

The Tale of Sulasa's Courage - A Mythological Poem

Irtika Kazi

The tale unfolds on the soil of Benares, shall I say,
Whence King Brahmadata o'er the land held sway.

There lived a beautiful courtesan named Sulasa,
Emerged at once from the tales of Jataka.

Sulasa, for her beauty and immense wealth,
Was known by one and all there, who dwell'th.

On the same soil lived a barbarous thief,
As mighty as an elephant, as wretched as grief.

Named he was Sattuka, O what a name!
To loot and plunder was his only aim.

For once he was trapped and caught by the King's men,
Who dragged and pulled him through the streets to kill,
every now and then.

Whence Sulasa's eyes lay on this cowardly man,
She saw him with bound hands surrounded by the clan.

At once she decided to save him from them all,
For the flash of love and compassion did on her befall.

She traded thousand pieces with the killer for her Love to
be freed,
And married him to live a life full of happiness and good
deeds.

O, she was foolish to have trusted a thief like him,
For, he again revealed his stealthy nature and whim.

He was determined to rob Sulasa of her jewels,
So bade he her to offer them to the deity of the hills.

Sulasa, with her husband, went uphill to the deity,
There he revealed his true colors out of spontaneity.

He threatened Sulasa to undo her jewelry lest she be dead,
Sulasa was wise; she was in wisdom of him ahead.

She pled Sattuka to accept her dutiful obeisance,
And asked for his final embrace of complacency.

On his assent respectfully she encircled him thrice,
With power like a goddess, pushed him off the precipice.

Down went the wretched thief, her husband he was,
He died a painful death that went unnoticed and was blur.

Perceiving this act of courage,
The deity of the hill praised;

“Wisdom at times is not confined to men
A woman can chew wisdom now and then.”

“Wisdom at times is not confined to men
Women are quick in counsel now and then.”

How quick and keen she was the way to know,
She slew him like a deer with a full-stretched bow.

Beware you wrongdoers of Humanity!
Make these lines sacred for your own sanity.

“He that to great occasion fails to rise,
Falls, like that dull thief from the precipice.”

Let us imbibe Sulasa's bravery, dear Women,
Let us engrave Sulasa's courage in us, dear Women,
In times of wrath, injustice and pain,
Let us wreak havoc on evil, like rain!

Irtika Kazi is a poet.
