

Golden, Silver and Iron Shackles

*Instructive Stories from the teachings of
Srla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur*



There was once a prince, a minister's son, and a treasurer's son who were all close friends. Once upon a time, all three of them set out on a long journey to different distant lands.



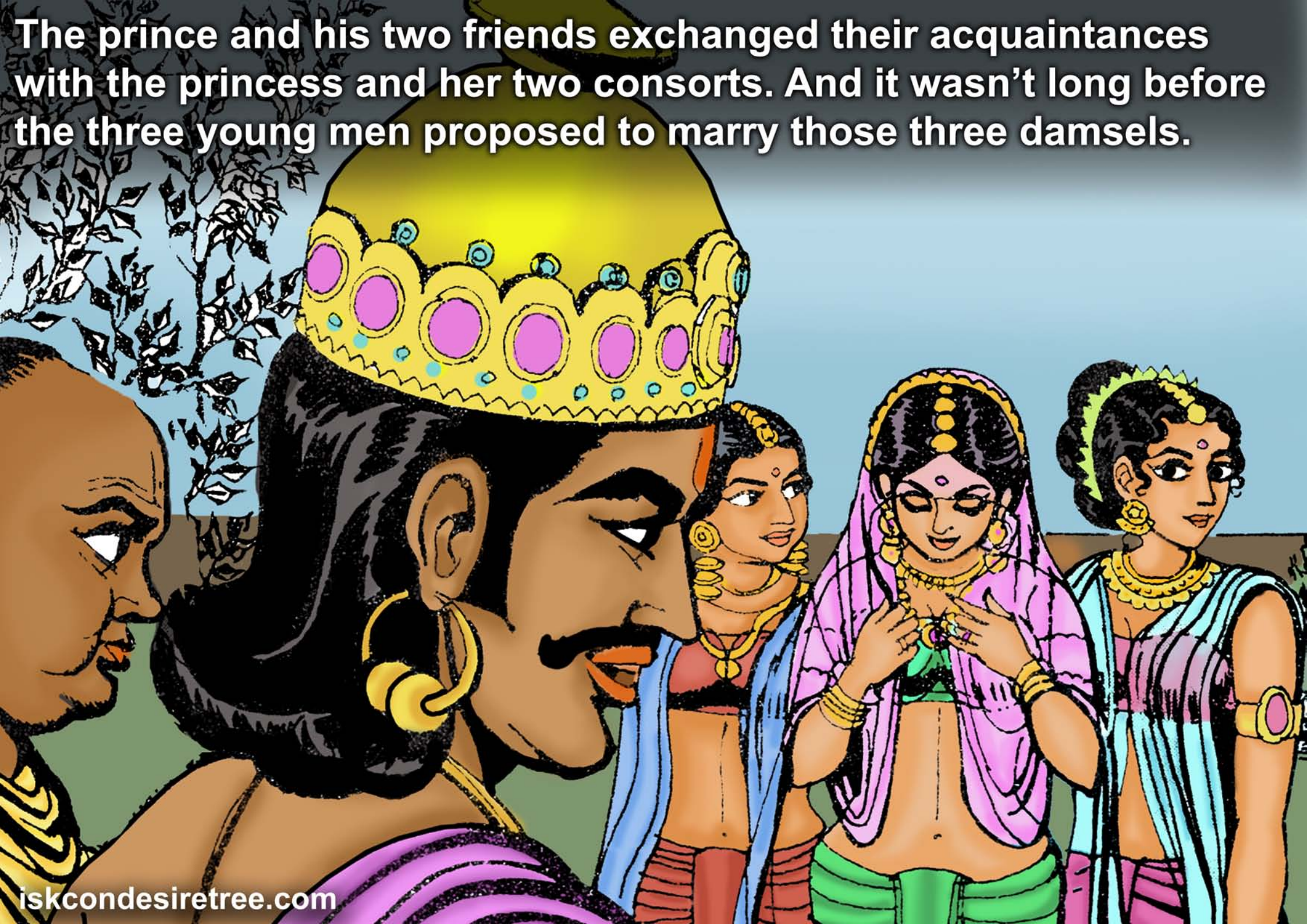
On the way they happened to arrive at a royal palace where the king of that land was absent, but his daughter, the princess, was staying there along with her two closest friends - one the minister's daughter and the other the treasurers daughter of that land.



Those three ladies were also similarly close friends like the prince, the minister's son and the treasurer's son.



The prince and his two friends exchanged their acquaintances with the princess and her two consorts. And it wasn't long before the three young men proposed to marry those three damsels.



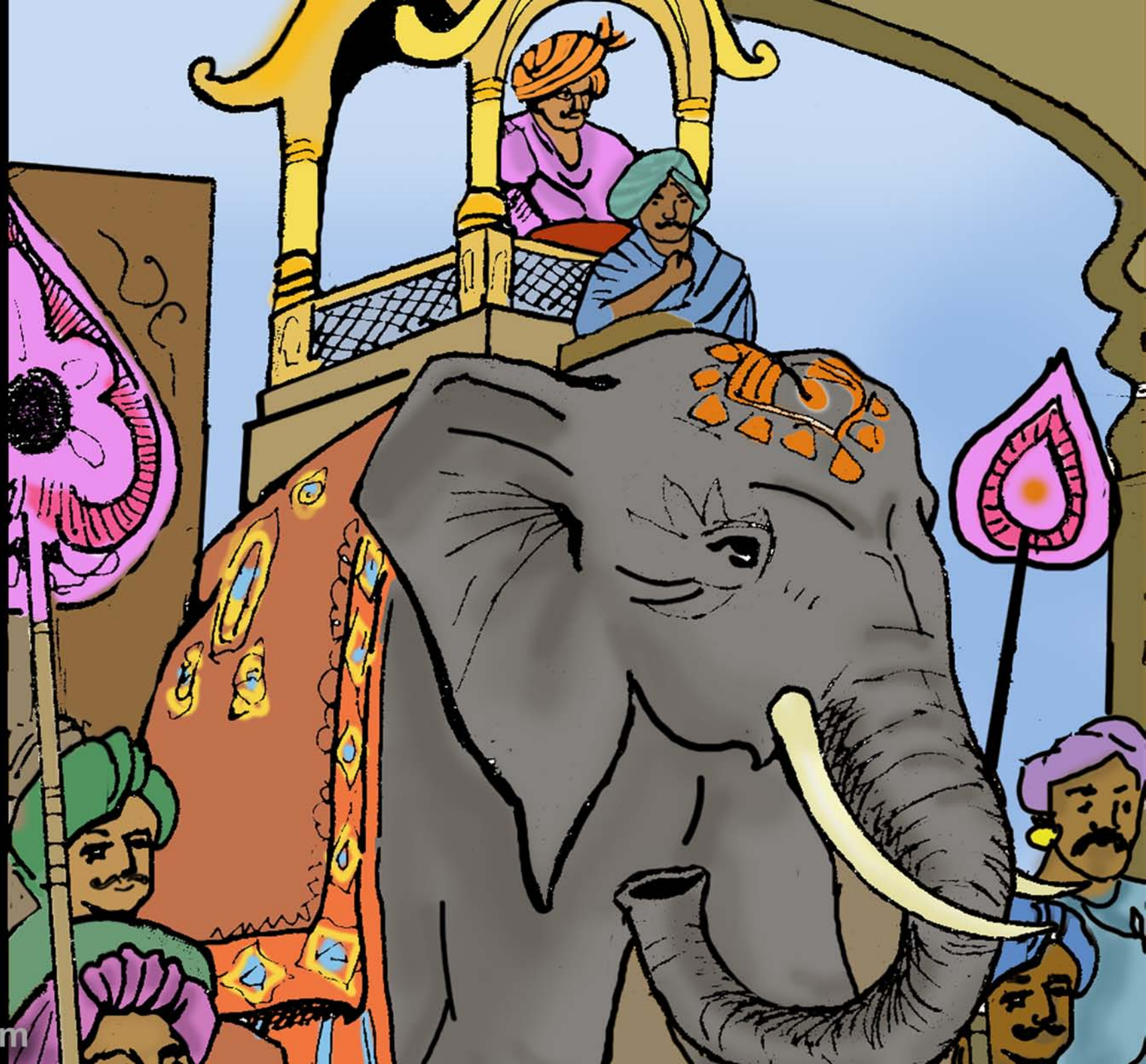
But they hesitated as it was custom to get permission from their respective parents for the marriage.



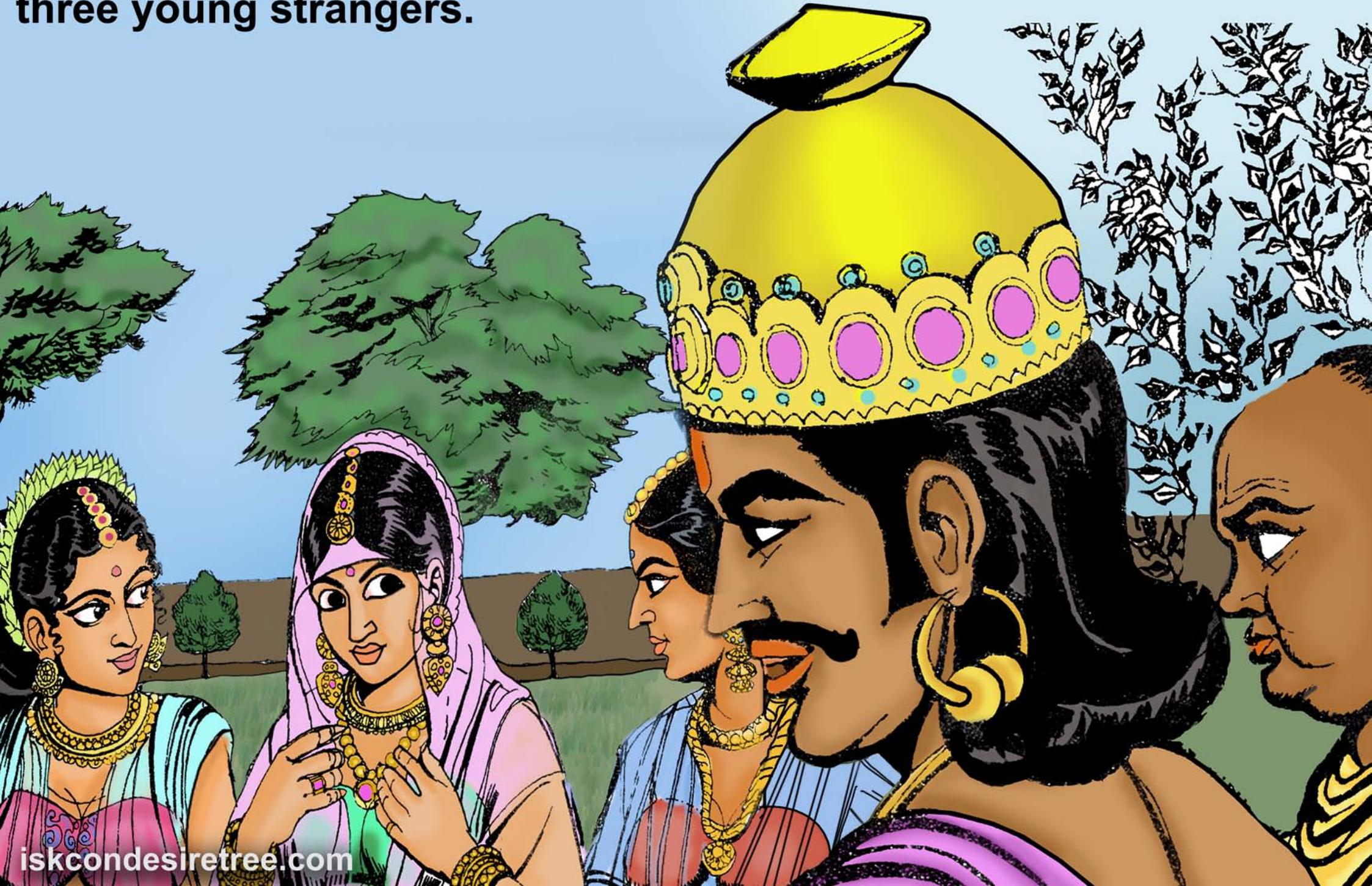
However, they decided to marry without further delay, according to the old saying “anything auspicious should be hastened”. So their happy marriages were solemnised.



Thereafter the king of the land with his minister and treasurer came back from their travels and entered the royal palace only to see in great astonishment...



...that their princess and their two consorts were chatting up with three young strangers.



**Our daughters
have been tricked by these
three trespassers into illegal
marriage. I order that these
trespassers be immediately
be arrested!**



The princess and the daughters of the minister and the treasurer begged to the King for the release of their husbands.





**I will not release
these young men instead I
order that they all be offered
proper respect according to
their respective status.**

**Tie the young prince
with golden shackles, whereas the young son of
the minister with silver shackles, and the
treasurers son with iron shackles.**



Purport :

The Supreme Lord binds up all living entities similarly in three types of shackles, namely the material modes according to the reactions of their respective fruitive activities. The bondage of goodness may very well be compared to golden shackles, that of passion to silver shackles, and the entanglement in ignorance is tantamount to iron shackles.

Whatever might be the elements or metals with which the shackles are made, they are simply meant for imprisonment. Unless and until one goes beyond these three material modes or entanglements, one can never be considered free and liberated. Only one who completely surrenders unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord unconditionally may thus be delivered from such bondage.