

Indradatta. They reached the house of Varṣa. Next morning they smeared and purified the floor and the three sincere and simple disciples sat facing the east. The teacher Varṣa recited to them the divine spell 'Om', and instantly all the Vedas and the ancillaries of Vedas made their appearance. The teacher commenced teaching. The three disciples learned, Vararuci hearing only once, Vyāli hearing twice and Indradatta hearing thrice. Hearing these divine recitations and repetitions which were not to be heard anywhere else, Brahmins crowded to the place. King Nanda of Pāṭaliputra praised the teacher Varṣa and sent him plenty of wealth and conferred on him ranks and privileges.

4) *Marriage.* Vararuci learned everything from the teacher Varṣa. He went with his friends once to see the Indra-festival. There, Vararuci happened to see Upakośā the daughter of Upavarṣa and fell in love with her. That night he did not sleep. At last he slowly closed his eyes. A divine woman clad in white garments appeared before him. It seemed to him that the woman said to him, "You need not worry in this matter. Upakośā was your wife in the previous birth. She will marry only you. I am Sarasvatī who pervades your body." Vararuci woke up. Next day the elders came to know of this, and gave her in marriage to Vararuci.

5) *Vararuci becoming a Minister.* Education was finished. It was time for Vyāli and Indradatta to give presents to the teacher Varṣa. The teacher demanded a crore of Vilkas (a Venetian ducat used for neck-ornament). They were not having so much wealth. They went with Vararuci to Nanda, the King of Ayodhyā, and the Brother-in-law of Vararuci. When they reached Ayodhyā, they heard that the King had just died. Indradatta said "By the practice of contemplation I shall enter the body of the King. Vararuci should come and beg money of me. Till my return Vyāli must keep my body." "The spirit of Indradatta immediately entered the King's body. The dead King rose up. People were struck with wonder. They celebrated a festival. Vyāli kept the body of Indradatta within a temple. Vararuci went to the presence of the King and begged for a crore of Vilkas. The King called his minister Śakaṭāla and told him to give Vararuci a crore of Vilkas. Śakaṭāla, who was an intelligent man, felt some doubt in the coming to life of the King. He decided that some one might have entered the body of the King. He ordered that every dead body in the city should be burnt. Along with the bodies, the body of Indradatta also was taken by force from Vyāli. At this time the King compelled Śakaṭāla to give the beggar Vilkas. But till the dead bodies were burnt, Śakaṭāla did not obey him. Because his body was burnt Indradatta had to remain in the body of the King. Śakaṭāla gave Vararuci the required amount. But of what use was the money? Indradatta had become the King. The King and Vyāli made a secret consultation, as a result of which Vararuci was made the Prime Minister. Śakaṭāla was charged with Brahmahatyā and was put into a dungeon with his hundred sons. They were allowed fried and powdered grain and a 'ceratu' (a measure) of water as food for each.

Śakaṭāla said to his sons. "My sons, all of us cannot live with so little food. The most intelligent one among

us should live by eating the whole food, to take revenge on the Yoga Nanda King. Who will do so?"

Sons:—We don't think that we are powerful to do that. So you must live, father!

So Śakaṭāla ate the whole food and lived while his sons, one by one, died of hunger before his eyes. Śakaṭāla sat in the middle of the Skeletons with the sole purpose of taking revenge. Vyāli gave the present to the teacher and went home.

Indradatta and Vararuci lived as king and minister.

6) *Loss of ministership.* By and by Indradatta had fallen into bad ways. The subjects were beset with famine. The people hated the king and the minister. They made a cry to bring Śakaṭāla back. They obtained the permission of the king and brought Śakaṭāla out of the dungeon. Śakaṭāla knew that so long as Vararuci was alive, he could do nothing to the King Yoga Nanda. So he decided to wait for an opportunity, and accepted an office under Vararuci. One day Yoga Nanda went out for a walk. He saw in the Ganges the palm of a hand with five fingers. He called Vararuci and asked him what the sight was. Vararuci showed two fingers in that direction. Immediately the palm of the hand disappeared. The King was amazed at this and asked him for its meaning. He said "The meaning of showing fingers was that if five men unite together, they could accomplish anything. I showed two fingers, to mean that if two men unite together they also could achieve anything." At this reply the king was much pleased and Śakaṭāla felt miserable at the intelligence of Vararuci.

On another occasion the King saw his wife looking at a Brahmin guest through the window. He got angry and ordered that Brahmin to be killed. When that Brahmin was being taken to the scaffold, a dead fish, placed for sale, laughed loud. The king asked Vararuci for its reason. Saying that he had to consider about it before giving a reply, he went out and meditated upon Sarasvatī. Devī appeared and told him. "If you climb up to the top of this palm tree and sit there to night you will understand why the dead fish laughed." Vararuci did as he was told. A fierce giantess came there with her young ones. The children began to ask her for food. The giantess told them that they would get the flesh of a Brahmin next day, and that he was not killed that day because the dead fish had laughed. The young ones asked her why the dead fish laughed. The giantess said "The wives of the kings are not chaste. In all harems men live in the guise of women. Without stopping this the king was going to kill an innocent Brahmin. That is why the dead fish laughed."

Vararuci, who heard this conversation, got down when the giantess was gone. He went to the king and told him why the fish laughed. The king made a sudden search in the harem. He found out some men in the dress of women. The king honoured Vararuci and released the Brahmin. One day an artist who drew portraits, came to the palace. He drew a portrait of the king and the queen and placed it before the king. The picture was life-like. The king gave the artist several presents. Once Vararuci happened to enter the bed-room of the king. He saw the picture on the wall. The picture was beautiful. Still, considering the appearance of each part of her body the queen ought to have a mole on her loin. Vararuci put that mole in the picture. When Vararuci had gone the king entered the