

“Too much,” the man replies indignantly, waving him on.

“Seventy-five paise,” Hari offers. “It’s a long distance.” Grudgingly the man places his heavy parcels in the rickshaw and climbs in.

Now Hari’s efforts are doubly strenuous. Every pothole threatens to unbalance him. Streetcar tracks and open drains add to the peril. He must be prepared to stop his load quickly if a cow should amble into his path. Bus and truck drivers assert their right of way with blaring horns and seem to enjoy terrifying the lowly pullers. Taxi drivers sometimes crowd the “human horse” to the curb. Hari nears his destination with a sense of satisfaction. Perhaps his customer will pay a bit extra for covering the four kilometers in so short a time. He stops the rickshaw and waits expectantly. The man grabs his bags without comment and walks off.

“Seventy-five paise,” Hari calls, thinking the man has forgotten. No response. “You agreed to seventy-five paise,” Hari demands.

“I did nothing of the kind,” the man retorts as he disappears through the door of a nearby restaurant.

Hari shrugs his shoulders weakly and moves on. He has no means of redress,<sup>8</sup> for there is no law against taking advantage of a rickshaw puller. Maybe his next customer will be more congenial.<sup>9</sup> He passes a restricted street, off-limits to rickshaws. Some pullers gain entrance anyway by bribing the police. The puller then avoids competition and may charge higher fees. Hari lacks even the few rupees needed for a bribe.

All morning he toils, debilitated<sup>10</sup> by the intense heat and lack of nourishment. Aromas of food mock his misery. Finally he stops to rest and count his paise. Almost enough for the daily rickshaw rent, he discovers. He plods on. Thoughts of his wife and