

The Croc and The Monkey

Vishnu Sarma begins his fourth Tantra with the following stanza:

“He overcomes all problems
Who does not lose his cool
Even in the face of adversity
Like the monkey in the water.”



Raktamukha was a monkey living on a blackberry tree near the coast. That tree was always full of fruits. One day a crocodile named Karalamukha came out of the waters and loitering on the sands came to the tree.

Seeing the croc, the monkey said, “O croc, you are my guest. I will feed you with these delicious blackberries. Enjoy the fare. The learned have said,

“That man is blessed who hosts
A lover or an enemy or a fool.
Angels will desert the home
That fails to host a guest.”

The monkey then gave the croc a lot of berries. After he had his fill, Karalamukha went home. Thereafter, it became a habit with the croc to daily visit Raktamukha, enjoy the fruit he offered, spend time with him discussing the world and then go home.

One day, the croc’s wife asked her husband, “Where do you get this fruit, they are so sweet. I have never tasted such mouth-watering fruit.”

“I have a close friend, a monkey, who gives me the fruit every day,” said the husband.

“If the fruit are so sweet, the heart of your friend who eats them everyday must be as delicious as the fruit. Please get his heart for me, if you have love left for me. I will always be young and immortal if I eat that fruit,” said the wife.

“My dear, it is improper for you to speak like that. I have accepted him as my brother. It is not possible for me to kill such a host. Please be reasonable. The elders have said,

“From mother we get our first relative,
A good word brings the second relative
Who is more precious than a brother.”

Angry, the wife said, "You have never defied my word. It must be a female monkey who is your friend. That's why you are spending so much time with him every day. I have now understood you thoroughly. Your heart is full of that monkey. You are a cheat."

Karalamukha, wanting to pacify his wife, said, "'My dear, why are you angry? I am your most obedient servant and ready to carry out your order at any time."

"No, she is dear to you. If you really love me, why don't you kill her and get me her heart. If you don't get it, I will fast and die," threatened the wife.

Worried, the croc went to the monkey. Seeing that the croc was late for his daily meeting, Raktamukha said, "You are late and do not seem to be cheerful. What's the matter?"

"O my friend, how can I tell you what happened at home. My wife is very angry. She told me that I am an ungrateful friend and that every day I eat the fruit you offer but never had the courtesy of inviting you home. You have no redemption; she told me and warned me that if I did not bring you home, I would see her only in the other world. These arguments with her have delayed me. Please come with me. My wife has decorated the house fit to receive you. She has hung welcome buntings at the entrance. She is eagerly waiting for me to bring you home."

The monkey said, "Your wife has said the proper thing. You should leave a man who loves you for your wealth like the spider attracts his prey. She might as well have quoted the elders saying,

"Where there is no give and take
Where there is no exchange of secrets
And of hospitality either
There is no true friendship."

"There is a problem, however. We are all land animals. You live in water. It may not be possible for me to accept your kind invitation. I advise you to bring her here," said the monkey.

"It's really no problem," said the croc. "Our house is on a sandbank. It's a beautiful place. Sit on my back. I will carry you."

The monkey happily sat on the back of the croc and the journey began. As the croc was entering deep waters, the monkey got scared and told the croc to go slowly.

Thinking that the monkey was his prisoner now, Karalamukha told Raktamukha, "It is now safe to tell you our plan. My wife wanted me to create trust in you first and persuade you to accept our invitation and then kill you so that we may have the good fortune of feasting on your heart."

With great presence of mind, the monkey said, "My friend, if this is what you and your wife wanted, why didn't you tell me in the beginning itself? My heart is safely stored in the burrow of the tree. What is the use of your taking me home without my heart? Let us go back. There is nothing happier for me than giving my heart to your wife." Happy, the croc turned back and brought the monkey to the shore.



The monkey at once leapt to the top of the blackberry tree and thought, "We should not trust an untrustworthy person, even if we did, it should not be total. Such trust will destroy us completely. This is a rebirth for me."

The croc was in a hurry and asked the monkey, "What is the delay? Get you heart. My wife will be very happy."

The monkey angrily told him, "You idiot, have you seen anyone who has two hearts? You are ungrateful. Get out of my sight and never come this way again. People who are hungry stoop to any level like Priyadarsana." The croc asked him to tell the story of Priyadarsana.

Raktamukha told him the following story.

The Greedy Cobra and The King Of Frogs



A big well was the home of Gangadatta, king of frogs. Unable to bear harassment by his relatives, the king abandoned his kingdom and came out of the well and thought,

**"He who certainly retaliates
Him who harmed him in peril
And ridiculed him in misery
Is a man without rebirth."**

Deeply lost in such thoughts, the frog king saw a big cobra entering the burrow of a tree and thought, "We must set an enemy to fight an enemy, set a strong person to crush another strong person. Their end will bring us happiness."

With this aim in view, he went to the burrow and called the cobra, "Priyadarsana, please come out."

The cobra, however, was careful. He thought, "Who is this fellow? He does not seem to be one of us. I don't have any friends outside my circle. I will stay inside and find out who the caller is. He could be a magician or someone seeking my help in killing his enemy."

Then, the cobra shouted from inside, "Who are you, sir?"

"I am Gangadatta, king of frogs. I have come to seek your help," said the caller.

"I cannot believe you. Can there be friendship between a blade of dry grass and fire? Haven't the learned said that he, who is natural prey to the predator never, even in a dream, gets closer to him? I cannot trust your words," said the cobra.

"O Priyadarsana, what I tell you is true. You are my born enemy. But I have come to you seeking help to avenge my humiliation. The learned have said,

**“When your life is under threat
When danger stares you in the face
It is better to bend before an enemy
And save life and property.”**

“Who humiliated you,” asked the cobra.

“It is my relatives.”

“Where do you live? Is it a well or a pond or a tank?”

“It is a well with stone walls.”

“But I have no legs. How can I reach the well and kill your enemies?”

“Sir, please don’t say no. I will show you how to enter the well. There is a crevice in the wall that opens into the well. It’s a nice hiding place for you. Come, I will show you,” said Gangadatta, king of frogs.



The cobra then thought, “I have become old. Rarely can I get a frog to eat. This fellow has come to give me a new lease of life. I will go with him and have a daily feast of frogs.”

Addressing the king of frogs, the cobra said, “Let’s go.”

“But there is a condition,” said Gangadatta, “Priyadarsana, I will take you there and show you the place. But you should spare frogs that are close to me. You should eat only those I select as food for you.”

The cobra replied, “You are now my friend. I give you my word. I will eat only those marked by you as my food.”

The cobra then emerged from its burrow and accompanied the king of frogs to the well. The frog king showed him the crevice in the well and his relatives who deserved to be killed. The cobra happily settled in the crevice and finished in course of time all those frogs their king had marked for extermination.

Now, without frogs to eat, the cobra told the king, “I have destroyed all your enemies. Now show me prey for food. It is you who brought me here.”

Gangadatta told him, “You have done your job to help me. Now, it is time for you to leave this place.”

“How can I leave?” protested the cobra. “Someone else will occupy my place. So, I will not go, I will stay here only. You offer me one frog every day from your circle of relatives.”

Repenting for making friends with a natural enemy, Gangadatta thought it was better to offer the cobra one friend a day, remembering the saying that “he who befriends a stronger enemy invites certain death. A wise man does not lose all his wealth to save a paltry sum.”

Accordingly, the king of frogs began offering the cobra a frog a day. But the wicked cobra swallowed all the frogs. One day, it was the turn of Yamunadatta, son of the king of frogs. The king cried bitterly over the loss of

his son. His wife then told him that there was no point in crying over the past and that he should immediately leave the place and look for ways to end the menace of the cobra.

As days passed, the cobra finished off the entire tribe of frogs with the exception of king Gangadatta. So, he asked Gangadatta, "Look, my friend, there is now no frog left for me to eat. I am very hungry. Show me where and how can sate my hunger."

The king replied, "Priyadarsana, don't worry about food as long as I am your friend. You get me out of this well. I will go and look for wells full of frogs. I will tempt them to come here and you can have your fill."

The cobra said, "You are like a brother to me, Gangadatta. I can't kill you. But if you bring me food, you will be as good as my father. I will get you out of this well." Thus, the king came out and disappeared. The cobra was eagerly waiting for the king to bring him food. When Gangadatta failed to turn up even after a long time, the cobra sought the help of a chameleon.

"My friend, you know Gangadatta very well. Please go to him and tell him that it does not matter if he cannot bring me a frog. Let him come. I cannot live without such a trusted friend."

The chameleon carried the message of the cobra to the king of frogs and told him, "Your friend Priyadarsana is eagerly looking for you to return."

Gangadatta told him, "Excuse me sir, who can trust a hungry man. You may please go."

Concluding the story, Raktamukha, the monkey, told the crocodile, "You wicked creature, I will never visit your home."

Karalamukha, the croc, pleaded with him, "My friend, this is not proper. Please come and sanctify my home. Otherwise, I will be guilty of ingratitude. If you don't come, I will fast and die."

The monkey said, "You are an idiot to think that I would, like Lambakarna, invite death knowingly."

"O my friend, let me hear that [story of Lambakarana](#)," asked the croc.

Then the monkey told the croc the story of Lambakarna.

The Lion and The Foolish Donkey



A lion named Karalakesara was living in a forest, loyally served by Dhoosaraka, a jackal that used to accompany the lion wherever he went. One day, an elephant badly injured the lion in a fight. The injuries were so serious that the lion could not go out hunting. As a result, the jackal also had to go without food. Both the master and the servant became very weak. Unable to bear hunger, the jackal pleaded with the lion to get him some food.

"You know my plight. I cannot move out of this place. However, if you manage to lure some animal to come here, I will kill him and both of us can have a good meal," said the lion.

So, the jackal set out in search of some animal and saw a donkey feeding himself on weeds. The jackal approached him and said, "O my friend, please accept my regards. I have not seen you for a long time. You have become very weak. What is the reason?"



The donkey said in sad tones, "How shall I tell you my suffering? The washer man is tormenting me by placing too much weight on my back. He does not feed me at all. I exist on weeds. That is why my body is weak."

The jackal said, "If that is the case, why don't you come with me? I shall show you a place where you can have your heart's fill of green and fresh grass. We can happily spend our time there."

"You have given me good news. But there is a problem. We are domestic animals and you are all wild animals. One of them will certainly kill me," said the donkey whose name was Lambakarna.

Allaying his fears, the jackal said, "O uncle, don't say like that. This place is in my control. Nobody can enter this area. Just like you are suffering at the hands of the washer man, there are three female donkeys in this area, which are waiting for a suitable husband. They are all young and told me, 'If you are really our uncle, go and get a suitable husband for us.' It is on that mission I have come here and seen you."

The donkey replied, "If that is the case, let's go now."

That is why the elders have said,

"If the very thought of a woman
Brings ecstasy to a young man
How thrilled would he be?
If he actually is in her presence."

In the end, the jackal and the donkey reached the forest and came to the lion. When Lambakarna saw the ailing Karalakesara, the lion, he began running away from him. The lion made a great effort to reach him and strike him with his paw but failed to get the donkey.

Angry at the lion's failure, Dhoosaraka, the jackal protested, "O my lord, you are useless. If you cannot tackle a foolish donkey, how can you fight an elephant? I have now realised how powerful you are."

Ashamed, the lion told the jackal quietly, "O my friend, I was not ready for attack. Otherwise, even an elephant cannot escape my strike."

Satisfied, the jackal said, "All right, let us forget the past. I will bring the donkey here again. You must be ready and strike him this time."

"But how can Lambakarna forget his experience and come back here again," asked the lion.



“You leave it to me,” said the jackal and set off to look for the donkey. Lambakarna was there on the bank of a lake feeding on grass.

He came to the jackal and said, “Friend, you have taken me to a nice place. I escaped death by inches. Who is that animal who had nearly killed me?”

“You are mistaken,” said Dhoosaraka, “It is, after all, the female donkey I promised to take you to. She was getting up to come and embrace you. You ran away in scare. She cannot live without you and so was trying to reach out to you. She told me that if you do not marry her, she would commit suicide. So please come and spare me the sin of causing the death of a woman. The God of Love will punish you if you do not heed my word.”

Beguiled, the donkey followed the jackal. The lion was prepared for the attack this time and when the donkey came; he fell on him and killed him instantly. The lion asked the jackal to keep an eye on the donkey’s body and left to take a bath in the river. Unable to resist the temptation of fresh flesh, the jackal snipped off the ears of the donkey and scooped his heart out and made a good meal of them. When the lion returned, he noticed that the ears and heart of the donkey were missing.

The lion angrily asked the jackal to tell him what had happened to the ears and heart of the donkey. Dhoosaraka told him that the donkey had no ears and heart. If he had, he would not have come again. The foolish lion believed every word of the jackal and shared the donkey with him.

“So, like the donkey in the story, you too are a fool,” said Raktamukha, the monkey to Karalamukha, the croc.

“You have deceived me but like Yudhishtira in the story I am going to tell you, you too spoke the truth when you ought not to and lost everything.”

“Please tell me everything about this Yudhishtira,” pleaded the croc.

The Story of The Potter



Once upon a time, there lived in a village a potter named Yudhishtira. One day, he drank a lot of liquor and got intoxicated and began running. He lost his balance and fell on broken pieces of a pitcher. The sharp edges of the pot pieces cut a big and bloody gash in his forehead. Somehow, he got up and went home. The wound took a long time to heal because he neglected to follow the instructions of the doctor.

Suddenly, a famine struck the whole country. The potter left the country with some others of the royal household. In the new country, he found a job with the king of that country. The king saw the mark of the big wound on his face and thought that Yudhishtira must have been a great warrior who suffered wounds in a battle. The king began showering special attention and affection on the potter, which the king's sons envied. They could not harm him because he was the king's favourite.



When everything was going smoothly for the potter, a war came and the king was summoning all known warriors to honour them and prepare them for the war. The king's men were readying the elephants and horses for the combat while the soldiers were busy staging rehearsals. It was now time for the king to know everything about Yudhishtira.

He sent for the potter and asked him when no one was around, "What is your name, o warrior? In what battle were you injured?"

The potter told the king, "My lord, this is not a wound inflicted on me in a battle. I am a potter and my name is Yudhishtira. One day, when I was drunk, I ran and fell on sharp pieces of a broken pot. This scar on my face is the result of that fall."



Ashamed that he deceived himself by the speech and garments of the potter, the king asked his servants to throw out the potter.

But Yudhishtira appealed to the king, "My lord, please don't throw me out. See how well I will fight."

The king said, "I admit you are a warrior. But you are born in a potter community and hence cannot kill an elephant."

"How is that," asked the potter.

The king then told him the following story.

A lion couple lived in a forest. In course of time, the lioness delivered two lion cubs. Every day, the lion went out and brought food for the lioness. One day, the lion wandered all over the forest in search of food but could not find any prey at all. At sunset, the lion gave up his search and was returning home when he found a jackal cub. The lion took a fancy for him and took him home and gave him to his wife.

The lioness asked her husband, "Did you get us any food today?"

"I found this cub. That's all," said the lion.

"I haven't killed him because he is a child. But if you are very hungry, you can have this child for your meal."

The lioness was angry and asked her husband, "How can I kill him when you spared him his life?"

The elders have said:

**"Don't do an unworthy deed
Even in the face of death;
Don't give up a worthy deed
Even if it means suicide."**

"I will treat him like my third son," said the lioness.

Thereafter, the new jackal cub became one of the family and the three ate, drank, played and slept together. One day when they were playing, an elephant passed by. At once, the two lion cubs got ready to attack the elephant. The jackal cub told them that the elephant was an enemy of the lions and that it was better for them to leave. The lion cubs were disappointed at the words of their jackal brother.

They went home and told their father the details of how the jackal brother fled from the scene. The father was not happy with his children and admonished them. The lion took the jackal cub aside and told him not to discourage the lion cubs who, she said, were his younger brothers.

The jackal was hurt and asked his lion mother, "How am I different from them in beauty or education or bravery? Why should the two ridicule me? I will kill both of them."

Amused by the words of the jackal cub and wishing him long life, the lioness said, "You are still a child. I brought you up taking pity on you. Your brothers are also young. Before they grow old and know that you are different from them, leave this place and join your own folk."

Realising the danger ahead, the jackal cub left the lion family in search of his own folk.

"That's why, before other warriors find out that you do not belong to the warrior caste, leave this place," the king advised Yudhishtira. The potter immediately left the palace.

Raktamukha, the monkey, told Karalamukha, the croc, "You have tried to kill me heeding your wife's plea. But one should never trust women. I deserted my family for the sake of a woman and gave her half of my life. But in the end she left me to join a lame lover. That's why never trust a woman."

"Interesting," said the croc and asked the monkey to tell him that story.

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A Three-in-One Story

Once upon a time, there was a popular king called Nanda. His people respected him for his learning and valour. He had a prime minister called Vararuchi who was well versed in diplomacy and statecraft. Vararuchi's wife was one day annoyed with her husband and kept away from him. Extremely fond of his wife, the prime minister tried to please her. It was no use. He did not know what to do to regain her affection.



He pleaded with her, "Tell me what can I do to make you happy."

The wife at last opened her mouth and said, "Shave your head cleanly and prostrate before me if you want to regain my love."

The prime minister complied with her wish and succeeded in winning back her favour.

The king's wife also played the same drama of shunning his company. Nanda tried every trick he knew to win her affection without success.

When everything failed, the king fell on her feet and prayed her, "My darling, I cannot live without you even for a while. Tell me what should I do to win back your love?"

The queen said, "I will be happy if you pretend to be a horse, agree to be bridled and to let me ride you. While racing you must neigh like a horse. Is this acceptable to you?"



“Yes,” said the king and did, as his wife demanded.

Next day, the king saw his prime minister with a shaven head and asked him, “Vararuchi, why did you have your head shaved on a day when tonsure is forbidden.”

Vararuchi replied, “O king, is there anything that a woman does not demand and a man does not readily concede? He would do anything, shave his head or neigh like a horse.”

Raktamukha, the monkey, then told Karalamukha, the crocodile, “You wicked crocodile, you are a slave of your wife like Nanda and Vararuchi. You tried to kill me but your chatter gave away your plans.”

That’s why the learned have said,

“Parrots sing and betray
 Their presence to the hunter.
 The crane eludes the hunter
 By keeping his beak tightly shut.”

“See how a donkey despite his disguise in a tiger skin betrayed his origin by braying and got killed. Here is the story if you want to know,” said Raktamukha and began telling the story of the donkey.

In a small village lived a washer man named Suddhapata. He had a donkey that was very weak because he did not feed the animal regularly. One day, the washer man found the dead body of a tiger while he was collecting wood from the forest. Suddhapata was very happy and thought, “I am lucky. I can skin the animal and cover my donkey with that skin and drive it into wheat farms where he will have plenty to graze. Thinking that he is a tiger, people will keep away from him. This way, my donkey will have plenty of food.”

He acted on his plan and the donkey would go to the wheat farm every evening, have his day’s fill and return to his master’s house in the morning. This went on for sometime. The donkey became so strong and sturdy that it became difficult for the washer man to pull him to the peg and tie him to it.

One day, when he was happily grazing at the wheat farm, the donkey heard the voice of a female donkey and began to respond to it in ecstasy. Then the watchman and others at the farm at once recognised him as a donkey in a tiger skin and killed him.

Raktamukha then addressed the crocodile and told him, “You have seen how the donkey met his end because he opened his mouth where he should not. Now, will you leave me or do you want to meet with the same fate as Syamalaka?”

“No, please. I want to know the story of Syamalaka,” said Karalamukha, the crocodile. Raktamukha told him the following story.

A very wealthy merchant named Eswara lived in a city called Vikantapuram. One day, his four sons-in-law arrived from Ujjain with their families to enjoy the hospitality of their father-in-law. Eswara did everything to make them happy and contented. Six months passed but the sons-in-law did not show any sign of leaving for Ujjain. Eswara was angry but could not directly tell his sons-in-law that they had overstayed.

One day, the father-in-law told his wife, "These guys are enjoying their stay here and are reluctant to leave. I am sure they will not leave unless we offend them in some way. Tomorrow, when they come for dinner, don't offer them water to wash their feet. They will regard this as an insult and will certainly leave."

Eswara's wife did, as her husband wanted her to do.

The first son-in-law was offended because water was not ready for him to wash his feet and left in a huff.

The second son-in-law was not happy with the place assigned to him at the table and left ranting.

The third complained about the quality of food and packed his bags.

Syamalaka, the fourth son-in-law, however, did not mind these insults and stayed on. The father-in-law had, therefore, to throw him out of his house by force.

"I have seen how wicked you are and I am not a fool to still trust you like the carpenter," said Raktamukha. At once Karalamukha insisted on hearing that story.

The Carpenter's Wife

Once upon a time, a carpenter lived in a village with his wife. He had heard bad stories about her and wanted to know the truth about those rumours.

Next day, pretending he was going to the village nearby, he told his wife, "I have to leave the place early morning tomorrow for a village not far away from here. I may have to stay there for a few days. Please get things ready for my travel."

The wife's joy knew no bounds. She cooked his favourite dishes and packed some of it for his travel.

Next morning the carpenter left. His wife put on her best clothes, daubed perfume on her body and thrust flowers in her hair and spent the rest of the day with great difficulty.

When it was dusk, she went to her lover's house and told him, "My wicked husband has left for some place and will not come back for a few days. So, come to my place after every one has gone to sleep and we will have a happy time."

After this invitation, she returned home.



Meanwhile, the carpenter spent the day in a nearby forest and came back before his wife had returned from her lover's place. He hid himself under a cot. Soon, his wife's lover came and joined her. As the wife was talking to

her lover on the bed, her dangling legs hit something hard. She at once thought it could be her husband hiding under the bed to test her.

"I will show my husband how clever I am," she thought.

When her lover moved close to her, she told him through signs that her husband was under the bed and said, "Sir, you should not touch me. I am a very faithful wife. If you touch me I will turn you into ash."

"In that case, why did you invite me," he asked her angrily.

"Please listen, this morning, I went to the temple of the goddess where I heard a divine voice saying, "O woman, I know you are my devotee. But you will become a widow in six months."

Then I prayed her to tell me a way by which I could save my husband and make him live for hundred years.

"There is a way which is in your hands," the goddess told me.

"If that is so, I would give my life to save my husband", I told the goddess.

She told me, "If you go to bed with a stranger, the danger to your husband's life will shift to the stranger who will die soon."

The foolish carpenter believed every word of his wife and happy that he had such a faithful wife, he came out of his hiding and told her, "O sacred woman, I paid heed to rumours about you and doubted your character. I wanted to test you and put you on the wrong track making you believe I had left the village. Now I have seen what you are. Come, let us enjoy," he said and embraced her. In that happiness he carried his wife and the carpenter on his shoulders and paraded the streets of the village.

At this stage Raktamukha, the monkey, told Karalamukha, the croc, "O wicked croc, I now know your evil thoughts. How can I come to your place? It is your nature to be wicked. Friendship with good men will not change your nature. You are too attached to your woman. You are her slave. Such people never hesitate to lose their wealth and friends for her sake."

As the monkey was telling this story of the carpenter to the croc, someone from the sea came and told the croc that his wife who was fasting had died. The croc felt that living in a house without a wife was like living in a jungle.

He told the monkey, "Friend, pardon me. I have done you harm. So, I have lost my wife. I deserve to die."

The monkey said, "I know you are a hen-pecked husband. But this is no time for grief because you are rid of a greedy wife. You must celebrate." The elders have said:

"Consider that evil woman
Who has no character and
Who always quarrels with you
As a curse in the form of a wife.
That man who wants to be happy
Should not even take her name.
He who loves a woman of vice
Perishes like a moth kissing fire."

The croc said in grief, "My friend, I have lost your friendship and also my wife. All this is the result of betraying a friend like you. I think I am wise. But it is like the wisdom of the foolish woman who lost her lover and her husband also."

"How is it?" asked the monkey.

The croc began telling him the story.

There was an old farmer who had a young wife, who always had other men on her mind. She never attended to household jobs. She was always looking for younger men to spend time. One day, a trickster saw her and seeing

that she was alone went to her and prayed, "O beauty, I am a widower. The minute I saw you I lost my heart to you. Please give me the pleasure of your company."

Delighted, the woman told him, "O handsome, my husband has a lot of wealth. He is old and of no use to me. I will bring all the money and jewellery at home to you. Let us run away to a far off place and live there happily ever after."

The trickster was very happy and asked her to bring all that money and gold to a place where he would be waiting for her. "We will then leave the place quietly," he told her.

The farmer's wife waited till it was dark and when her husband fell asleep stole all the money and gold, packed it in a bag and left the house at dawn to meet the trickster at a place he had indicated. The trickster took the bag full of money and gold from her on the pretext that he would carry it and began their journey. After two miles, they stopped because there was a river to cross.

The trickster thought, "What do I do with a woman? If someone else were to set eyes on her, I have to protect her. It is better I give her up but take the money with me."

With these thoughts in mind he told the woman, "Look, my dear, it is very difficult to cross the river. I will first ferry the money bag to the other side of the river and keeping it there I will come back and carry you on my back."

She said, "Okay" and gave the bag to the trickster. He asked her to give her clothes also because he said clothes would hinder swimming. She gave away her clothes also. The trickster left with the bag and her clothes.

Covering her naked body with her hands, the woman began waiting restlessly for the trickster to return. Just then a jackal with a piece of meat in his mouth happened to pass by. The jackal saw a fish that had come out of water and in trying to get at it he dropped the meat piece and ran towards it. But the fish, seeing the rushing jackal, jumped back into water. Disappointed, the jackal went back to pick up the piece of meat. But a kite dived down fast and took it away before the jackal could reach it.

The woman laughed at the jackal that had lost the fish and also the piece of meat. Hurt by the woman's behaviour, the jackal said, "You may be twice as intelligent as I am. But what is the use? You have lost your husband, your lover and your wealth also."

In the middle of the story, some one from the sea came and disturbed Karalamukha and told him that another big croc had occupied his house. The croc did not know what to do. He had lost a friend (Raktamukha), his wife and the house. He began to wonder how he could throw out the big croc from his house. He went to the monkey who had already climbed back to the top of the tree and asked him for his advice.

Raktamukha told the croc, "You fool, why do you still bother me? You have tried to kill me to make your wife happy. Now, you have come for advice. I cannot give it to such fools like you who ask for advice but do not follow it. He who does not heed the advice of wise men will perish like the camel at the hands of the lion."

Without any shame, the croc asked the monkey to tell him that story. The monkey told him the following story.

The Price of Indiscretion

In the city of Nagara, there was a carpenter whose name was Ujjwalaka and who was extremely poor. One day he was pained to realize that every one else in his profession was rich and happy and that he alone was very poor. He thought Nagara was not the proper place for him to prosper and that he must go out and seek his fortune elsewhere. Then he left that city and began his journey to a new country. When the sun was fading, he reached a cave in a forest.

There he saw a female camel that separated from her caravan and just then delivered a child. The carpenter gave up his plans to go to another country and went home taking the camel and her calf with him. Every day he would go into the forest and bring back with him bundles of tender leaves for the camel and her child to eat. The she camel regained and her strength and the calf now became an adult. The carpenter began selling camel milk and making good money.

Ujjwalaka loved the camel so much that he bought a bell and hung it to her neck. One day he thought to himself, "If one camel can bring so much money for me, how much more would I earn if I buy more camels and sell their milk?" He told his wife that he would borrow some money to go to Gujarat and buy a she camel and that she should take care of the she camel and her calf till he returned from Gujarat.

He went to Gujarat and returned home with a she camel. Slowly, the number of camels he had increased several times. He appointed a keeper to take care of the camel herd he had on the condition that he would give one camel to the keeper every year as remuneration. The keeper was also free to drink camel milk twice a day. Now, everything was fine for the carpenter and he and his wife thus lived happily ever after.



The camels used to go every day to a nearby forest to feed on the fresh green leaves available in plenty in the forest. After spending a lot of time in the forest, eating and playing, the camels trekked back home. But the senior she camel stayed on in the forest and joined the herd later. The other camels thought that the she camel was a fool to go her separate ways and what would she do if a wild animal attacked her.

One day a lion saw all the camels leaving the forest in a herd and the she camel staying back and loafing about. By the time she finished her leisurely grazing, the others left and reached home. The she camel lost her way and was in panic when the lion, which was following her, pounced on her and soon tore her to pieces.

"That's why I tell you that he who does not follow the advice of wise men perishes like the camel," said the monkey.

The croc replied, "You are right, if you follow advice given for your good you will face no danger either here or in the heaven above. Yet, what is great about doing good to a person who is good? He who helps a person who has done him harm is considered great by learned people. That's why take pity on me and give me advice."

The monkey said, "In that case, you go and fight that big croc who has occupied your home. If you die in that battle, you will go to heaven. If you win the battle, you will get back your house. Know this from me:

"Conquer a good man with humility,
 Vanquish a hero with strategy,
 Overcome the poor through small gifts
 And crush equals with power."

"How is that possible?" Karalamukha asked Raktamukha. Another story begins.

The Jackal's Strategy



Mahachataraka was a jackal living in a forest. One day, he found the body of an elephant and was happy that it would have food for many days. However, he was not able to bite into the thick hide of the elephant and was circling around the body when a lion came that way. The jackal humbly prostrated before the lion and said, "My lord, I am your obedient servant. At your command, I am keeping a vigil on the body of the elephant. Please help yourself."

The lion said, "You know my friend, I do not eat something others have killed. You may take it as my gift to you."

"I am touched by your magnanimity, my lord," said the jackal.

After the lion had left, a tiger came on the scene. The jackal thought, "I got rid of one menace through humility. How do I escape this fellow? He will not yield to any strategy I know. The only way of keeping him at bay is cunning. Let me try it."

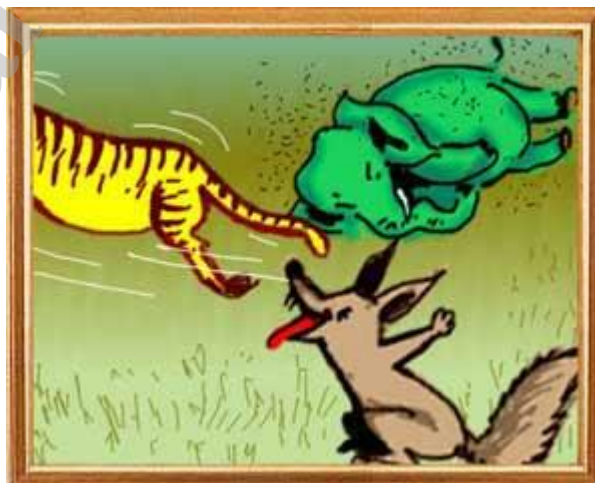
The jackal then went half way to greet the tiger and said, "O uncle, why are you entering this area of death? The lion has killed this elephant and asked me to keep watch on it. He has gone to take bath. Before going, he told me to inform him if any tiger happened to come here. He vowed to kill all the tigers because long time ago a tiger had nibbled at an elephant he had killed. He told me that from that day he had sworn to kill all tigers."

These words frightened the tiger.

He told the jackal, "Son, save my life. When the lion comes, don't tell him I had come this way. Please."

On receiving an assurance from the jackal, the tiger hurriedly left the scene. Then came a leopard.

The Jackal thought, "This fellow has strong and sharp teeth. I will persuade him to pierce the hide of the elephant."



Addressing the leopard, the jackal said, "My son, you have come this way after a long time. You seem to be hungry. Why don't you be my guest? See this body of the elephant killed by the lion. He has asked me to keep an eye on the body. So, have a feast before he returns."

The leopard said, "Uncle, how can I accept your invitation. If I want to live long I should not touch this elephant. I will leave now."

The jackal assured him, "Don't worry, you go ahead. I will alert you when the lion comes."

The leopard then began attacking the elephant and when he tore the hide, the jackal cried, "Run. The lion is coming."

In this way, the jackal managed to get rid of the leopard also.

When the jackal began feasting on the elephant flesh, another jackal came that way. He was very angry and looked very strong. The first jackal remembered the last line of the stanza "crush equals with power" and attacked the trespasser with great ferocity and killed him.

Raktamukha told Karalamukha, "In the manner of the jackal in the story, you also kill that encroaching croc. Otherwise, it will be your end. But you must be wary like Chitranga, the dog, of your own kith and kin."

"Who is this Chitranga? Can I learn anything from his story," asked the croc.

"Why not?" said the monkey and began telling him the story of Chitranga.

Chitranga was a dog living in a city in the south visited by famine for many years. Dogs began dying by the hundreds because there was no food. There was a danger that they would disappear as species. So, Chitranga left that city and came to a far-off city in search of food. There he found the house of a wealthy man whose wife was a lazy and careless woman who would not close the doors of the house.

Every day, Chitranga would sneak into the open house and have his fill. But he really could not enjoy his food because as soon as he came out of the house, street mongrels attacked him and severely wounded him.

Chitranga thought, "Oh, I made a mistake in coming here. Home was better even if there was no food. There was no struggle like this for food. Let me go home."

In the end, Chitranga left that city and returned home.

Seeing him return from abroad, Chitranga's friends asked him, "Tell us everything about the country you have visited. How are the people there? What is their culture?"

The dog said, "The less said the better about that country. Everything is freely available because the women are careless. Yet your own kith and kin deprive you of this joy."

The croc was then impressed by the monkey's good advice and decided to fight the encroaching croc. He fought his enemy with great valour and killed him and regained the house occupied by him. The elders have said:

**"There is no true happiness in
What you get without effort.
Even an old bullock survives
On food that comes his way."**

Thus ended the dialogue between Raktamukha and Karalamukha. With that ends the fourth Tantra of Vishnu Sarma.