

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

CHITRA



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A PLAY IN ONE ACT

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Here is Tagore's interpretation of an episode from the *Mahabharata*. Chitra, daughter and only child of the King of Manipur, has been brought up like a boy. She is proud of her prowess and 'manliness' till she falls in love with Arjuna, who spurns her. Broken-hearted, Chitra realises the 'vain pride of her man-like strength' and prays to the gods for 'a brief day of perfect beauty' to ensnare Arjuna. Her wish is granted for a year. But Chitra soon realises that her body has become her own enemy, for Arjuna has been attracted by 'borrowed beauty' and Chitra cannot reveal her true self.

Tagore has handled this delicate story with great charm and at times the play is sheer poetry.

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