER : What good will that do?

SANJAY : Every man is but half a man by himself. He finds his unity only when he is truly united with someone else. My . . . unity I find in my union with the Crown Prince.

MINISTER : But where the union is true, a mere outward meeting is superfluous. The cloud in the sky, and the water in the sea, are truly one, in spite of their distance from each other. Our Crown Prince must manifest himself through you, where he is absent.

SANJAY : These words do not seem like your own. They sound like his.

MINISTER : His words are everywhere in the air of this place. We make use of them, and yet forget that they are his.

SANJAY : You have done well to remind me of this. I shall serve him by living away from him. I must now go to the King.

MINISTER : Why?

SANJAY : I shall ask the King to give me the Governorship of Shiu-tarai.

MINISTER : But the times are very critical.

SANJAY : And therefore, this is the best time. [They go.

Enters VISHWAJIT, the King's uncle.

VISHWAJIT : Who is there? Is that Uddhab?

UDDHAB : Yes, Sire!

VISHWAJIT : I was waiting for it to grow dark. Have you received my letter?

UDDHAB : I have.

VISHWAJIT : Have you followed my advice?

UDDHAB : You will know within a short time. But—

VISHWAJIT : Have no misgiving in your mind. The King is not ready to give him freedom: but if, by some chance, someone without his knowledge effects it, it will be a great relief to the King.

UDDHAB : But he will never forgive the man who does it.

VISHWAJIT : My soldiers will take you and your guards captive. The responsibility is mine.

[A voice from outside, 'Fire! Fire!']

UDDHAB : There it is! They have set on fire the kitchen tent, which is near the guard-room. This is the opportunity for me to release Dhananjay and the Crown Prince.

[He goes out, and Abhijit comes in later.

ABHIJIT : [To Vishwajit.] Why are you here?

VISHWAJIT : I have come to capture you. You must come to Mohangarh.

ABHIJIT : Nothing will be able to keep me captive today, neither anger, nor affection. You think that you are the agents who set this tent on fire? No! This fire

has been waiting for me! The leisure has not been granted to me to remain in captivity.

VISHWAJIT : Why, child! What work have you to do?

ABHIJIT : I must pay off the debt of my birthright. The current of the waterfall has been my first nurse and I must set her free.

VISHWAJIT : There is time enough for that, but not today!

ABHIJIT : All that I know is this, that the time has come! And no one knows when that time will ever come again.

VISHWAJIT : We also shall join you.

ABHIJIT : No, the quest is mine; it has never reached you.

VISHWAJIT : The people of Shiu-tarai, who love you and are eagerly waiting to join hands in your work, will you not call them to your side.

ABHIJIT : If my call had come to them also, they would never sit waiting for me. My call will only lead them astray.

VISHWAJIT : It is growing dark, my child.

ABHIJIT : The light comes from that direction, from whence comes the call.

VISHWAJIT : I have not the power to turn you from your own path. Though you are taking a plunge into the darkness, I will trust in God to guide you. I must leave you in His hands. Only let me hear one word of hope. Tell me, that we shall meet again.

ABHIJIT : Keep it ever in your mind, that we can never be separated. [They go in opposite directions.

Enter BATU and DHANANJAY.

BATU : Father, the day is ended and it grows dark.

DHANANJAY : My son, we have formed the habit of depending upon the light which is outside us, and therefore we are blinded when it is dark.

BATU : I had thought that the dance of the God, Bhairava, would commence from today. But has the Engineer, Bibhuti, bound up even His hands and feet with the machine?

DHANANJAY : When Bhairava begins His dance, it is not visible. Only when it comes to its end, is it revealed.

BATU : Give us confidence, Master. We are afraid! Awake Bhairava! Awake! The light has gone out! The path is dark! We find no response! Lord of all conquering Life! Kill our fear with something still more dread! Bhairava, awake! Awake!

[He goes.

Enter CITIZENS of Uttarakut.

FIRST CITIZEN : It was a lie! He's not in the prison house! They have hidden him somewhere.

SECOND CITIZEN : We shall see how they can hide him.

DHANANJAY : No! They will never be able to hide him. The walls will break down; the gate will be shattered. The light will rush into the dark corner, and everything will be revealed.

FIRST CITIZEN : Who's this? He gave me such a start.

THIRD CITIZEN : All's right! We Must have some victim! this Vairagi will serve us quite well. Bind him!

DHANANJAY : What is the use of catching one, who has always surrendered himself?

FIRST CITIZEN : Leave your saintliness behind you! We are not your followers.

DHANANJAY : You are fortunate! I know some miserable wretches, who have lost their teacher by following him.

FIRST CITIZEN : Who is their teacher?

DHANANJAY : Their true teacher is he, from whom they get their blows.

THE WATERFALL

Enter the DEVOTEES, who sing.

Victory to the fearful Flame,
That tears the heart of Darkness,
That burns to ashes things which are dead,
Victory to Him, whose voice thunders forth Truth,
Whose right arm smites the unrighteous,
Whose guidance leads mortals across death,
Victory to Him!

THIRD CITIZEN : Look there! Look at that! The evening is darkening and that machine is looking blacker and blacker.

FIRST CITIZEN : In the day time, it tried to outmatch the sunlight, and now it's rivalling the night itself in blackness. It looks like a ghost!

SECOND CITIZEN : I can't understand why Bibhuti built it in that fashion. Wherever we are in the town, we cannot help looking at it. It's like a shriek rending the sky.

Enters FOURTH CITIZEN.

FOURTH CITIZEN : Our King's uncle has carried away by force the Crown Prince along with the guards who guarded his prison.

FIRST CITIZEN : What's the meaning of that?

THIRD CITIZEN : It shows he has the blood of Uttarakut in his veins. He must have done it, for fear lest the Crown Prince should fail to get his proper punishment from our King.

THE WATERFALL

FIRST CITIZEN : Outrageous! Think of it! To encroach upon our right to punish our own Prince ourselves!

SECOND CITIZEN : The best thing to do, friend, is to you understand?

FIRST CITIZEN : Yes, Yes. The gold mine which he has in his territory,

THIRD CITIZEN : And I've heard from a most reliable source that he has at least fifty thousand head of cattle in his stall. We must take possession of them, counting every head. This is insufferable!

FOURTH CITIZEN : And then again, the yearly yield of his saffron field must amount at least to

SECOND CITIZEN : Yes! yes! His state must be made to disgorge it. What an affront!

FIRST CITIZEN : Come! Let us inform the King about it.

[They all go.

Enters a TRAVELLER, who shouts out.

FIRST TRAVELLER : Budhan! Sambhu! Budha-an! Sambhu-u-u! What a nuisance! They sent me in advance, saying they'd overtake me, following the short cut. But there's no sign of them. [Looking up] That black iron monster over there! It's making grimaces at me! It makes me shiver with fear.

Enters another TRAVELLER.

Who's there? Why don't you answer? Are you Budhan?

SECOND TRAVELLER : I'm Nimku, the lamp-seller. They've got in all night festival in the Capital, and lamps will be needed. Who are you?

FIRST TRAVELLER : I'm Hubba. I belong to a band of strolling players. Did you meet with our party on the way, and their leader Andu?

NIMKU : There are crowds of men coming up. How could I recognize them?

HUBBA : But our Andu is an entire man by himself. You don't have to put on glasses to pick him out of the crowd. He's not a mere fraction. I say! What a quantity of lamps you have in your basket! Can't you spare one for me? Those who are out in the street have greater need of lamps than those who are in their houses.

NIMKU : How much will you pay for it?

HUBBA : If I could afford to pay, I should order you in a loud voice, and not waste my sweet tones on you!

NIMKU : You seem to be a humorist! [He goes.

HUBBA : I failed to get my lamp; but I got my recognition as a humorist! That's something! Humorists have the knack of making themselves felt, even in the dark. Confound this chirping of the crickets! It is like pins and needles in the limbs of the sky, made audible. I wish I had used my muscle with that lamp-seller, instead of displaying my humour.

Enters a RECRUITER.

RECRUITER : Up! Up!

HUBBA : Oh, goodness! Why on earth d'you go and frighten me in that way?

RECRUITER : Get ready to start!

HUBBA : That was exactly my intention, my friend. And now I am trying to digest the lesson how to get stuck, when one tries to go ahead.

RECRUITER : Your party is ready. Only you are wanting.

HUBBA : What do you say? We, inhabitants of Tin Mohana are remarkably inept at understanding words, when their meaning is not clear. What do you mean by my party?

THE WATERFALL

RECRUITER : We inhabitants of Chabua village have become wonderful adepts in making our meaning clear by other means than words. [Gives him a push.] Now you understand!

HUBBA : H'm! Yes! The simple meaning is, I must start, whether I wish it or not. But for what place? Please make your answer a little more gentle this time. That first push of your talk has cleared my mind greatly.

RECRUITER : You have to go to Shiu-tarai.

HUBBA : To Shiu-tarai? On this dark night? What is the subject of the play there?

RECRUITER : The subject is 'The rebuilding of the fort of Nandi Pass'.

HUBBA : You mean to rebuild the Fort with my help? My dear friend, it's only because you can't get a good sight of me, in this darkness, that you could ever utter such an absurdity as that! I'm

RECRUITER : I don't care who you are! You've got your two hands.

HUBBA : That's only because I could not help it. But can you call these

RECRUITER : The proof of the use of your hands doesn't come from your mouth. We shall discover it at the right time. Come now! Get up!

Enters SECOND RECRUITER.

SECOND RECRUITER : Here's another man, Kankar.

KANKAR : Who is he?

WAYFARER : I'm nobody, Sir! I am Lachman. I sound the gong in the Temple of Bhairava.

KANKAR : That means your hands are strong. Come to Shiu-tarai!

LACHMAN : But the gong?

KANKAR : Bhairava will sound His own gong himself.

LACHMAN : Pray, have pity on me! My wife's ailing!

THE WATERFALL

KANKAR : She'll either be cured or dead, when you're absent. And the same thing'll happen if you're present.

HUBBA : Lachman, my good fellow! Don't make a fuss. The work has its risk, I know. But your objection also has its own risk, and I've had some taste of it already.

KANKAR : Listen! I can hear the voice of Narsingh.

NARSINGH enters with a gang of men.

KANKAR : Is the news good, Narsingh?

NARSINGH : I've gathered these men for our purpose. And some have already been despatched.

ONE OF THE PARTY : I refuse to go.

KANKAR : Why? What's the matter with you?

ONE OF THE PARTY : Nothing. But I'm not going.

KANKAR : What's his name, Narsingh?

NARSINGH : His name's Banwari. He makes rosaries out of lotus seeds.

KANKAR : Let me settle with him. [To Banwari] Why do you refuse to go?

BANWARI : I've no quarrel with the Shiu-tarai people. They're not our enemies.

KANKAR : But let's suppose that we are their enemies. Hasn't that also its responsibility?

BANWARI : I'd hate to take part in wrong-doing.

KANKAR : Wrong's only wrong where you've the right to judge. Uttarakut is a great body, you're only a part. Whatever you do as a part of it you can have no responsibility for that!

BANWARI : There's a greater body, whose part's Uttarakut as well as Shiu-tarai.

THE WATERFALL

KANKAR : I say, Narsingh! This man argues! Nobody's a greater nuisance for the country than the man who argues!

NARSINGH : Hard work is the best cure for that! This is why I'm taking him along with us.

BANWARI : I'll be only a burden to you and of no use for your work.

KANKAR : You're a burden to Uttarakut, and we're trying to get rid of you.

HUBBA : My dear friend Banwari, you seem to belong to that class of men who are rational and you won't accept the fact that there's another class of men who are powerful. And you two always clash! Either learn their method, or else give up your own and keep quiet.

BANWARI : What's your method?

HUBBA : I usually sing. But that would only be useless now, and therefore I keep silence.

KANKAR : [To Banwari.] Now tell me what you're going to do.

BANWARI : I shan't move a step further.

KANKAR : Oh! Then we'll have to make you move. I say, there! Bind him with this rope.

HUBBA : [Intervening.] My dear sir, please let me say one word. Don't be angry with me! The force you spend in carrying this man can be better used, if you save it.

KANKAR : Those who are unwilling to serve Uttarakut we've got our unpleasant duty towards them, and we can't neglect it. D'you understand?

HUBBA : H'm, yes! Very clearly indeed!

[They all go out except Narsingh and Kankar.]

NARSINGH : Here comes Bibhuti. Long live Bibhuti!

Enters BIBHUTI.

KANKAR : We've made great progress. Our party's grown strong. Why are you here? They're waiting for you at their Festival.

BIBHUTI : I have no heart for this Festival.

NARSINGH : Why?

BIBHUTI : The news about the Nandi pass has deliberately been sent to us today, in order to take away from the glory of my reception. There is a rivalry against me.

KANKAR : Who's the rival?

BIBHUTI : I do not want to utter his name. You all know it. The problem has become acute with him, whether he shall have more honour in this country than I. I have not told you one fact. A messenger came to me from the other party, to lure me away, and he also gave me a hint that they are ready to break the embankment.

NARSINGH : What impudence!

KANKAR : How could you bear it, Bibhuti?

BIBHUTI : It is useless to contradict the ravings of madness.

KANKAR : But is it right to feel too secure? I remember how you said once that there are one or two weak spots, which can easily be.

BIBHUTI : Those who have any information about these weak spots also know, that they themselves will be carried away by the flood, if they meddle with them.

NARSINGH : Wouldn't it be wise to keep guards at those places?

BIBHUTI : Death itself is keeping guard there. There is not the least fear for my embankment. If only I can shut up once again the Nandi Pass, I shall die happy.

KANKAR : It's not at all difficult for you to do that.

BIBHUTI : My appliances are ready. Only the Pass is so narrow, that it can be defended by a very few men.

KANKAR : That means we shall require men who must die.

[From behind the scene, the cry comes, 'Awake, Bhairava! Awake.'

Enters DHANANJAY.

KANKAR : This is an evil sight for us at the moment of starting for our adventure.

BIBHUTI : Vairagi, saints like you have never succeeded in awakening

BHAIRAVA : But men like myself, whom you call infidels, are on our way to give Him a good rousing up.

DHANANJAY : I have no doubt in my mind, that it's for you to awaken Him.

BIBHUTI : Our process-of awakening Him is not through sounding temple gongs and lighting temple lamps.

DHANANJAY : No! When you bind Him with your fetters, he will wake up to break them.

BIBHUTI : Our fetters are not easy to break. The evils are innumerable, and there are an infinite number of knots.

DHANANJAY : His time comes when the obstacle becomes insurmountable.

[The Devotees come, singing.]

Victory to Him, the Terrible,
The Lord of Destruction,
The Uttermost Peace,
The Dissolver of doubts,
The Breaker of fetters,
Who carries us beyond all conflicts,
The Terrible! The Terrible!

Enter RANAJIT and MINISTER.

THE WATERFALL

MINISTER : Sire, the camp is deserted and a great part of it is burnt away. The few guards, who were there.

RANAJIT : Never mind about them. Where is Abhijit? I must know!

KANKAR : King! We claim punishment for the Crown Prince.

RANAJIT : Do I ever wait for your claim, in order to punish the one who deserves it?

KANKAR : The people harbour suspicions in their minds, when they cannot find him.

RANAJIT : Suspicions? Against whom?

KANKAR : Pardon me, Sire! You must understand the state of mind of your subjects. Owing to the delay in finding the Crown Prince, their impatience has grown to such a degree, that they will never wait for your judgment, when he is discovered.

BIBHUTI : Of our own accord we have taken in hand the duty of building up again the Fort of Nandi Pass.

RANAJIT : Why could you not leave it in my hands?

BIBHUTI : We have the right to suspect your secret sanction to this outrage done by the Crown Prince.

MINISTER : Sire, the mind of the public is excited by their self-glorification on the one hand and by their anger on the other. Do not add to their impatience, and make it still more turbulent by your impatience.

RANAJIT : Who is there? Is it Dhananjay?

DHANANJAY : I am happy to find that you have not forgotten me!

RANAJIT : You certainly know where Abhijit is.

DHANANJAY : I can never keep secret what I know for certain.

RANAJIT : Then what are you doing here?

DHANANJAY : I am waiting for the appearance of the Crown Prince.

[From outside, the voice is heard of Amba.

AMBA : Suman! Suman, my darling! It's dark. It's so dark!

THE WATERFALL

RANAJIT : Who is that calling?

MINISTER : It is that mad woman, Amba.

Enters AMBA.

AMBA : He has not yet come back.

RANAJIT : Why do you seek him? The time came, and Bhairava called him away.

AMBA : Does Bhairava only call away and never restore, secretly? In the depth of the night? My Suman!

[Amba goes out.

Enters a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER : A multitude of men from Shiu-tarai is marching up.

BIBHUTI : How is that? We had planned to disarm them, by falling on them suddenly. There must be some traitor among us! Kankar! Very few people knew, except your party. Then how was it?

KANKAR : Bibhuti! You suspect even us!

BIBHUTI : Suspicion knows no limits.

KANKAR : Then we also suspect you.

BIBHUTI : You have the right! But when the time comes, there will be a reckoning.

RANAJIT : [To the Messenger] Do you know, why they are coming?

MESSENGER : They have heard that the Crown Prince is in prison, and they have come to seek him out and rescue him.

BIBHUTI : We are also seeking him, as well as they. Let us see who can find him!

DHANANJAY : Both of you will find him. He has no favourites.

MESSENGER : There comes Ganesh. the leader of Shiu-tarai.

Enters GANESH.

GANESH : [To Dhananjay.] Father, shall we find him?

DHANANJAY : Yes.

GANESH : Promise us!

DHANANJAY : Yes, you shall find him.

RANAJIT : Whom are you seeking?

GANESH : King! You must release him.

RANAJIT : Whom?

GANESH : Our Crown Prince! You do not want him, but we do! Would you shut up everything that we need for our life, even him?

DHANANJAY : Fool! Who has the power to shut him up?

GANESH : We shall make him our King.

DHANANJAY : Yes, you shall! He is coming with his King's crown.

Enter the EVOTEES, singing.

Victory to the fearful Flame,

That tears the heart of Darkness,

That burns to ashes things which are dead.

Victory to Him whose voice thunders forth Truth.

Whose right arm smites the unrighteous.

Whose guidance leads mortals across Death.

THE WATERFALL

[From outside is heard the cry of Amba.

AMBA : Mother calls, Suman! Mother calls! Come back, Suman! Come back! [A sound is heard in the distance.

BIBHUTI : Hark! What is that? What is that sound?

DHANANJAY : It is laughter, bubbling up from the heart of the darkness.

BIBHUTI : Hush! Let me find out from what direction the sound comes.

[In the distance, the cry is faintly heard, 'Victory to Bhairava.'

BIBHUTI : [Listening with his head bent towards the ground.] It is the sound of water.

DHANANJAY : The first beat of the drum before the dance

BIBHUTI : The sound grows in strength!

KANKAR : It seems

NARSINGH : Yes! It certainly seems

BIBHUTI : My God! There is no doubt of it. The water of Muktheadhara is freed! Who has done it? Who has broken the embankment? He shall pay the price! There is no escape for him!

[He rushes out.

[Kankar and Narsingh rush out, following him.

RANAJIT : Minister! What is this!

DHANANJAY : It is the call to the Feast of the Breaking of Bondage [Sings.] The drum beats; It beats into the beatings of my heart.

MINISTER : Sire, it is

RANAJIT : Yes, it must be his!

MINISTER : It can be no other man than

RANAJIT : Who is so brave as he?

DHANANJAY : [Sings.] His feet dance, They dance in the depth of my life.

THE WATERFALL

RANAJIT : I shall punish him, if punished he must be. But these people, maddened with rage, Only Abhijit! He is favoured of the Gods! May the Gods save him!

GANESH : I do not understand what has happened. Master!

DHANANJAY : [Sings.]

The night watches,

And watches also the Watchman.

The silent stars throb with dread.

RANAJIT : I hear some steps! Abhijit! Abhijit!

MINISTER : It must be he, who comes.

DHANANJAY : [Sings] My heart aches and aches, While the fetters fall to pieces.

Enters SANJAY.

RANAJIT : Here comes Sanjay! Where is Abhijit?

SANJAY : The waterfall of Muktheadhara has borne him away, and we have lost him.

RANAJIT : What say you, Prince?

SANJAY : He has broken the embankment.

RANAJIT : I understand! And with this he has found his freedom!

SANJAY : No! But I was certain he would go there. And so I preceded him, and waited in the dark. But there it ends. He kept me back. He would not let me go.

RANAJIT : Tell me more!

SANJAY : Somehow he had come to know about a weakness in the structure, and at that point he gave his blow to the monster Machine. The monster returned that blow against him. Then Muktheadhara, like a mother, took up his stricken body into her arms and carried him away.

GANESH : We came to seek our Prince! Shall we never find him again!

DHANANJAY : You have found him forever!

Enter the DEVOTEES of Bhairava, singing.

Victory to Him, who is Terrible,
The Lord of Destruction,
The Uttermost Peace!
The Dissolver of doubts,
The Breaker of fetters,
Who carries us beyond all conflicts,
The Terrible! the Terrible!
Victory to the fearful Flame,
That tears the heart of Darkness!
That turns to ashes things that are dead!
Victory to Him, whose voice thunders forth Truth.
Whose right arm smites the unrighteous,
Whose guidance leads mortals across death!
The Terrible! The Terrible!