



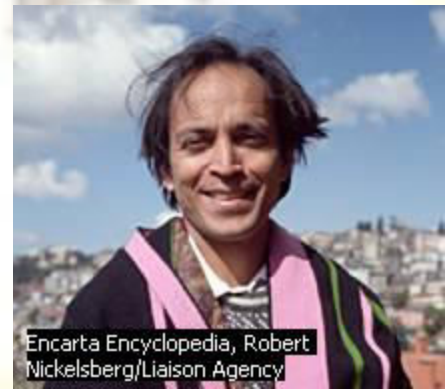
The Tale of Melon City

Vikram Seth

The Tale of Melon City

(After Idries Shah)

- ✦ Idries Shah (16 June 1924–23 November 1996), also Sayyid Idris al-Hashimi an author in the Sufist tradition.
- ✦ Maintained spiritual teachings should be presented in forms and terms familiar in the community where they are to take root.
- ✦ Used stories and humor to great effect.
- ✦ Had a profound influence on several intellectuals.



Encarta Encyclopedia, Robert Nickelsberg/Liaison Agency

About the poem.

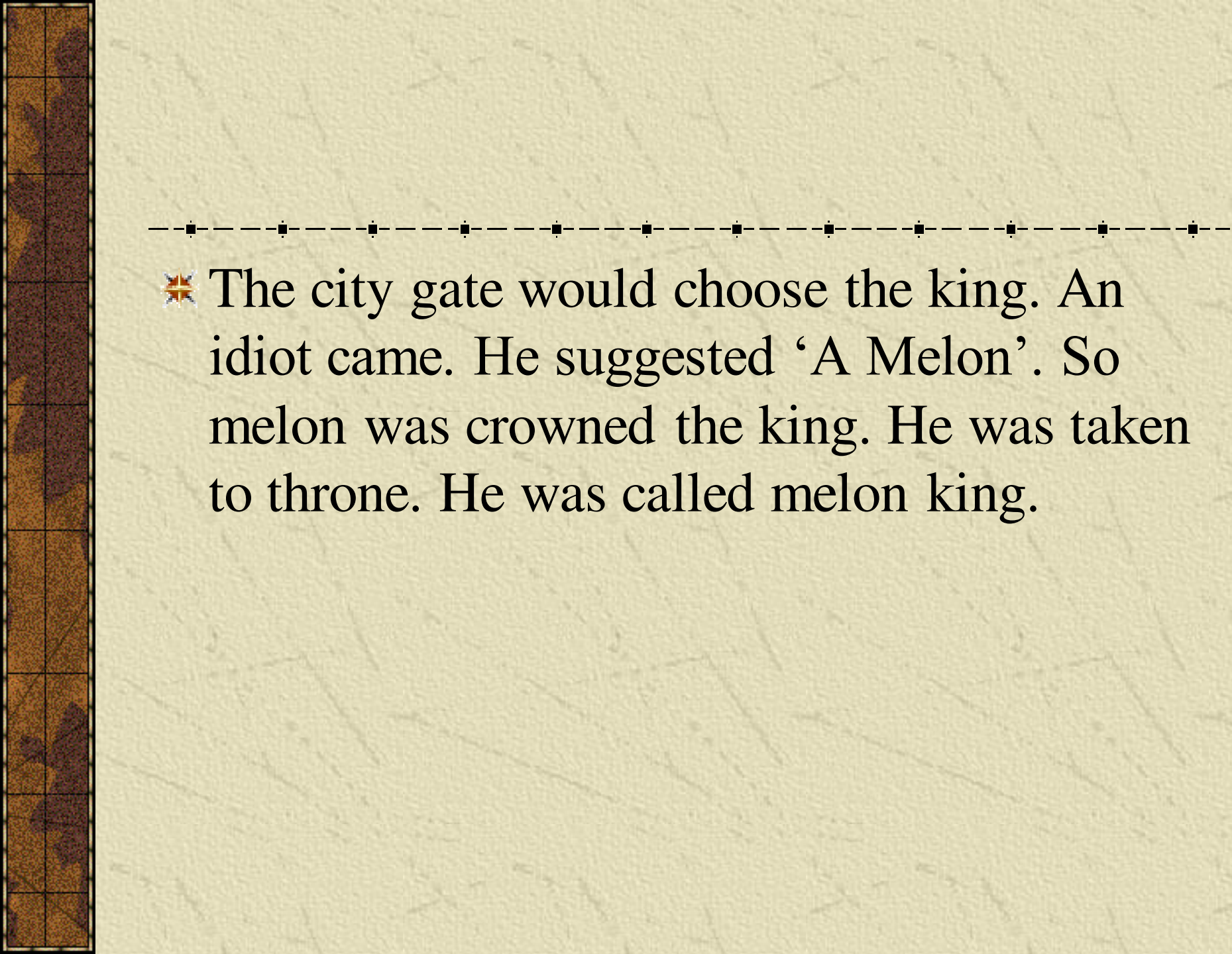
✧ ‘The Tale of Melon City’ runs like a folk tale. The city is called Melon City because its ruler is a melon. There is a curious tale about it. Once a fair and easygoing king ruled over a state. He got an arch built across the thoroughfare. As he passed under the low arch it struck his head and he lost his crown.



✠ He thought it a disgrace and ordered the chief of builders to be hanged. The chief lay the blame on the workmen. The workmen were surprised. They said that the bricks were made of wrong size. So the masons were thought guilty. The masons shifted the blame on the architect. The architect put the blame at the king's door as he amended his original plan.



✧ The king sought a wise man's counsel. He held the arch guilty and ordered it to be hanged. A councillor objected to it as it had touched the king's head. The people became restless. They wanted to see someone hanging. Only the king's head could fit the noose. So he was hanged. It was now announced that the next man who passed

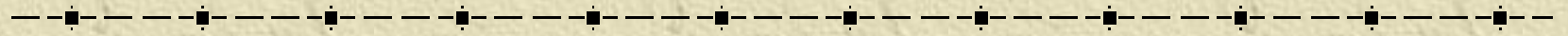


✠ The city gate would choose the king. An idiot came. He suggested ‘A Melon’. So melon was crowned the king. He was taken to throne. He was called melon king.



✠ Humour and irony: Construction of curved structure/ king's riding under low arch and losing crown. The way accused appeal to the king/ self defence of architect / holistic blame game/ selection criteria of the wisest man ..aged, toothless and intestine less / the process is quite ridiculous. Whimsical king/ his fickle mindedness.

A PRESENTATION.....



✦ Remember: Some people are born great, some upon greatness is thrust and some achieve greatness with their hard work.