



ENGLISH
II SEMESTER
BENGALURU CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

HAYAVADANA
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A BRIEF SUMMARY

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HAYAVADANA

- × Introduction
- × Hayavadana is a play written by Dr.Girish Karnad.
- × It is a two acts play.
- × It deals with human imperfection and woman emancipation



ACT ONE

- The setting of the play is Dharmapura..
 - The play begins with a puja to Lord Ganesha.
 - Bhagavata introduces the main characters of the play.
 - Three characters namely, Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini are the central characters of the play.
 - Two closest friends , Devadatta son of a poet and Kapila son of an Iron –smith.
 - Devadatta symbolizes sensitivity and Kapila for strength.
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- ✘ Bhagavata is interrupted in his narration by a strange creature.
- ✘ The creature had a head of horse and body of man and speaks in the voice of man.
- ✘ It is called as Hayavadana, face of the horse and body of humanbeing.
- ✘ Hayavadana narrates his story; of his mother, a princess falling in love with a celestial being in the form of a horse and the result is his birth.
- ✘ Bhagavata tells Hayavadana to go to Kali temple and ask goddess to turn him to become human being.



- ✘ Devadatta asks his friend Kapila to find out the name and address of the woman he loves i.e., Padmini.
- ✘ Kapila finds Padmini's home and conveys the message of his friend to her, but falls in love with her immediately.
- ✘ After seeing how much Devadatta loves Padmini, he gives up his love of Padmini.
- ✘ Devadatta and Padmini marry.
- ✘ Padmini becomes pregnant and the two are supposed to go to Ujjain with Kapila.
- ✘ Devadatta suspicious of his wife hesitates and Padmini also decides to cancel but changes her mind to go as she knows Kapila's joining in this sojourn.



- ✘ Padmini admires Kapila's strong muscular body.
- ✘ Devadatta decides to make good of his promise leaves the pair and cuts off his head.
- ✘ Kapila comes to know about the death of his friend and he also cut off his head.
- ✘ Padmini unable to bear the death of both her husband and Kapila and tries to kill herself.
- ✘ Goddess Kali interferes and tells Padmini to join the heads of both dead persons so that she can heal them.
- ✘ Padmini carries out the order of goddess.
- ✘ But in a hurry she fixes the head of Devadatta to the body of Kapila and Kapila's head to Devadatta's body.
- ✘ An argument ensues who should be the husband of Padmini.
- ✘ They visit a sage to find a solution for this problem.
- ✘ The sage advice them that the person who has the head of Devadatta is the husband of Padmini.



SECOND ACT

- ✘ The act begins with Padmini and Devadatta are seen happier than ever been.
- ✘ Padmini loves the new body of her husband i.e., Devadatta's head and Kapila's body.
- ✘ Padmini and Devadatta buy two dolls for their son and these dolls narrate some part of the story to the audience.
- ✘ As time passes by, Devadatta's body starts to wear off and he becomes old Devadatta with weak body.



- ✘ As time passes by, Devadatta's body starts to wear off and he becomes old Devadatta.
- ✘ Padmini tells him to buy a new doll for their son as the old one shows the signs of wearing out.
- ✘ She takes her son to the forest where she meets Kapila.
- ✘ Kapila who has gained strength tells her how he has fought to accept the new found body of his.
- ✘ She falls in love with him and spends many nights with him.



- ✘ Meanwhile Devadatta returns with dolls and finds Padmini living with Kapila in the forest.
- ✘ Unable to accept the situation, Devadatta and Kapila decides to fight with each other to end their lives.
- ✘ The two decide to kill each other.
- ✘ Padmini hands over the child to Bhagavata and tells him to handover the child to huntsmen
- ✘ After that the child should be handed over to its grandfather when it attains the age of 5 years.



- ✘ Finally Padmini ends her life by performing sati.
- ✘ As the play is about to come to an end, a second actor runs onto the stage announcing that he has seen a horse singing national anthem and at the same time, first actor enters with a young boy.
- ✘ The young boy is none other than Padmini's son.
- ✘ The boy looks serious and the child neither speaks, laughs nor cries.



- ✘ Hayavadana enters the stage and explains that on his request, goddess Kali has made him to be a complete horse rather than a man.
- ✘ Hayavadana wishes to rid off himself with his human voice.
- ✘ The boy encourages Hayavadana to laugh and as the horse starts laughing more and more, its voice turns to a horse's neigh.
- ✘ The play ends with Bhagavata praying Ganesha for his mercy on fulfilling the desires of both Hayavadana and the young boy.
- ✘ All the actors come on stage and praise the Lord for his benediction on successful completion of the play.