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# Chapter I

1. Salutation to *Aum* (undifferentiated Brahman, and yet the Primal and Blissful cause), the transcendental consciousness shining as the unique mirror of the wonderful universe:

*Note:* The one undifferentiated Brahman signified by *Aum* polarises as *Sat-chit-ananda* taking shape as Parameswari who, in Her crystal purity, displays the variegated phenomena which gyrate in equipoise within Her. Neutral Brahman and the polarised Brahman are thus interchangeable. The idea of the mirror implies the non-separateness of the object from the subject (conscious being).

2. (Harithayana said: . . .)

"Undisturbed you have heard, O Narada! the *Mahatmya* (The Gospel) of Sri Tripura, which teaches the way to Transcendence."

*Note:* Thus begins the latter part of the book; the first part deals with a narrative of Devi (Sakti-Sri Tripura), Her worship and Her grace. Tripura literally means the three cities. They are the states—*Jagrat, Svapna* and *Shushupti*. The undercurrent of consciousness in all of them, remaining unaffected, is metaphorically called the Resident Mistress by name Sri Tripura. The procreative faculty generating new beings and the link of altruistic love connecting the offspring to the parent are personified in the *Mother*. Hence the feminine termination of Tripura.

"The way to transcendence" signifies that interest in Tripura purifies the mind and creates the zeal for enquiry into the Truth. The listener is now fit for the ensuing discourse on wisdom.

3. I shall now discourse on wisdom, which is unique because one will be permanently freed from misery, by hearing it.

4. This is the concentrated extract of the essence of the Vedic, Vaishnava, Saiva, Satkta and Pasupata lore taken after a deep study of them all.

5-7. No other course will impress the mind so much as this one on Wisdom which was once taught by that illustrious master

Dattatreya to Parasurâma. The teaching was born of his own experience, logical in sense and quite unique in its nature. One who cannot apprehend Truth even after hearing this must be dismissed as a silly fool to be ranked among the insentient and accursed of God; Siva himself cannot make such a one gain wisdom.

8. I now proceed to relate that incomparable teaching. Listen! Oh, the lives of Sages are most sacred!

9-11. Narada, too, served me to learn the same from me; for, service to sages enables one to comprehend their innate kindness, just as the sense of smell helps one to detect the intrinsic odor of musk.

As Parasurâma, the son of Jamadagni, already pure-minded and pleasing to all, was listening to the Gospel of Tripura from the lips of Dattatreya, he became abstracted in devotion and so growing still for a time, his mind became still purer.

12-13. Then as the mind relaxed, his eyes glowed in rapture and his hair stood on end, as if his ecstasy could not be contained within but must escape through the very pores of his body. He then fell to the ground before his master Datta.

14. Again he arose, and being filled with ecstasy his voice choked with emotion as he said: 'Lucky am I; blessed am I; through Thy Grace O Lord!'

15. That expanse of Grace called Siva, here incarnate as my Guru, is indeed gracious to me; gaining whose pleasure even the Lord of creation looks a pigmy.

16. Does not the God of Death verily merge into the Self, if only one's master is pleased with one?

That Supreme Being is gracious indeed, just in so much as is my Master, for reasons unknown to me.

*Note:* The meaning is that the Guru, being God, is mercy incarnate and requires no incentive to show grace.

17. The Guru's grace gained, I have gained all! Thou hast now kindly opened out to me the glory of Tripura.

18. I now desire fervently to worship Her Transcendental Majesty. Kindly tell me, my Master, how it is to be done.

19-22. Being thus requested, Datta Guru satisfied himself as to the fitness of Parasurâma, whose zeal for and devotion to

Tripura worship were intense; and he duly initiated him into the method of Her worship. After initiation into the right method, which is more sacred than all others and leads directly to Realization, Parasurâma learned from the sweet lips of Sri Guru all the details regarding recitation figures for worship and different meditations, one after another—like a honey bee collecting honey from flowers. Bhargava (*i.e.*, Parasurâma) was overjoyed.

23. Being then permitted by his holy master, he thirsted to practise the sacred lore; he went round his master, made obeisance to him and retired to the Mahendra Hill.

*Note:* To walk round gently and peacefully, always keeping the centre to one's right, is a sign of respect to the object in the centre.

24. There, having built a clean and comfortable hermitage, he was engaged for twelve years in the worship of Tripura.

25. He incessantly contemplated the figure of that Holy Mother Tripura, performing at the same time his daily tasks and the special ceremonies connected with Her worship and recitations; twelve years thus passed in a flash. Then on a certain day while the son of Jamadagni was sitting at ease, he fell into a reverie.

27. "I did not understand even a little of what Samvarta told me whom I met formerly on the way.

28. I have also forgotten what I asked my Guru. I heard from him the Gospel of Tripura, . . .

29. . . . but it is not clear to me what Samvarta said in reply to my query on creation.

30. "He mentioned the story of Kalakrit, but went no further, knowing that I was not fit for it.

31. "Even now I understand nothing of the workings of the universe. Where does it rise from, in all its grandeur?

32. "Where does it end? How does it exist? I find it to be altogether transient.

33. "But worldly happenings seem permanent; why should that be? Such happenings seem strangely enough to be unconsidered.

34. "How strange! They are at *par* with the blind man led by the blind!

35. "My own case furnishes an example in point. I do not even remember what happened in my childhood.

36. "I was different in my youth, again different in my manhood, still more so now; and in this way, my life is constantly changing.

37-38. "What fruits have been reaped as the result of these changes is not clear to me. The end justifies the means as adopted by individuals according to their temperaments in different climes and in different times. What have they gained thereby? Are they themselves happy?

39. "The gain is only that which is considered to be so by the unthinking public. I however cannot deem it so, seeing that even after gaining the so-called end, the attempts are repeated.

*Note:* Since there is no abiding satisfaction in the gain, it is not worth having.

40-41. "Well, having gained one purpose, why does man look for another? Therefore, what the man is always after should be esteemed the only real purpose—be it accession of pleasure or removal of pain. There can be neither, so long as the incentive to effort lasts.

42. "The feeling of a need to work in order to gain happiness (being the index of misery) is the misery of miseries. How can there be pleasure or removal or pain so long as it continues?

43-45. "Such pleasure is like that of soothing unguents placed on a scalded limb, or of the embrace of one's beloved when one is lying pierced by an arrow in the breast; or of the sweet melodies of music heard by an advanced consumptive!

46. "Only those who need not engage in action, are happy; they are perfectly content, and self-contained, and they experience happiness which extends to all the pores of the body.

47. "Should there still be a few pleasurable moments for others, they are similar to those enjoyed by one who, while writhing with an abdominal pain, inhales the sweet odor of flowers.

48. "How silly of people with innumerable obligations ever to be busy seeking such moments of pleasure in this world!

49. "What shall I say of the prowess of undiscriminating men? They propose to reach happiness after crossing interminable hurdles of efforts!

50. "A beggar in the street labors as much for happiness as a mighty emperor.

51-52. "Each of them having gained his end feels happy and considers himself blessed as if he had reached the goal of life. I too have been unwittingly imitating them like a blind man following the blind. Enough of this folly! I will at once return to that ocean of mercy—my Master.

53. "Learning from him what is to be known, I will cross the ocean of doubts after boarding the boat of his teachings."

54. Having resolved thus, Parasurâma of pure mind immediately descended the hill in search of his Master.

55. Quickly reaching the Gandhmadan Mountain, he found the Guru sitting in the *padmasana* posture as if illuminating the whole world.

56. He fell prone before the Master's seat and, holding the Guru's feet with his hands, pressed them to his head.

57. On Parasurâma saluting him thus, Dattatreya gave him his blessings, his face lit with love, and he bade him rise saying:

58. "Child! rise up. I see you have returned after a long time. Tell me how are you? Are you in good health?"

59. He rose as commanded by his Guru, and took his seat in front of and close to him as directed. Clasping his hands, Parasurâma spoke with pleasure.

*Note:* Clasping the two hands with fingers directed towards the object, is a sign of respect.

60. "Sri Guru! Ocean of Mercy! Can any one drenched with Thy kindness ever be afflicted by ailments even if destiny so decree?

61. "How can the burning pains of illness touch one who is abiding in the refreshing moon of Thy nectarlike kindness.

*Note:* The moon is believed to be the store of nectar with which the *pitris* feed themselves.

62–64. "I feel happy in body and mind, being refreshed by Thy kindness. Nothing afflicts me except the desire to remain in unbroken contact with Thy holy feet. The very sight of Thy holy

feet has made me perfectly happy, but there are a few long-standing doubts in my mind.

65. "With Thy kind permission I desire to propound them."

66. Hearing the words of Parasurâma, Dattatreya the Ocean of kindness, was pleased and said to him.

67. "Ask at once, O Bhargava, what you so much want to know and what you have so long been thinking about. I am pleased with your devotion and shall answer your questions with pleasure."

Thus ends the First Chapter known as the Interrogatory of Bhargava in *Sri Tripura Rahasya.*

# Chapter II

## Obligatory Sense towards Action Condemned and Investigation Recommended

1. Ordered thus, Parasurâma, again saluting the son of Saint Atri with humility, began to ask:

2. "Bhagavan, dear and esteemed Master! Oh, Omniscient one! Ocean of Mercy! Once before for good reason I was furious with the kingly class.

3. "Twenty-one times I strode the land exterminating them all, including suckling babes and those in the womb collecting their blood in a pool.

4. "My forefathers were pleased with my devotion to them; however, they ordered me to desist from such carnage. My wrath was at last appeased.

5. "On hearing of the renowned Rama the very incarnation of Hari in Ayodhya, my wrath was rekindled. Blinded by fury and proud of my prowess, I challenged him.

6. "I was defeated by that great Lord and my pride was humbled. However, out of his innate kindness he let me go with my life because I was a Brahmin.

7. "As I was returning mortified by defeat, I realized the vanity of the ways of the world.

8. "Unexpectedly I met Samvarta, the Lord of the *Avadhutas*, and instinctively recognised him to be like fire in embers.

*Note:* Samvarta, the brother of Brihaspati, looked like a maniac wandering in the forests. Narada once directed the emperor Nivritta to him and instructed him how Samvarta could be recognised. The King accordingly met the Sage and prayed for his help in the performance of a sacrifice, in which Brihaspati prompted by Indra had refused to officiate. Samvarta agreed, though hesitatingly, and later completed it in spite of the wrath of Indra. Indra attempted to break up the function

but was rendered impotent by the Sage (*see Asvarnedha Parva* in the *Mahabharata*).

9. "His greatness was like red hot coal hidden in embers. Every inch of his body filled one with exhilaration so that I had a refreshing feeling in his mere proximity.

*Note:* Sensation of Peace or of *ananda* is the symptom of *Satsanga.*

10. "I asked him to tell me about his state. His answer was clear cut and expressive of the essence of the sweet nectar of Eternal life.

11. "I could not pursue the conversation then and felt like a beggar maid before a queen. However I prayed to him and he directed me to Thee.

12. "Accordingly I have sought shelter at Thy holy feet, just as a blind man who is entirely dependent on his friends.

13. "What Samvarta said is not at all clear to me. I have learnt the Gospel of Tripura well. It is undoubtedly an incentive to devotion to Her.

14. "She is incarnate as Thou, and always abides in my heart. But what have I gained after all?

*Note:* Prayers to God are only selfish in the beginning, yet they not only fulfill one's desires but also purify the mind so that devotion to God grows in intensity and the devotee desires nothing more than God. Then God shows His Grace by manifesting as his Guru.

15. "Lord, kindly explain what Samvarta told me before. It is certain that I cannot realize the goal until it is made known to me.

16. "Whatever I do in ignorance thereof looks like mere child's play.

17. "Formerly I pleased the Gods, including Indra, with various ceremonies, observances, gifts and presents of food.

18. "Later I heard Samvarta say that the fruits of all these acts are only trivial. I consider those acts of no account which yield only trifling results.

19. "Misery is not absence of happiness, but limited happiness. For as happiness recedes misery pours in.

20. "This is not the only miserable result of action, but there remains a still worse one, the fear of death, which cannot be mitigated by any amount of activity.

21. "My devotional practices before Tripura are similar. All these mental conceptions are nothing but child's play.

22. "The practices may be according to Thy instructions, or different. Again they may be with discipline or without discipline, since the Sastras differ about this.

23. "Meditations may also differ according to individual tastes and temperaments. How can that be? Devotion is just as imperfect as *Karma.*

24. "How can transient mental concepts of devotion produce intransient results of high Truth? Moreover, the practices are continuous and there seems to be no end to these obligatory duties.

25. "I have noticed that Samvarta, the Lord, is quite happy, being completely free from any sense of obligation to act and its disastrous results.

26. "He seems to laugh at the ways of the world, to stride unconcerned up the road of fearlessness, like a majestic elephant refreshing itself in a lake of melted snow when the surrounding forest is on fire.

27. "I found him absolutely free from any sense of obligation and at the same time perfectly happy in his realization of Eternal Being. How did he gain that state? And what did he tell me?

28. "Kindly explain these points, and so rescue me from the jaws of the monster of *Karma.*"

29. Praying so, he fell prostrate and took the Master's feet in his hands.

Seeing Parasurâma doing so and feeling that he was now ready for Realization.

30. Sri Datta, whose very being was love, said gently: "Oh child Bhargava! Lucky are you—your mind being thus disposed.

31-33. "Just as a man sinking in the ocean suddenly finds a boat to rescue him, so also your virtuous actions of the past have now placed you on the most sacred heights of Self-Realization. That Devi Tripura, who is the conscious core of the heart and

therefore knows each one intimately, swiftly rescues Her unswerving devotees from the jaws of death, after manifesting Herself in their hearts.

34. "As long as a man is afraid of the nightmare, obligation, so long must he placate it, or else he will not find peace.

35. "How can a man stung by that Viper, obligation, ever be happy? Some men have gone mad as if some poison had already entered their blood and were torturing their whole being.

36. "While others are stupefied by the poison of obligation and unable to discriminate good from bad.

37. "Wrongly do they ever engage in work, being deluded; such is the plight of humanity stupefied by the poison of the sense of obligation.

38. "Men are from time immemorial beings swallowed up by the terrific ocean of poison, like some travellers once on the Vindhya range.

39. "Oppressed by hunger in the forest, they mistook the deceptive *Nux Vomica* fruits for some delicious oranges.

40. "And in their voracious hunger they ate them up without even detecting the bitter taste. They then suffered torment from the effects of the poison.

41. "Having originally mistaken the poisonous fruit for an edible fruit, their reason being now blinded by poison, they eagerly sought relief from pain.

42. "And in their agony they took hold of and ate thorn-apples, thinking them to be rose-apples.

*Note:* Thorn-apples are used for extracting a poisonous alkaloid. The fruit is fatal or produces insanity.

43. "They became mad and lost their way. Some becoming blind fell into pits or gorges.

44. "Some of them had their limbs and bodies cut by thorns; some were disabled in their hands, feet or other parts of the body; others began to quarrel, fight and shout among themselves.

45. "They assaulted one another with their fists, stones, missiles, sticks, etc., till at length thoroughly exhausted, they reached a certain town.

46. "They happened to come to the outskirts of the town at nightfall, and were prevented by the guards from entering.

47-49. "Unaware of the time and place and unable to gauge the circumstances, they assaulted the guards and were soundly thrashed and chased away; some fell into ditches; some were caught by crocodiles in deep waters; some fell headlong into wells and were drowned; a few more dead than alive, were caught and thrown into prison.

50. "Similar is the fate of the people who, deluded with the quest of happiness, have fallen into the snares of the task-master of action. They are bewildered in their frenzy and destruction awaits them.

51-52. "You are fortunate, Bhargava, in having transcended that distracted state. Investigation is the root-cause of all, and it is the first step to the supreme reward of indescribable bliss. How can any one gain security without proper investigation?

53. "Want of judgment is certain death, yet many are in its clutches. Success attends proper deliberation till eventually the end is without doubt accomplished.

54. "In deliberation is the ever-present weakness of the Daityas and Yatudhanas (Asuras and Rakshasas); deliberation is the characteristic of the Devas (Gods), and therefore they are always happy.

55. "Owing to their discrimination they depend on Vishnu and inevitably conquer their enemies. Investigation is the seed capable of sprouting and flourishing into the gigantic tree of happiness.

56. "A deliberating man always shines over others. Brahmâ is great because of deliberation; Vishnu is worshipped because of it.

57-58. "The Great Lord Siva is omniscient for the same reason. Rama, though the most intelligent of men, came to disaster for want of judgment before attempting to capture the golden deer; later with due deliberation, he spanned the ocean, crossed over to Lanka, the island of the Rakshasa brood, and conquered it.

*Note:* The reference is to the *Ramayana.* Ravana, the arch enemy of Rama, induced one of his lieutenants to assume the

shape of a golden deer and entice Rama away from his hermitage so that Ravana could forcibly carry away Sita, who would thus be left unprotected. The ruse succeeded; and later ensued the great battle in which Ravana and others were killed and Sita was recovered. Thus did Rama vindicate himself.

59. "You must have heard how Brahmâ also becoming on an occasion infatuated, acted rashly like a fool and consequently paid the penalty with one of his five heads.

*Note:* Brahmâ had originally five heads. He and Vishnu were once contesting each other's superiority. Just then a huge column of light appeared in front of them and they wondered what it was. They agreed that he who found either end of the column earlier, should get the palm. Vishnu became a boar and sought the bottom; Brahmâ became a swan and flew up towards the top. Vishnu returned disappointed. Brahmâ at the point of despair came across a swrewpine flower. He stopped its descent and asked wherefrom it was coming. All that it knew was that it was falling from space and nothing more. Brahmâ persuaded it to bear false witness and claimed superiority over his rival. Siva was enraged, snipped off that head which spoke the lie, and declared himself as the column of light.

60. "Unthinkingly, Mahadeva conferred a boon on the Asura and was immediately obliged to flee in terror for fear of being reduced to ashes.

*Note:* There was once an Asura by name Bhasma. He did penance and pleased Siva who appeared before him and asked him what he wanted. Bhasma desired that his mere touch should reduce any object to ashes. Siva conferred the boon; Bhasma wanted to test it on him; Siva took to flight. In order to save him from that predicament, Vishnu appeared as a voluptuous damsel before the purusing Asura and enticed him. He became amorous and made advances to her. She asked him to go to a spring in front of them and rub himself with water, before embracing her. He was taken in. On his hand touching his body, he fell down, a heap of ashes.

61. "On one occasion, Hari having killed the wife of Bhrigu became the victim of a terrible curse and suffered untold miseries.

62. "Similarly have other Devas, Asuras, Rakshasas, men and animals become miserable by want of judgment.

63. "On the other hand, great and valiant are the heroes, O Bhargava, whom judgment ever befriends. Eternal homage to them.

64. "Common people, becoming foolishly involved in regard to their sense of action, are perplexed at every turn; if on the other hand, they think and act, they will be free from all misery.

65. "The world has been in the coils of ignorance from time immemorial; how can there be discernment so long as ignorance lasts?

66-68. "Can the sweet waters of dew collect in tropical sandy deserts which are already scorched by heat? Similarly, can the refreshing touch of discernment be sought in the red-hot flue over the furnace of long burning ignorance? Discernment is, however, gained by proper methods, the most effective of which is also the best of all, and that is the supreme grace of the Goddess who inheres as the Heart Lotus in every one. Who has ever accomplished any good purpose, without that Grace?

69. "Investigation is the Sun for chasing away the dense darkness of indolence. It is generated by the worship of God with devotion.

70. "When the Supreme Devi is well pleased with the worship of the devotee, She turns into *vichara* in him and shines as the blazing Sun in the expanse of his Heart.

*Note:* Devi: Goddess. *Vichara:* (Thought), discrimination, investigation, deliberation, judgment.

Devi is there in ignorance, in worship, in *vichara* and later, like fat in the milk, the curds and the churned butter successively.

71-72. "Therefore that Tripura, the Supreme Force, the Being of all beings, the blessed, the highest, the one consciousness of Siva, who abides as the Self of self, should be worshipped sincerely, exactly as taught by the Guru. The fore-runner of such worship is devotion and praiseworthy earnestness.

73-76. "The antecedent cause of these is again said to be the learning of the *mahatmya* (Gospel). Therefore, O Rama, the *mahatmaya* was first revealed to you; having heard it, you have

now progressed well. *Vichara* is the only way to attain the highest Good. I was indeed anxious about you; and there is very good reason for such anxiety until the mind turns towards *vichara* from the overpowering disease of ignorance, just as one is anxious for a patient who is delirious, until one sees that the system shows signs of a favorable turn.

77. "If once *vichara* takes root, the highest good has for all practical purposes, been reached in this life. As long as *vichara* is absent from a human being, the most desirable form of birth, so long is the tree of life barren and therefore useless. The only useful fruit of life is *vichara.*

79-81. "The man without discrimination is like a frog in the well; just as the frog in the well does not know anything either of good or of bad and so dies in his ignorance in the well itself, in the same way men, vainly born in *Brahmanda,*[1] do not know either good or bad regarding themselves and are born only to die in ignorance.

82. "Confounding dispassion *(vairagya)* with misery, and pleasures of the world with happiness *(sukha),* a man suffers in the cycle of births and deaths, powerful ignorance prevailing.

83-84. "Even though afflicted by misery, he does not cease further indulgence in those causes antecedent to it (namely, wealth, etc.); just as a jack-ass pursues a she-ass even if kicked a hundred times by her, so also it is with the man and the world. But you, O Rama, becoming discriminating have transcended misery."

Thus ends the Second Chapter in *Tripura Rahasya.*

1. *Brahmanda:* Egg of Brahmâ (*i.e.,* the Universe).

# Chapter III

## The Antecedent Cause for Learning the Gospel. Association with the Wise Must Precede "*Vichara*"

1. Having listened to Dattatreya's words, Parasurâma was delighted and continued his questions in all humility:

2. "O Bhagavan! It is precisely as my Lord Guru has just said. Truly, a man will ever head for destruction in his ignorance.

3. "His salvation lies in investigation *(vichara)* alone. The remote and proximate causes have also been mentioned by Thee, and they have been traced to *mahatmya*. I am in great doubt on this point.

4. "How does that happen and what is again its proximate cause? Can it be that it is natural (like courage to a hero)? Then why is it not shared by all?

5-6. "Why have I not got it as yet? Again, there are others who are more troubled and who suffer more than I. Why have they not got this means? Kindly tell me."

Thus asked, Datta, the Ocean of Mercy, answered:

7. "Listen, Rama! I shall now tell you the fundamental cause of salvation. *Association with the wise* is the root cause for obliterating all misery.

8-9. "Association with the sages is alone said to lead to the highest good. Your contact with Samvarta has led you to this stage of enlightenment, which is the fore-runner of emancipation. On being approached, the sages teach the greatest good.

10. "Has any one ever got anything great, without contact with the wise? In any case, it is the company which determines the future of the individual.

11. "A man undoubtedly reaps the fruits of his company. I shall relate to you a story to illustrate this:

12. "There was once a king of Dasarna by name Muktachuda. He had two sons: Hemachuda and Manichuda.

13. "They were comely, well-behaved and well-learned. At one time they led a hunting party, consisting of a great retinue of men and warriors, into a deep forest on the Sahya Mountains which was infested with tigers, lions and other wild animals. They were themselves armed with bows and arrows.

14. "There they shot several deer, lions, boars, bisons, wolves, etc., having killed them by the skilful use of their bows.

16. "As more wild animals were being hunted down by the royal hunters, a tornado began to rage, pouring down sand and pebbles.

17. "A thick cloud of dust screened the sky; and it became dark like night, so that neither rocks, trees nor men could be seen.

18. "The mountain was shrouded in darkness, so that neither hills nor valleys could be seen. The retinue hurried away afflicted by the sands and pebbles hurled down by the tornado.

19. "A few of them took shelter under rocks, others in caves, and still others under trees. The royal pair mounted on horses and rode away into the distance.

20. "Hemachuda ultimately reached the hermitage of a sage, which had been built in a fine garden of plantain, date and other trees.

21. "There he saw a charming maiden whose body, bright as gold, shone like a flame of fire.

22-23. "The prince was bewitched at the sight of the girl, who looked like the Goddess of Fortune, and spoke to her thus: 'Who are you, fair lady, who live fearlessly in such a dreadful and solitary forest? Whose are you? Why are you here? Are you alone?'

24. "On being spoken to, that spotless maiden replied: 'Welcome, prince! Please sit down.

25. "Hospitality is the sacred duty of the pious. I notice you have been overtaken by the tornado and afflicted.

26. "Tie your horse to the date-palm. Sit here and take rest, and then you will be able to listen to me in comfort."

27-29. "She gave him fruits to eat and juices to drink. After he had refreshed himself, he was further treated with her charming words which dropped like sweet nectar from her lips.

'Prince! there is that well-known sage, Vyaghrapada, and ardent devotee of Siva, by whose penance all the worlds have been transcended, and who is eagerly worshipped even by the greatest saints for his unparalleled wisdom both with regard to this and other worlds.

30. "I am his foster child—Hemalekha is my name. There was a *Vidyadhari* (celestial damsel), Vidyaprabha by name, and very beautiful.

31. "One day she came here to bathe in this river, the Vena, to which Sushena, the King of Vanga, also came at the same time.

32. "He saw the celestial beauty bathing. She was the fairest in the world, lithe in body and with the most beautiful breasts.

33. "He fell in love with her which love she returned.

34. "Their love consummated, he returned home leaving her pregnant.

35. "Afraid of slander, she caused an abortion. I was however born alive from that womb.

36. "As Vyaghrapada came to the river bank for his evening ablutions, he picked me up because of his great love for all, in order to bring me up with a mother's care.

37. "He who offers righteous protection is said to be the father. I am therefore his daughter by virtue of this and devoted to him.

38-39. "There is certainly no fear for me anywhere on earth on account of his greatness. Be they Gods or Asuras, they cannot enter this hermitage with bad motives; if they did they would only be counting their own ruin. I have now told you my story. Wait here, Prince, a little.

40. "That same lord, my foster-father, will soon be here. Salute him and hear him with humility; your desire will be fulfilled, and you may leave here in the morning.'

41. "Having heard her and becoming enamored by her, he was silent for fear of giving offence; yet he became distressed in mind.

42-46. "Noting the prince love-stricken, that highly accomplished girl continued: 'Bravo Prince! Be steady! My father is about to come. Tell him all.' As she was saying this Vyaghrapada

the great saint arrived, carrying a basket of flowers culled from the forest for worship. Seeing the sage coming, the prince rose up from his seat, prostrated before him mentioning his own name, and then took his seat as directed. The sage noticed that the man was love-stricken; taking in the whole situation by his occult powers, he pondered on what would be the best course in the circumstances; and ended by bestowing Hemalekha on the young man as his life-partner.

47-49. "The prince was filled with joy and returned with her to his own capital. Muktachuda, his father, was also very pleased and ordered festivities in the kingdom. He then had the marriage performed ceremoniously, and the loving couple passed a very happy honeymoon in the palace, in forest retreats, and in holiday resorts. But the infatuated prince noticed that Hemalekha was not as amorous as himself.

50. "Feeling that she was always unresponsive, he asked her in private: 'My dear! How is it you are not as attentive to me as I am to you?

51. "Thou fairest of girls radiant with smiles! How is it that you are never keen on seeking pleasure or enjoying it? Are not these pleasures to your taste?

52. "You look indifferent even during the greatest pleasures. How can I be happy if your interest is not awakened?

53. "Even when I am close to you, your mind seems to be elsewhere; when spoken to, you do not seem to listen.

54. "As I hold you in close embrace for a long while, you seem unconscious of me, and then ask me, 'Lord, when did you come?'

55. "None of the carefully planned arrangements seem to interest you and you do not take part in them.

56. "When I turn away from you, you remain with your eyes closed; and so you continue whenever I approach you.

57. "Tell me how I can derive pleasure with nothing but an artist's model which is what you are, seeing your indifference to all enjoyments.

58. "What does not please you cannot please me either. I am always looking to you, trying to please you like a lily looking up at the moon.

*Note: Kumuda*, a certain lily, blossoms only in the night and is therefore said to be the beloved of the Moon, as the lotus blossoming in the day is said to be the beloved of the Sun.

59. "Speak, dear! Why are you like this? You are dearer to me than even life. I adjure you! Speak and so relieve my mind."

Thus ends the Third Chapter in the section on the potency of the association with the wise, in *Tripura Rahasya*.

# Chapter IV

## Disgust for Worldly Enjoyments is Inculcated So That Dispassion Might Be Developed

1-3. "On hearing the sweet words of her infatuated lover, who was all the time pressing her to his bosom, that stainless girl, wishing to teach him, smiled gently and spoke with good sense as follows: 'Listen to me, O Prince. It is not that I do not love you, only that I am trying to find what the greatest joy in life is which will never become distasteful. I am always searching for it, but have not attained it as yet.

4. 'Though always looking for it, I have not reached any definite decision, as is a woman's way. Will you not kindly tell me what exactly it is and so help me?'

5. "Being thus coaxed, Hemachuda laughed derisively and told his beloved: 'Women are indeed silly.'

6-8. "For do not even the birds and beasts, nay the crawling insects know what is good and what is bad? Otherwise, how are they guided in the pursuit of good, and how do they escape from bad? That which is pleasing is clearly good and that which is not so, is bad. What is there in it, my dear, that you are always given to thinking about it? Is it not silly?' Hearing her lover speak thus, Hemalekha continued:

9. "True that women are silly and cannot judge rightly. Therefore should I be taught by you, the true discerner.

10. "On being rightly taught by you, I shall stop thinking like that. Also, I shall then be able to share in your pleasures to your entire satisfaction.

11. "O King, subtle judge that you are, you have found happiness and misery to be the result of what is pleasing or otherwise.

12. "The same object yields pleasure or pain according to circumstances. Where is then the finality in your statement?

13. "Take fire for example. Its results vary according to seasons, the places and its own size or intensity.

14. "It is agreeable in cold seasons and disagreeable in hot seasons. Pleasure and pain are, therefore, functions of seasons; similarly of latitudes and altitudes.

15. "Again, fire is good for people of certain constitutions only and not for others. Still again, pleasure and pain depend on circumstances.

16-17. "The same reasoning applies to cold, to riches, to sons, to wife, to kingdom and so on. See how your father, the Maharaja, is daily worried even though he is surrounded by wife, children and wealth. Why do not others grieve like this? What has happened to enjoyments in his case? He is certainly on the look-out for happiness; are not his resources all directed to that end?

18. "No one seems to possess everything that is sufficient for happiness. The question arises: Cannot a man be happy, even with such limited means? I shall give you the answer.

19. "That cannot be happiness, my Lord, which is tinged with misery. Misery is of two kinds, external and internal.

20. "The former pertain to the body and is caused by the nerves, etc., the latter pertains to the mind and is caused by desire.

21. "Mental distraction is worse than physical pain and the whole world has fallen a victim to it. Desire is the seed of the tree of misery and never fails in its fruits.

22. "Overpowered by it, Indra and the Devas, though living in celestial regions of enjoyment and fed by nectar, are still slaves to it and work day and night according to its dictates.

23. "Respite gained by the fulfilment of one desire before another takes its place, is not happiness because the seeds of pain are still latent. Such respite is enjoyed by the insects also (which certainly do not typify perfect happiness).

24. "Yet is their enjoyment distinctly better than that of men because their desires are less complex.

25. "If it is happiness to have one desire among many fulfilled who will not be thus happy in this world?

26. "If a man, scalded all over, can find happiness by smearing unguents on himself, then everyone must be happy.

27. "A man is happy when embraced by his beloved; he is unhappy in the same act under other circumstances.

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30. ". . . Or do you mean to say that the enjoyment of man is enhanced by his sense of beauty?

31. "Beauty is only a mental concept, as is evident from the similar feeling in similar enjoyments of lovers in dreams. (I shall tell you a story to illustrate the point.) There was once a most handsome scion of a king—fairer than Cupid himself.

32. "He was wedded to an equally beautiful damsel and was very devoted to her.

33. "But she fell in love with a servant of the royal household who deceived the young prince very skilfully.

34. "This servant used to serve liquor in excess so that the prince got drunk and lost his senses, on retiring, a wily harlot was sent to keep him company.

35-38. "The unchaste princess and the servant were then able to carry on; and the foolish prince was embracing the other woman in his intoxication. Yet he thought within himself that he was the happiest of men to have such an angel for his wife who was so devoted to him. After a long time, it happened that the servant in the pressure of work left the liquor on the prince's table and occupied himself otherwise. The prince did not drink as much as usual.

39-42. "Becoming voluptuous, he hastily retired to his bedroom, which was sumptuously furnished, and enjoyed himself with the strumpet, without recognising her in the heat of passion. After some time, he noticed that she was not his wife and on this confusion asked her 'where is my beloved wife?'

43-48. "She trembled in fear and remained silent. The prince, who suspected foul play, flew into a rage and holding her by her hair drew his sword and thus threatened her, 'Speak the truth or your life will not be worth a moment's purchase.'

Afraid of being killed, she confessed the whole truth, taking him to the trysting-place of the princess. There he found her with her lovely and delicate body in close and loving embrace of the dark, ugly, loathsome savage who was his servant. . . .

51. "The prince was shocked at the sight.

52. "Shortly afterwards he pulled himself together and began to reflect as follows: ' Shame on me who am so addicted to drink!

53. "Shame on the fools infatuated with love for women. Women are like nothing but birds flitting above the tree tops.

54. "Ass that I was, all the time loving her even more than life.

55. "Women are only good for the enjoyment of lecherous fools. He who loves them is a wild ass.

56. "Women's good faith is more fleeting than streaks of autumnal clouds.

57-59. "I had not till now understood the woman who, unfaithful to me, was in illicit love with a savage, all the time feigning love to me, like a prostitute to a lecherous fool.

60. "I did not in my drunkenness suspect her in the least; on the other hand, I believed that she was as much with me as my own shadow.

61-64. "Fie! is there a fool worse than myself, who was deceived by this ugly harlot at my side and enthralled by her professions of love? Again, what has the other woman found in preference to me in a loathsome brute?

65. "The prince then left society in disgust and retired into a forest."

Hemalekha continued "So you see, O Prince, how beauty is only a concept of the mind.

66. "What pleasure you have in your apprehension of beauty in me, is sometimes even exceeded by others in their love of their dear ones—be they fair or ugly. I will tell you what I think of it.

67. "The fair woman that appears as the object is only the reflection of the subtle concept already in the subjective mind.

68-69. "The mind draws an image of her beauty in conformity with its own repeated conceptions. The repeatedly

drawn image becomes clearer and clearer until it appears solidly as the object. An attraction springs up (and enslaves the mind) by constant mental associations.

70. "The mind, becoming restless, stirs up the senses and seeks the fulfillment of its desires in the object; a composed mind is not excited even at the sight of the fairest.

71. "The reason for the infatuation is the oft-repeated mental picture. Neither children nor self-controlled yogis are excited in the same way (because their minds do not dwell on such things).

72. "So whoever finds pleasure in anything, the beauty therein is only mental imagery.

73. "Ugly and loathsome women too are looked upon as delightful angels by their husbands.

74. "If the mind conceives anything as loathsome and not delightful, there will be no pleasure in such.

75. "Fie on human beings who appraise the foulest part of the body as the most delightful.

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77. "Listen Prince! the idea of beauty lies in one's own desire innate in the mind.

78. "If, on the other hand, beauty is natural to the object of love, why is it not recognised by children too, as sweetness in edibles is recognised by them?

79-81. "The form, the stature and complexion of people differ in various countries and at different times; their ears may be long; their faces distorted; their teeth large; their nose prominent; bodies hirsute or smooth, their hair red, black, or golden, light or thick, smooth or curly; their complexion fair, dark, coppery, yellow or grey.

82. "All of them derive the same kind of pleasure as you, Prince!

83. "Even the most accomplished among men have fallen into the habit of seeking pleasure from woman, for all consider her the best hunting ground for delight.

84. "Similarly also a man's body is thought by woman to be the highest source of enjoyment. But consider the matter well, Prince!

85-86. "Shaped of fat and flesh, filled with blood, topped by the head, covered by skin, ribbed by bones, covered with hair, containing bile and phlegm, a pitcher of feces and urine, generated from semen and ova, and born from the womb, such is the body. Just think of it!

87. "Finding delight in such a thing, how are men any better than worms growing in offal?

88. "My King! Is not this body (pointing to herself) dear to you? Think well over each part thereof.

89. "Analyze well and carefully what it is that forms your food materials with their different flavors, kinds and consistencies?

90. "Every one knows how the consumed foods are finally ejected from the body.

91. "Such being the state of affairs in the world, tell me what is agreeable or otherwise."

"On hearing all this, Hemachuda developed disgust for earthly pleasures.

92. "He was amazed at the strange discourse he heard. He later pondered over all that Hemalekha had said.

93. "His disgust for earthly pleasures grew in volume and in force. He again and again discussed matters with his beloved so that he understood the ultimate truth.

94. "Then realizing the pure consciousness inhering in the Self to be that self-same Tripura, he became aware of the One Self holding all, and was liberated.

95. "He was liberated while yet alive. His brother Manichuda and his father Muktachuda were both guided by him and were also liberated.

96. "The queen was guided by her daughter-in-law and was liberated; so also did the ministers, chieftains and citizens gain wisdom.

97. "There was no one born in that city who remained ignorant. The city was like that of Brahmâ, the abode of happy, peaceful and contented people.

98. "It was known as Visala and became the most renowned on Earth, where even the parrots in the cages used to repeat: 'Meditate, O Man, on the Self, the Absolute Consciousness devoid of objects! There is naught else to know besides pure consciousness; it is like a self-luminous mirror reflecting objects within.

100. "'That same consciousness is also the objects, that is the subject, and that is all—the mobile and the immobile; all else shines in its reflected light; it shines of itself.

101. "'Therefore, O Man, throw off delusion! Think of that consciousness which is alone, illuminating all and pervading all. Be of clear vision.

102-103. "Those holy saints Vamadeva and others having on one occasion heard these sacred words of the parrots, wondered at the wisdom of even the birds of that city and named it the *City of Wisdom*.

104. "The city is today still called by that name," Dattatreya continued. "Association with the sages, O Rama, is thus the root cause of all that is auspicious and good.

105. "By association with Hemalekha, all people gained *jnana* (wisdom). Know then, the *satsanga* (association with the wise) is alone the root cause of salvation.'"

Thus ends the Fourth Chapter on the fruits of *satsanga* in the Section of Hemachuda in *Tripura Rahasya*.

# Chapter V

## On Bondage and Release

1. Parasurâma, on hearing the master's discourse on the greatness of *satsanga,* was highly pleased and continued to ask.

2. "You have truly said, O Lord, that *satsanga* is the harbinger of all that is worthy, and illustrated the fact with a story.

3. "One's enjoyments are determined by the quality of one's company. The highest good was accomplished by all owing to their association direct or indirect, with Hemalekha, though she was only a woman.

4. "I am anxious to hear how Hemachuda was further guided by her. Please tell me, Thou Lord of Mercy!"

5. Thus requested, Dattatreya said to Parasurâma: "Listen, O Bhargava, I shall now continue the holy narrative.

6. "Having heard what she had to say, the enjoyments ceased to interest him, he developed a disgust for them, and became pensive.

7. "But the force of habit still remained with him. He was therefore unable either to enjoy himself or to desist all of a sudden.

8. "He was however too proud to confess his weakness to his beloved. Some time passed in this way.

9. "When his habits forced him into the old ways he was still mindful of his wife's words, so that he engaged himself in them with reluctance and shame.

10-11. "He repeatedly fell into his old ways by force of habit; and very often he became repentant, realizing the evil of those ways and remembering his wife's wise words. His mind was thus moving to and fro, like a swing.

12. "Neither delicious foods, nor fine clothes, nor rich jewels, nor charming damsels nor caparisoned horses, nor even his dear friends continued to interest him.

13-14. "He became sad as if he had lost his all. He was unable to resist his habits at once nor was he willing to follow them knowingly. He grew pale and melancholy.

15. "Hemalekha, always aware of the change in him, went to him in his private chamber and said, "How is it, my Lord, that you are not as cheerful as before?

16. "You look sad. Why so? I do not see symptoms of any particular ailment in you.

17. "Doctors may hold out the fear of disease amidst the pleasure of life; diseases are due to loss of harmony in the three tempers of the body.

18. "Diseases remain latent in all bodies because disharmony of tempers cannot always be prevented.

19. "Tempers get displaced by food consumed, clothes worn, words uttered or heard, sights seen, objects contacted, changes of seasons and travel in different countries.

20. "Being inescapable, the dislocation of tempers need not claim one's constant attention. There are remedies prescribed for diseases arising from it.

21. "Now tell me, dear, why you are so sad."

22. "When Hemalekha had finished, the prince replied, 'I will tell you the cause of my misery. Listen to me, dear.'

23. "'What you said on the last occasion has barred all means of pleasure for me, so that I can now find nothing to make me happy.

24. "'Just as a man under orders to be executed cannot relish the luxuries provided for him by the State, so also I do not relish anything.

25. "'Just as a man is forced by royal command to do something in spite of himself, so also must I engage in old ways by force of habit. Now I ask you, dear, tell me how I can gain happiness.'

26. "Being thus approached, Hemalekha thought: This dispassion is certainly due to my words.

27. "'There is the seed of the highest good in that field where such symptoms appear. Had my well-calculated words not produced even the slightest turn in this direction, there would be no hope of emancipating him. This state of dispassion only

arises in one with whose continued devotion Tripura inherent in the Heart as the Self, is well pleased."

Thinking thus, that wise lady was eager to reveal wisdom to her husband.

30. "Keeping her own wisdom secret at the same time, she spoke with measured words: 'Listen, Prince, to the story of my own past.

31. "My mother formerly gave me a lady-in-waiting who was good by nature, but later associated with an undesirable friend.

32. "This friend was clever in creating new and wonderful things. I also without my mother's knowledge associated with her.

33. "That lady-in-waiting became very friendly with that undesirable companion, and I was obliged to do the same because I loved my friend more than life.

34. "For, I could not remain without her even for a second; so much did she enthrall me by her undoubted purity.

35. "Always loving my friend, I quickly became part of herself. She for her part was all the time close to her friend, a wicked strumpet, who was ever generating new and fascinating things.

36-38. "In secret that woman introduced her son to my friend. That son was an ignorant fool with eyes blood-shot with drink. And my friend went on enjoying him in my very presence. But she, though completely overpowered by him and being enjoyed by him day after day, never left me, and I, too, did not abandon her. And out of that union was born a fool of the same type as his father.

39-41. "He grew up to be a very restless young fellow, fully inheriting his father's dullness and his grandmother's wickedness and creativeness. This boy, *Master Inconstant* by name, was brought up and trained by his father, *Mr. Fool* and his grandmother *Madame Ignorance,* and he became skilled in their ways. He could negotiate the most difficult places with perfect ease and surmount obstacles in a trice.

42. "In this manner, my friend, though very good by nature, became afflicted and silly because of her association with wicked people.

43-44. "What with love for her friend, devotion for her lover, and affection for her son, she began gradually to forsake me. But I could not break with her so easily.

45-46. "Not being self-reliant, I was dependent on her so remained with her. Her husband, *Mr. Fool,* though always in enjoyment of her, mistook me for one of the same sort and tried to ravish me. But I was not what he took me to be. I am pure by nature and only led by her, for the time being.

47. "Even so, there was wide-spread scandal about me in the world, that I was always in *Mr. Fool's* hold.

48. "My friend, entrusting her son *Master Inconstant* to me, was always in the company of her lover.

49. "*Mr. Inconstant* grew up in my care and in due course married a wife with his mother's approval.

50. "*Unsteady* by name, she was ever restless and changeful and could put on different forms to please her husband's whim.

51. "By her wonderful capacity to change and by her exceeding skill and cleverness, she brought her husband completely under her control.

52. "*Mr. Inconstant,* too, used to fly hundreds of miles in a twinkling and return, go here, there and everywhere, but yet could find no rest.

53-54. "Whenever *Mr. Inconstant* wished to go anywhere and whatever he wanted to have in any measure, *Madame Unsteady* was ready to meet his desires changing herself accordingly and creating new environments to please her husband. She thus won his affection entirely.

55. "She bore him five sons who were devoted to their parents. Each one was skilled in his own way. They were also entrusted to my care by my friend.

56-61. "Out of love for my friend, I brought them up with care, and made them strong. Then those five sons of *Madame Unsteady* individually erected splendid palaces, invited their father to their homes and entertained him continually in turns. The eldest of them entertained him in his mansion with different kinds of classic music, with incantations of the Vedas, the reading of scriptures, the humming sounds of bees, the twittering of birds and other sounds sweet to hear.

62-64. "The father was pleased with the son, who arranged for still further sounds for him which were harsh, fearful and tumultuous like the roar of the lion, the peal of thunder, the raging of the sea, the rumblings of earthquakes, the cries from lying-in-chambers, and the quarrels, moans and lamentations of many people.

65-67. "Invited by his second son, the father went to stay in his mansion. There he found soft seats, downy beds, fine clothes and some hard things, others hot or warm or cold, or refreshing things with various designs, and so on. He was pleased with the agreeable things and felt aversion to the disagreeable ones.

68. "Then going to the third son, he saw charming and variegated scenes, things red, white, brown, blue, yellow, pink, smoky grey, tawny, red-brown, black and spotted, others fat or lean, short or long, broad or round, bent or wavy, pleasing or horrible, nauseous, brilliant or savage, unsightly or captivating, some pleasing and others otherwise.

72. "The father was taken to the fourth son's mansion and there he had fruits and flowers to order. He had drinks, things to be licked, to be sucked, and to be masticated, juicy things, some refreshing like nectar, others sweet, sour, pungent or astringent, some decoctions of similar flavors, and so on. He tasted them all.

76-79. "The last son took the father to his home and treated him with fruits and flowers, with various scented grasses, herbs and things of different odors, sweet or putrescent, mild or acrid, others stimulating or soporific and so on.

"In this manner, he enjoyed himself uninterruptedly, one way or another, in one mansion or another, being pleased with some and repulsed by others.

80. "The sons too were so devoted to their father that they would not touch anything themselves in his absence.

81. "But *Mr. Inconstant* not only enjoyed himself thoroughly in his sons' mansions, but also stole away things from them and shared them in secret with his dear wife, *Madam Unsteady*, in his own home, unknown to his sons.

83. "Later, one *Vorax* fell in love with *Mr. Inconstant* and he wedded her; they became very devoted to each other. *Mr. Inconstant* loved *Madam Vorax*, heart and soul.

84-87. "He used to fetch enormous provisions for her, she consumed them all in a moment and was still hungry for more; therefore she kept her husband always on his legs, to collect her food; and, too, he was incessantly in quest of provision for her. She was not satisfied with the service of the father and his five sons put together, but wanted still more. Such was her insatiable hunger. She used to order all of them about, for her needs. In a short time she gave birth to two sons.

88. "They were *Master Flaming-mouth* the elder and *Master Mean* the younger—both of course very dear to their mother.

89-91. "Whenever *Mr. Inconstant* sought *Madam Vorax* in privacy, his body was burnt by the wrathsome flames of *Master Flaming-mouth*; being thus afflicted, he fell down unconscious.

"Again, whenever he fondled the younger son out of his love, he was hated by all the world and he himself became as if dead. *Mr. Inconstant* thus experienced untold misery.

92. "Then my companion, good by nature, was herself afflicted because of her son *Mr. Inconstant's* grief.

93-95. "Being also associated with her two grandsons, *Master Flaming-mouth* and *Master Mean,* she became quite miserable and gave way under the public odium. I too, dear, collapsed in sympathy with her. Thus passed several years until *Mr. Inconstant* dominated by *Madam Vorax* lost all initiative and was entirely in her hands.

96-107. "He was foredoomed and betook himself to the city of ten gates. There he lived with *Madam Vorax*, his sons and his mother, always seeking pleasure but only sharing misery, day and night. Burnt by the wrath of *Flaming-mouth* and treated with contempt by *Master Mean,* he swung hither and thither greatly agitated. He went into the homes of his other five sons but was only perplexed, without being happy. My companion too was so affected by her son's plight that she again collapsed, and yet she continued to live in the same city. *Madam Vorax* with her two boys *Masters Flaming-mouth* and *Mean* was being fed by *Madam Ignorance*—her husband's grandmother, and by *Mr. Fool,* her father-in-law. She got on well with her co-wife *Madam Unsteady* and was even intimate with her. (Ingratiating herself with all of them), she completely dominated her husband *Mr. Inconstant.*

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"I too continued to live there because of my love for my friend. Otherwise, none of them could remain in the town without me who was their protectress, though I was moribund owing to my friend's moribundity.

"I was sometimes suppressed by *Madam Ignorance,* was made a fool of by *Mr. Fool,* became inconstant on account of *Mr. Inconstant,* grew unsteady with *Madam Unsteady,* contacted wrath with *Flaming-mouth* and looked contemptible with *Master Mean.* I reflected within myself all the moods of my friend, for she would have died if I had left her even a minute. Because of my company, the common people always misjudged me for a strumpet, whereas discriminating men could see that I have always remained pure.

108-111. "For that Supreme Good One, my mother, is ever pure and clear, more extensive than space and subtler than the subtlest; she is omniscient, yet of limited knowledge; she works all, yet remains inactive; she holds all, herself being unsupported; all depend on her, and she is independent; all forms are hers, but she is formless; all belong to her, but she is unattached; though illumining all, she is not known to any one under any circumstances; she is Bliss, yet not blissful; she has no father nor mother; innumerable are her daughters, like me.

112-113. "My sisters are as many as the waves on the sea. All of them, O Prince, are just like me involved in their companions' affairs. Though sharing the lives of my friends, I am in possession of the most potent spell, by virtue of which I am also exactly like my mother in nature.

114. (The tale is resumed.)

115. "When my friend's son retired to rest, he always slept soundly on the lap of his mother; as *Mr. Inconstant* was asleep, all others, including his sons, were also asleep, for no one could remain awake.

116. "On such occasions, the city was guarded by *Mr. Motion,* the intimate friend of *Mr. Inconstant,* who was always moving to and fro by two upper gateways.

117. "My friend, the mother of *Mr. Inconstant,* along with him and her wicked friend—the same was her mother-in-law—watched the whole sleeping family.

118. "I used to seek my mother in that interval and remain blissful in her fond embrace. But I was obliged to return to the city simultaneously with the waking of the sleepers.

119. "This *Mr. Motion,* the friend of *Mr. Inconstant,* is most powerful and keeps them all alive.

120-121. "Though single, he multiplies himself, manifests as the city and citizens, pervades them all, protects and holds them.

122. "Without him, they would all be scattered and lost like pearls without the string of the necklace.

123. "He is the bond between the inmates and myself; empowered by me, he serves in the city as the string in a necklace.

124. "If that city decays, he collects the inmates together, leads them to another and remains their master.

125-131. "In this way *Mr. Inconstant* rules over cities always, he himself remaining under the sway of his friend. Though supported by such a powerful friend, though born of such a virtuous mother and brought up by me, he is never otherwise than miserable, because he is tossed about by his two wives and several sons. He is torn asunder by his sons and finds not the least pleasure but only intense misery. Tempted by *Madame Unsteady*, he grieves; ordered about by *Madam Vorax*, he runs about in search of food for her; stricken by *Flaming-mouth,* he burns with rage, loses his sense and is baffled; approaching *Master Mean*, he is openly despised and reviled by others and becomes as one dead under shame of odium.

132-134. "Already of disreputable heredity, and now infatuated by love for, and tossed about by his wicked wives and sons, he has been living with them in all kinds of places, good or bad, in forests with woods or thorny bushes and infested with wild beasts, in deserts burning hot, in icy tracts pierced by cold, in putrid ditches or in dark holes and so on.

135. "Again and again my friend was stricken with grief on account of her son's calamities and nearly died with sorrow.

136. "I too, though sane and clear by nature, dear, got involved in the affairs of her family and became sad also.

137. "Who can hope for even the least happiness in bad company? One may as well seek to quench one's thirst by drinking water from a mirage.

138. "Engulfed in sorrow, my friend once sought me in private.

139. "Advised by me, she soon gained a good husband, killed her own son and imprisoned his sons.

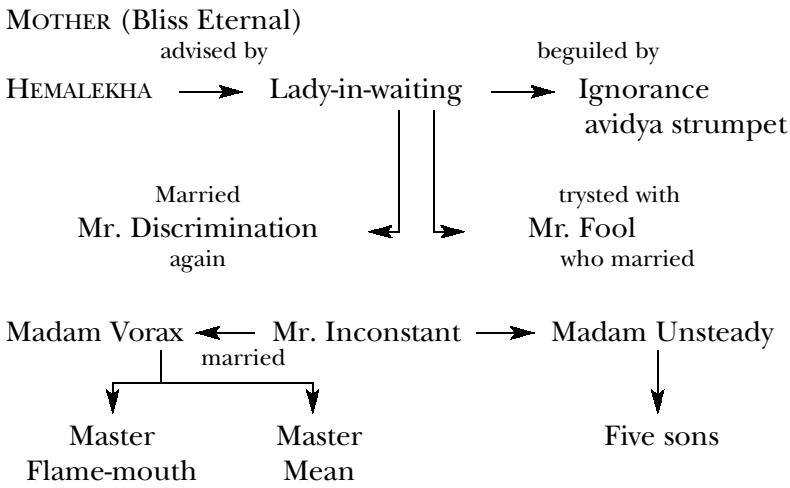
140. "Then accompanied by me, she quickly gained my mother's presence, and being pure, she often embraced my mother.

141. "She at once dived in the sea of Bliss and became Bliss itself. In the same manner, you too can conquer your wrong ways which are only accretions.

142. "Then, my Lord, attain the mother and gain eternal happiness. I have now related to you, my Lord, my own experience of the pedestal of Bliss.'"

Thus ends the Chapter on Bondage in the Section of Hemachuda in *Tripura Rahasya*.

*Note:*




The chapters above are from *Tripura Rahasya: The Secret of the Supreme Goddess* (World Wisdom, 2002).