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SANSKRIT ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Vowels: a ā i ī u ū ē aī āī iī uū
Gutturals: k kh g gh ṣ
Palatals: c ch j jh ñ
Retroflex: ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṅ
Dentals: t th d ḍh n
Labials: p ph b bh m
Semivowels: y r l v
Spirants: ś s h

GUIDE TO SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATION

a but vowel so that tath is pronounced tath
ā, ā father k luck
i six kh blockhead
ī, ī bee kh blockhead
u put g go
ū, ū boo gh bighead
r vocalic r, American pur-
dy or English pretty n anger
c chill
ṛ lengthened r cb matchhead
ṝ vocalic ḍ, able ḍh aspirated j, hedgehog
ṝ, ṭ retroflex ḍ, stry (with the jh canyon
tip of tongue turned up ī retroflex t, try (with the
to touch the hard palate) i same as the preceding but
ai bite th aspirated
a, ā o, ā o toe, esp. Welsh pronun-
ciation; Italian solo dh same as the preceding but
au sound a, ā o toe, esp. Welsh pronun-
ciation; Italian solo d retroflex d (with the tip
t of tongue turned up to
touch the hard palate)
au sound a, ā o toe, esp. Welsh pronun-
ciation; Italian solo dh same as the preceding but
m anusvēna nasalizes the pre-
ceding vowel dh same as the preceding but
vīṣṭa, a voiceless aspira-
tion (resembling the En-
glish b), or like Scottish
loch, or an aspiration with
a faint echoing of the last
element of the preceding
n retroflex n (with the tip
of tongue turned up to
touch the hard palate)  yes
French  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
text  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
book  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
dinner  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
guillotine  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
word  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
shore  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
pillar  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
upheaval  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
before  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
aborrent  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r
mind  trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of r

 CSL PUNCTUATION OF ENGLISH

The acute accent on Sanskrit words when they occur outside of the Sanskrit text itself, marks stress, e.g. Ramáyana. It is not part of traditional Sanskrit orthography, transliteration or transcription, but we supply it here to guide readers in the pronunciation of these unfamiliar words. Since no Sanskrit word is accented on the last syllable it is not necessary to accent disyllables, e.g. Rama.

The second CSL innovation designed to assist the reader in the pronunciation of lengthy unfamiliar words is to insert an unobtrusive middle dot between semantic word breaks in compound names (provided the word break does not fall on a vowel resulting from the fusion of two vowels), e.g. Maha·bhárata, but Ramáyana (not Rama·áyana). Our dot echoes the punctuating middle dot (·) found in the oldest surviving samples of written Indic, the Ashokan inscriptions of the third century BCE.

The deep layering of Sanskrit narrative has also dictated that we use quotation marks only to announce the beginning and end of every direct speech, and not at the beginning of every paragraph.

 CSL PUNCTUATION OF SANSKRIT

The Sanskrit text is also punctuated, in accordance with the punctuation of the English translation. In mid-verse, the punctuation will not alter the sandhi or the scansion. Proper names are capitalized. Most
Sanskrit metres have four “feet” (pāda): where possible we print the common śloka metre on two lines. The capitalization of verse beginnings makes it easy for the reader to recognize longer metres where it is necessary to print the four metrical feet over four or eight lines. In the Sanskrit text, we use French Guilmets (e.g. «kva sa ticīrtha?») instead of English quotation marks (e.g. “Where are you off to?”) to avoid confusion with the apostrophes used for vowel elision in sandhi.

Sanskrit presents the learner with a challenge: sandhi (“euphonic combination”). Sandhi means that when two words are joined in connected speech or writing (which in Sanskrit reflects speech), the last letter (or even letters) of the first word often changes; compare the way we pronounce “the” in “the beginning” and “the end.”

In Sanskrit the first letter of the second word may also change; and if both the last letter of the first word and the first letter of the second are vowels, they may fuse. This has a parallel in English: a nasal consonant is inserted between two vowels that would otherwise coalesce: “a pear” and “an apple.” Sanskrit vowel fusion may produce ambiguity.

Fortunately it is not necessary to know these changes in order to start reading Sanskrit. For that, what is important is to know the form of the second word without sandhi (pre-sandhi), so that it can be recognized or looked up in a dictionary. Therefore we are printing Sanskrit with a system of punctuation that will indicate, unambiguously, the original form of the second word, i.e., the form without sandhi. Such sandhi mostly concerns the fusion of two vowels.

In Sanskrit, vowels may be short or long and are written differently accordingly. We follow the general convention that a vowel with no mark above it is short. Other books mark a long vowel either with a bar called a macron (ā) or with a circumflex (â). Our system uses the macron, except that for initial vowels in sandhi we use a circumflex to indicate that originally the vowel was short, or the shorter of two possibilities (ē rather than ai, o rather than au).

When we print initial ā, before sandhi that vowel was a

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
i & i \\
i & ē \\
i & ā \\
i & āi, \\
\end{array}
\]

uttaramacaritaR 9 (10, 10)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

ā, o
ā, ā (i.e., the same)
i, i (i.e., the same)
ū, ā (i.e., the same)
ē, ā
ō, ō
āi, āi
āu, āu

’, before sandhi there was a vowel a

FURTHER HELP WITH VOWEL SANDHI

When a final short vowel (a, i or u) has merged into a following vowel, we print ’ at the end of the word, and when a final long vowel (ā, ī or ū) has merged into a following vowel we print ” at the end of the word. The vast majority of these cases will concern a final a or ā.

Examples:

What before sandhi was atra asti is represented as atr’āsti
atra āste atra āste
kanyā āsti kany” āsti
kanyā āste kany” āste
atra īti atr’ēti
kanyā īti kany” ēti
kanyā īpsitā kany” ēpsitā

Finally, three other points concerning the initial letter of the second word:

(1) A word that before sandhi begins with r (vowel), after sandhi begins with r followed by a consonant: yathā” rtu represents pre-sandhi yathā rtu.

(2) When before sandhi the previous word ends in ē and the following word begins with ch, after sandhi the last letter of the previous word is c and the following word begins with ch: rūc chāstravit represents pre-sandhi rūc āstravit.

(3) Where a word begins with h and the previous word ends with a double consonant, this is our simplified spelling to show the pre-sandhi

uttararamacaritaR 10 (11, 0)
CSL CONVENTIONS

form: *tad hasati* is commonly written as *tad dbhasati*, but we write *tadd hasati* so that the original initial letter is obvious.

COMPOUNDS

We also punctuate the division of compounds (*samāśa*), simply by inserting a thin vertical line between words. There are words where the decision whether to regard them as compounds is arbitrary. Our principle has been to try to guide readers to the correct dictionary entries.

EXAMPLE

Where the Devanagari script reads:

कुम्भस्थली रक्षुते वीकिर्षिनिवर्षुरुपिन्धराक्षसस्य।
प्रणालेव विक्रमवर्षांतः निष्ठुतालालस्य अन्वेष्य॥

Others would print:

kumbhasthali rakṣatu vo vikirṣasinduraṇeṇpur dviradānanasya /
praśāntyeye vighnataṃsaḥchaṭanāṃ niṣṭhyutālālatapallaveva //

We print:

kumbhāṣṭhali rakṣatu vo vikīrṣasindūraṇeṇpur dviraḍānaṇasya
praśāntyaye vighnatatamaḥchaṭanāṃ niṣṭhyutālālātapatapallaveva //

And in English:

“May Gānēśa’s domed forehead protect you! Streaked with vermillion dust, it seems to be emitting the spreading rays of the rising sun to pacify the teeming darkness of obstructions.”

“Nava-sāhasanka and the Serpent Princess” 1.3

DRAMA

Classical Sanskrit literature is in fact itself bilingual, notably in drama. There women and characters of low rank speak one of several Prakrit dialects, an “unrefined” (*prākṛta*) vernacular as opposed to the “refined” (*śāmśkrta*) language. Editors commonly provide such speeches with a Sanskrit paraphrase, their “shadow” (*chāyā*). We mark Prakrit speeches
RAMA’S LAST ACT

with "opening and closing," corner brackets, and supply the Sanskrit chaṭṭaḥ in endnotes. Some stage directions are original to the author but we follow the custom that sometimes editors supplement these; we print them in italics (and within brackets, in mid-text).

WORDPLAY

Classical Sanskrit literature can abound in puns (śleṣa). Such paronomasias, or wordplay, is raised to a high art; rarely is it a cliché. Multiple meanings merge (śliṣyanti) into a single word or phrase. Most common are pairs of meanings, but as many as ten separate meanings are attested. To mark the parallel senses in the English, as well as the punning original in the Sanskrit, we use a slanted font (different from italic) and a triple colon (•••) to separate the alternatives. E.g.,

yuktam Kādambaraṁ śrutvā kavayo maunam āśrītāḥ
Bāṇaḥdhanāv anādhvayaḥ bhavaṁ iti śmṛtir yataḥ.

It is right that poets should fall silent upon hearing the Kādambari, for the sacred law rules that recitation must be suspended when the sound of an arrow: the poetry of Bana is heard.

Somēshvara-deva’s “Moonlight of Glory” I.15

uttaramacaritaQQQ 12 (13, 0)
For Allison,

tat tasya kim api dravyam...
I wish to thank Guy Leavitt for his help in preparing the Sanskrit and Prakrit text in the Clay Sanskrit Library format. Staff at the British Library and Gillian Evison and Doris Nicholson at the Oriental Institute, Oxford, provided me copies of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa’s commentary, for which I am very grateful. My research assistant Shreya Vora helped gather materials for the introduction and did last-minute proofing. Allison Busch read the entire translation and her Sanskrit eyes, coupled with her literary taste, saw numerous places for improvement—some of which, alas, remain. CSL editors Isabelle Onians and Somadeva Vasudeva were ever ready with advice and guidance. I am also grateful to Dániel Balogh for his superb job of copyediting. Lastly, John Clay himself has proved to be the ideal patron, providing at once the inspiration for achieving excellence and the possibility of realizing it.

Sheldon Pollock
New York City, September, 2006
FOREWORD
In Valmiki’s ‘Ramayana,’ the course of Rama’s life is determined by forces impinging upon him from the outside. Things happen to him, and he faces the crises according to moral precepts sanctified by tradition or advice given to him by respected elders. He hardly initiates any action of his own, except in a rare and desperate case like the killing of Vali. As a result, Rama emerges from the epic morally unsullied and psychologically unscathed, and tradition has been able to accept him as the ultimate embodiment of righteousness.

In the “Final Chapter” (Uttarakanda) of the ‘Ramayana,’ however—a later addition to Valmiki’s poem—a single act of Rama’s sets the entire action rolling, and it is an act the ethical justification for which has always been ambiguous. Rama here is responsible for inflicting humiliation and pain on the queen he knows is innocent and for tearing his family apart. When in the end he receives the public rebuff of being rejected by the gentle Sita, our sympathies are all on her side. It is this anguished awareness of the responsibility he must bear for the abandonment of the woman he loves so dearly that forms the basic tenor of this section of the ‘Ramayana.’

Bhava-bhuti, in ‘Rama’s Last Act,’ exploits the enormous emotional potential and ethical complexities of this situation. But instead of a straightforward dramatization of a fairly simple original narrative, he takes breath-taking risks with his material by refracting the narrative and projecting it from different and often conflicting angles. And, in ad-
dition, he takes immense pleasure in drawing our attention to these unusual strategies and devices.

Take for instance the lopsided organization of the narrative itself. Act One ends with Rama sending Sita off with Lákshmana to the jungle. Then the action jumps over twelve years, and in the Prelude to the next act, a female ascetic, talking to a forest deity, recounts four events from different parts of the epic, totally unrelated to each other in terms of time. Nothing is said about what actually happened to Sita, abandoned alone in the jungle—a wrenching moment for which the whole of Act One has been a build-up. Thus there is a gaping ‘hole’ after Act One, left unfilled till the very end, a crucial piece missing at the very centre of the jigsaw puzzle.

Before we pursue this trajectory further, it is worthwhile looking at another feature of the play which is equally striking. We are not too far into the drama before we become aware of the number of art forms that figure in it. Painting, music, sculpture, singing, poetry are all brought in. But they are not there, as often in Sanskrit plays, to emphasize the artistic and sensual vibrancy of the royal court. They play a positive role in furthering the action, almost like human characters, each form making its own specific contribution to the development of the plot.

In Act One, the central action takes place in the picture gallery, where Rama, Sita and Lákshmana are looking at paintings illustrating episodes from their past life. Moved by the memories evoked by these images, Rama calls upon the Jrímbhaka weapons to become available to Sita’s children, and beseeches the goddesses, Bhagi-rathi and Prithivi...
(Earth), to protect Sita should the need arise. These exclama-
tions, purely emotional responses to the paintings, come true and decide the course of the rest of the play. Similarly, 
an image sculpted in gold replaces Sita by Ramā’s side, en-
abling him to remain loyal to her while launching the horse 
sacrifice that will ultimately bring the family together. The 
possession of the Jrimbhaka weapons by the twins helps 
confirm their parentage. Lava owes much of his recogni-
tion of the world to the books he has read. He identifies 
the functions of a horse from what he has read in the Vedic 
texts.

Thus, Bhava-bhuti designs the action to emphasize how 
the various art forms help toward healing the wounds in-
flicted by Ramā’s initial act. Not surprisingly, it is the epic, 
the ‘Rāmāyana,’ that plays a seminal role in this recupera-
tion.

In fact, as the action of the play unfolds in front of us, we 
are continually made conscious that the epic is being com-
posed and developing in parallel in the background. Valmī-
ki is invisible till the last few minutes of the play but we are 
aware of his creative presence in the wings right through. 
The paintings in Act One not only give a synoptic presenta-
tion of the content of the ‘Rāmāyana’ but also consciously 
echo the summary provided by the sage Nārada to Valmī-
ki at the very beginning of the epic. In Act Two we are in-
formed that Valmīki has started composing the ‘Rāmāya-
na.’ In Act Four, the composition has progressed far enough 
for Kusha and Lava to have started studying it. The poet 
has not published the entire poem yet, so while Lava knows 
the names of the members of his parents’ generation, he is
still in the dark regarding his cousins. Indeed, the process of Lava getting acquainted with his cousins takes place in the scene we are witnessing, thus intertwining the plot development in Bhava-bhuti’s play with the progressive unfolding of Valmiki’s epic. The encounter between Rama and his sons is continually and subtly modulated by their academic recitation of the ‘Ramayana.’ Thanks to the epic, the twins, who have been brought up in the jungle, have a nuanced access to Rama’s emotions which their cousin, Chandra-ketu, who has grown up with Rama in the palace, entirely lacks. And in the final act, it is the presentation of Valmiki’s new play that reunites Sita with Rama and her sons.

This play-within-the-play begins, suddenly, with Sita shouting out to Rama and Lákshmana that she is alone in the wild forests, about to give birth to twins. And we immediately realize that Bhava-bhuti is here filling in the ‘hole’ we pointed out earlier, the piece missing at the heart of the jigsaw puzzle. That Valmiki should have chosen this scene for presentation to Rama is understandable, since Rama was not present when the event actually happened. He is now being brought up to date on what exactly transpired after he abandoned Sita. But we, the audience watching Bhava-bhuti’s play, have a right to ask what point Bhava-bhuti is making by placing this scene so late in the play, dislocating it from its chronological position in the narrative.

Obviously, he is avoiding needless repetition. But there is a subtler strategy at work here. For the play-within-the play doesn’t merely inform us that Sita was saved. It details how she was saved: she was saved by the two goddesses, Bhagi-rathi and Prithivi, who were responding to Rama’s
exclamations while viewing the paintings in Act One. This connection of the play-within-the-play with Act One is further reinforced by making the Jrimbha weapons appear in the scene and assure Sita that ‘our destiny now lies with your sons as…. [Rama] proclaimed at the time of viewing the paintings.’ As in a detective novel, the references to the viewing of the paintings are clues provided by Bhava-bhuti to make it unambiguously clear that the scene that Valmiki is presenting in ‘Rama’s Last Act’ is in fact the ‘absent Second Act’ of the same play.

The play written by Valmiki then is in fact Bhava-bhuti’s. Bhava-bhuti is thus asserting that he himself is Valmiki. All poets are one: through their work they give us unalloyed joy, the experience of rasa, the aesthetic equivalent of a mystical experience.

The question is whether this polyphonic structure of the play is merely a vehicle for the display of Bhava-bhuti’s fondness for pyrotechnics—almost akin to his proclivity for prodigiously long verbal compounds—or, at the most, a means of asserting his own stature as a poet, or whether there is a more complex philosophical purpose to the exercise. Does, in short, a prabandha dhvani—a unified resonance—emerge from the simultaneous playing of these various themes?

As far as I know, Kirtinath Kurtkoti, the great critic of Kannada literature, was the first scholar to draw our attention to the significance of the following passage in the Prologue to the play:
RAMA’S LAST ACT

DIRECTOR: My dear fellow,
It is our duty to act no matter what.
There is no escaping criticism.
However pure the words—or the woman—
There are always people who'll be malicious.

ACTOR: Worse than malicious, you should have said.
Since the people are reproaching
Vaidéhi, the queen herself.

Thus Sita personifies speech. (There is an obvious reference here to the Nāṭyaśāstra: ‘Let Indra protect the hero and Sarásvati the heroine.’) Spreading slander about such a noble person is to indulge in the abuse of speech, to distort the perception of reality and to damage the fabric of normal life. The tragedy inflicted upon Sita by her vilifiers objectifies what is being done to language itself in the same process. This is a crisis which only the Poet can resolve. ‘Rama’s Last Act’ celebrates the Poet as one who bears the central responsibility of maintaining the purity of speech and who, when that turns turbid, can restore it to its unclouded state.

At the end of the ‘Ramáyana,’ Sita rejects Rama’s offer of acceptance. Even in the play-within-the-play, Sita’s exit line expresses similar rejection of the ‘vicissitudes of this world.’ But this is not a dénouement acceptable to Bhava-bhuti. When Rama faints at Sita’s exit, Lákshmana turns to Valmíki and demands:

LÁKSHMANA: Help, Valmiki, help! Is this the moral of your poem?

Bhava-bhuti here is protesting that for him, Rama and Sita must unite. But their reunion is not merely a bow to the
FOREWORD BY GIRISH KARNAD

convention of happy endings ordained by Sanskrit dramaturgy. That is the central necessity of his philosophical position: The poet pleases our sensibilities. He heals us psychologically. But he fulfils a more universal function; he purifies the language of the tribe and brings its members together in the enjoyment of a meaningful life.

If this interpretation seems to attribute an almost godlike status to the Poet, Bhava-bhuti would be the last person to feel embarrassed. In fact, as has often been noted, in the benedictory verses at the beginning as well as at the end of the play (which should normally praise the gods), he goes out of his way to hail the Poet’s prowess.

Valmiki appears on stage only a few minutes before the end of the play, almost as though to take a bow, and appropriately the final line spoken by him is,

VALMIKI: Dear Rama, is there some further good turn I can do for you?

As a playwright myself, I know that this is what every playwright would want to ask of his audience.

Finally, may I say how happy I am to be writing the Foreword to this delightfully limpid translation of a play which, for all its concern with what we do to language, is not exactly known for its pellucid style.

Girish Karnad
INTRODUCTION
The Playwright Bhava-bhuti

As is the case with most Sanskrit poets, even the most eminent, we have scant reliable knowledge about Bhava-bhuti. The twelfth-century historian Kālhana associates him with the court of King Yasho-varman, which would place him in the celebrated cultural capital of Kanya-kubja (Kanauj) in the first third of the eighth century, and nothing in his writings speaks against this. Bhava-bhuti tells us something of himself in the prologues to his works. He was born in what is today southern Maharashtra, and was a member of a Brahman family distinguished for its Vedic learning. Indeed, his works show a degree of knowledge—especially in hermeneutics (nimāṇsa) and Vedānta—that give some credence to the otherwise thin (but chronologically credible) tradition that makes him a pupil of Kumārila, the greatest hermeneutics scholar of the epoch.

If the hard documentary evidence scarcely enables us to eke out a paragraph about Bhava-bhuti’s life, the personality that emerges from his work is as sharp as we can delineate for any Sanskrit poet, and his voice as individual. He was a man drawn to exploring the most vexed problems the literary tradition had bequeathed him, and to do so in a way—through a searching examination of the human heart—that sets him apart in the history of Sanskrit literature.

Bhava-bhuti wrote only three plays and probably in the following order: the ‘Acts of the Great Hero’ (Mahāvīra-carita), a nāṭaka, or historical (epic-derived) play, on the Rama legend; ‘Mālati and Mādha’ (Mālatimādhava), next to ‘Little Clay Cart’ (Mrchakaṭikā) undoubtedly the finest
prakarana, or fictional play, in the entire Sanskrit repertory, and arguably the most insightful meditation on the nature of romantic love in early India; and ‘Rama’s Last Act’ (Uttararāmaçarita).

‘Rama’s Last Act’ is also a nāṭaka—indeed, the implicit claim that Bhava-bhutī makes at the end of the play, that it is the first formal drama based on Valmīki’s poem, may well be true. At least, no unequivocally earlier examples exist. Undoubtedly it is Bhava-bhutī’s masterpiece, and next to Kāli-dasa’s ‘Shakuntala’ (Abhijñānasākuntala), the most celebrated work of the Sanskrit theater. In the Śrīgāraprakāśa (‘Light on Passion’), an encyclopedic literary treatise of the early eleventh century, the scholar-king Bhoja cites ‘Rama’s Last Act’ more than any other work (some 235 times) except Kāli-dasa’s ‘Birth of Kumāra’ (Kumārasambhava, 415). And the play had become famous within a few generations.

Vāmana, an important literary critic of Kashmir (c. 800), prized it as a touchstone of literary figuration (citing Act 1.8 as a paradigm of metaphor). Another measure of the poet’s impact, besides his prominence among literary critics, is his appearance in the “praise-poems of poets,” eulogies that form the closest thing Sanskrit literary culture had to a canonization process. In a twelfth-century anthology, an anonymous poet, after praising Subándhu, Kāli-dasa, Pānini, Harī-chandra, Arya-shura, and Bhāravi—the greatest among the earlier poets—ends by saying Bhava-bhutī transcends them all by offering the deepest, most indescribable kind of pleasure (a line no doubt imitating Bhava-bhutī). Another such poem attributes to him the mastery of the
“Way” that his contemporaries and successors such as Vak-pati-raja would follow.

Bhava-bhuti’s Way (mārga)—the term is a technical one, meaning style in the largest sense—is no easy thing to characterize. His language can be abstruse and his nominal compounding dense, though he knows precisely how and when to moderate both (the point-counterpoint in the descriptive verses of Act 2 of ‘Ramā’s Last Act’ is a good example). One less obvious dimension of his style may well be the personalized authorial voice, of the sort we find in the autobiographical section of Bana’s Harṣacarita, or in Vak-pati’s reflections on his literary art. Consider this celebrated verse from ‘Mālati and Mādhava’:

Those quick to disparage me here
know something, I am sure,
but I don’t write on their account.
Someone of like nature to me
exists or will be born
for time is endless and earth is vast.

(Mālatimādhava Act 1.6)

Related in some way to this voice is Bhava-bhuti’s penchant for acute psychological analysis. It is uncommon to meet anywhere in Sanskrit literature the kind of deep-felt reflection on love that we find throughout ‘Ramā’s Last Act’:

Love between a man and a woman:
Identity in joy and sorrow,
consonance in every condition,
where the heart can find respite,

Identity in joy and sorrow,
consonance in every condition,
where the heart can find respite,
whose rasa old age cannot spoil,
what alone abides as time
removes all veils and pure love ripens—
that singular blessing is only bestowed
on a good man, and only then with luck. (1.171 [40])

between new friends:
There is no way to counteract
a predilection that has no cause.
There is some thread of affection that knits
living things together deep within. (5.57 [17])

between parent and child:
A child marks the highest degree of love,
and the source of the parents’ ultimate bonding.
Because it is the common object of a couple’s love
a child is a knot of bliss that ties their hearts together.⁴
(3.105–3.106 [18])

No one in Sanskrit—except again, perhaps, Kali-dasa—
demonstrates quite this level of interest in and capacity for
capturing in verse the most complex states of human attach-
ment. The hazard here, of straying into turgid and turbid
psychologism, is one to which Bhava-bhuti often exposes
himself as he strives to give expression to the least express-
ible dimensions of human feeling:

Every single time you touch me
a kind of transformation—
it can’t be described as joy or sorrow,
extasy or sleep,
a state of intoxication

---

⁴uttararamacarita R 32 (33, 0)
or all-suffusing poison—
confuses my senses and at once
excites and dulls my awareness. (1.154[36])

And melodrama often threatens: the characters “fall faint” and “compose themselves” a dozen times or more, and their expressions of woe beggar the resources of contemporary English. Here the modern reader is urged to keep in mind the potentially very different standards of literary taste—and indeed, the possibility of a very different history of emotions—in the nonmodern non-West. That said, the analyst of the human heart inevitably runs the risk of excess, in the hopes of penetrating to some important truth.

Kali-dasa’s work, dating from three centuries earlier, is comparable to Bhava-bhuti’s in other respects besides emotional register: it was one of Bhava-bhuti’s crucial models. This fact is centrally important in understanding both the story he has told in ‘Rama’s Last Act’ and the way he has constructed the play.

Interpretation and Structure

To grasp the significance of the narrative dimension of ‘Rama’s Last Act’ and in fact even to perceive the complexity of its formal organization, we need to take a step backward in Sanskrit literary history, and explore not just Bhava-bhuti’s relationship to earlier drama but the epic literature from which that drama was derived.
In the heart of Bhava-bhuti’s principal epic source, Valmiki’s ‘Ramayana,’ lies a formative relationship with India’s other great epic, the ‘Maha-bhárata’ of Vyasa. The works are, in a fundamental way, complementary. For example, the ‘Ramayana’ concerns the Solar lineage of kings, the ‘Maha-bhárata’ the Lunar (the major—though completely ideal—genealogical division among ancient Indian royalty); the ‘Ramayana’ is a story of normative monogamy; the ‘Maha-bhárata,’ of anomalous polyandry. Both poems relate a struggle over succession to the throne, leading to the degradation of the princess and the political power she represents and (before or after that) the exile of the protagonists, war, return, and recovery of the throne. But here, too, the complementarities are telling. Most important is the agon itself: the ‘Ramayana’ is a tale of “othering,” the enemy is non-human, even demonic, and the war takes place in an unfamiliar, faraway world; the ‘Maha-bhárata’ is a tale of “brothering,” the enemy are kinsmen—indeed, as the protagonists say, almost their own selves—and the war takes place at home.5

‘Shakuntala’ is a ‘Maha-bhárata’ play, and ‘Rama’s Last Act’ seems designed as a ‘Ramayana’ counterpart to, and competitor of, Kali-dasa’s masterpiece. Like the two epics the two plays share a deep resemblance. In their core they are stories about love, rejection, recovery, and ultimately—because this is the very reason behind the rejection—political power and its perpetuation. The star-crossed love of Dushyanta and Shakuntala is mirrored in that of Rama and Sita. The women, both of whom are pregnant, are repudiated because of doubts about their fidelity and (implicitly)
the paternity of the progeny they are carrying. This is followed by a soul-searing acknowledgement of guilt on the part of the husband, reunion with his wife, recognition of the legitimacy of the offspring with the aid of quasi-divine agents (Maricha in ‘Shakuntala,’ the magical anthropomorphic weapons in ‘Rama’s Last Act’), and reconciliation of husband and wife. Both works hereby aim to emend and aesthetically enhance their epic models.  

If some of these features may be found in other plays, nowhere else is the correspondence so intimate. But what most strikingly testifies to Bhava-bhuti’s creative appropriation from ‘Shakuntala’ is the architectural principles behind his play. These are entirely different from the elements of traditional dramaturgical theory, which have claimed the attention of medieval commentators and modern scholars alike, but which actually do little to enhance our actual appreciation of the play as anything more than a token of a type. The Kalidasan architectonics adopted in ‘Rama’s Last Act,’ by contrast, are fundamental to our understanding the playwright’s thought, despite the fact that they were never noted by traditional Indian readers or perhaps even consciously apprehended. Great poets are always smarter than their smartest readers.

No fully satisfactory account of these structural principles exists for ‘Shakuntala,’ one that would show how thoroughly they pervade the work from acts to scenes to verses to the most subtle verbal echoes. A perfect symmetry of action balances Acts 1 and 7, 2 and 6, 3 and 5, each latter act recapitulating events, motifs, and even phrases from the former in a kind of counterpoint or antiphony. A com-
parable concentric construction can be found in ‘Rama’s Last Act.’ Thus, in Act 1, the opening verse, which offers up ‘Rama’s Last Act’ “with an expression of homage to the poets of old”; the viewing of the picture gallery and the metaliterary framing by Rama, “It’s only a painting”; the benediction that Rama pronounces regarding the magical weapons, “From now on without fail they will serve your offspring”; the reference to Sita as “dear companion in my sojourn in Dándaka wilderness”; the request that Ganga protect Sita; the artistic representation that precedes the separation; the announcement about the demon Lávana—all this has crystal-clear resonances with what occurs in Act 7: the play within the play and the metaliterary framing by Lákshmana, “This is only a play”; the mention of the magical weapons (Lákshmana directly quotes the earlier statement, “My brother did tell her, ‘From now on without fail…”’); the reference to Sita as Rama’s “dear companion in my sojourn in Dándaka wilderness”; Gangā’s affirmation that she has protected Sita; the dramatic representation that precedes the reunion; the announcement about the demon Lávana, and the concluding verse making reference to the ancient narrative, the ‘Ramáyana,’ that the playwright has transfigured in his work.

The same sort of excavation could be done for the remaining acts: 2 and 6 correspond in their preludes (spoken by semidivine beings, the water spirits and the Vidyādhāras respectively); in individual verses—one of the poet’s most often quoted insights on love is repeated verbatim:

*The person need do nothing at all,  
the mere joy of being together*
dispels sorrow, What a gift it is, to have someone who loves you

and in subtle resonances such as the allusion to Rama and Sita’s intimate conversations (Act 2.99 = Act 6.127). Acts 3 and 5 correspond closely, too: Rama’s tense dialogue with the invisible Sita is shadowed by Chandra-ketu’s dialogue with the unrecognized Lava, the victory of Sita’s “son,” the elephant she raised from birth, by the victory of Lava (to whom Sita herself makes allusion, Act 3.98), and so on.

There is no doubt a distinct pleasure for the audience in the discovery of such concealed artistry, but that is not the only purpose of this structure. The design of the construction may be thought to recapitulate, as a sort of objective correlative, the design of the action: The lovers’ separation and reunion are as carefully plotted by fate as the play is by the poet. This dimension of predestination, a dominant convention of Sanskrit theater and repeatedly emphasized in ‘Rama’s Last Act’ no less than in ‘Shakuntala,’ is a major concern, or even a problem, for Bhava-bhuti given the moral calculation of responsibility that motivates his revision of Valmiki, a question I examine below. It would be unsurprising, then, to find it reflected in the dramatic structure. But in addition to offering aesthetic pleasure and providing an objective correlative for the narrative of predetermined action, the concentric, antiphonal design of the play might also be interpreted as another aspect of the playwright’s concern with the reflexive appreciation of dramatic art itself and the place of art in making sense of lived experience. Not only is this concern a dominant interest of Bhav-
va·bhuti’s, but it perhaps constitutes the supreme achievement of ‘Rama’s Last Act.’

BHAVA·BHUTI’S THEATER OF REFLEXIVITY

Bhava-bhuti is arguably the most “meta” of premodern Indian authors—and this is saying much, since the concern with reflecting on literature in literature has a distinguished genealogy in Sanskrit, beginning with the ‘Maha·bhárata’ (where Vyasa literally fathers the characters of his epic) and the ‘Ramáyana’ (where the work opens with a poetic account of Valmíki’s invention of poetry). ‘Rama’s Last Act’ is as much about the power of drama itself, about the capacity of literary narrative to make life intelligible and coherent, as it is about the problem of moral agency that the best literature aims to highlight. I see two principal dimensions to this reflexivity: one pertains, again, to the formal dimension of literature, but specifically as this resides in the purpose and paradox of representation itself; the other to its content, which in traditional Indian dramaturgical theory largely means the problem of rasa.

As just noted, the play is framed by two verses that celebrate the power of poets: at the start, the power of the “poets of old,” Valmíki foremost among them (as any Indian audience would immediately recognize); at the end, that of Bhava-bhuti himself, “master of the sacred mystery of language,” who claims primacy in turning the ‘Ramáyana’ into formal drama. More dramatically, the play is framed by two representations of representation: the tour of the picture gallery in Act 4 and the performance of “Valmíki’s” new play in Act 7. The former is a representation of what is
past and known to the viewers (Rama, Lákshmana, and Sita are seeing the painted scenes of their life in exile, effectively the main events of Valmíki’s poem, of which there will be allusive reprise in Act 3). The latter—offered as a portion of the as-yet unpublished ‘Ramáyana,’ ”the rasa heightened by its new form, [which] is meant for performance”—is a representation about what is past but unknown to the viewers (Rama and Lákshmana are seeing the events that occurred after Sita was abandoned in the forest). Embedded in the play-within-the-play we can find a crucial metaliterary claim of Bhava-bhuti’s: He himself, of course, wrote the play he attributes to Valmíki. Thus when Valmíki declares, “Through deep insight made possible by a seer’s vision we have produced a brief composition at once purifying and filled with rasa,” and Rama concurs that “Seers have direct vision of dharma,” and that their insights are “never found to be contradicted—and hence never to be doubted,” Bhava-bhuti is asserting his own power to declare the truth—or even make it, since “In everyday life a good man’s words correspond with facts / But in the case of a primal seer the facts conform with his words” (Act 1.42 [10]). It is this assertion that seems to underlie the use of the device.

In both cases the reality or truth of the representations is the paramount question. In Act 1, Sita cries out when she sees the painting of Shurpa·nakha, “Oh my husband, this is my last sight of you!” to which Rama replies, “Now, now, there’s no need to be afraid of separation. It’s only a painting.” In Act 7, observing “Sita” on stage (played by an apsaras, or divine courtesan, in the troupe of the mythic director, Bharata) about to commit suicide after her brother-
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in-law has abandoned her in the forest, Rama cries out “My queen, my queen, look, Lákshmana is here!” to which Lákshmana replies, “But brother, this is only a play.” But in both instances, there are truths to be learned from something that is untrue because unreal. In the former instance, the characters relive the past and confirm the truth of their experience. In the latter, they not only learn what happened in the past but hear it correctly for the first time: They learn from Earth, Sita’s mother, and the Ganga River, tutelary deity of Rama’s clan, the truth of Sita’s innocence (declaring her “the source of good fortune to the world” and enhancer of their own purity), and learn from the divine weapons the truth of the pedigree of the twins, Kusha and Lava. For the audience the content of this markedly reflexive form consists in coming to recognize that the representation they themselves are watching—‘Rama’s Last Act’—is as true as the representations, paintings or performance, that the characters themselves verify, as Rama does when he avers in Act 1, “My god, it’s as if the episode at Jana-sthana were happening this very moment.” It is only through narrative that we can understand our lives. Or indeed perhaps, to simplify the complex ancient theory of śabda/brahma, the “mystery of language” of which Bhava-bhuti is master, our lives may be nothing but verbal narrative. While it may be that art can sometimes make us, quixotically, confuse reality and representation, it also shows us that representation can sometimes be the only way the real and the true come to be known.

Bhava-bhuti was obviously not the first writer in history to use this technique. Western poetry begins with Homer
deriving a similar truth-claim about his representation from showing Odysseus corroborate with his tears what that bard Demodocus sang in his account—that is, of course, Homer’s account—of the ‘Iliad’ at Phaeacia; less developed but more familiar is Vergil’s adaptation of Homer in Aeneas’s lacrimae rerum before the murals in Dido’s temple depicting the sack of Troy. But Bhava-bhuti’s achievement is not only as compelling as these, but even more complex, shaping as it does the whole work of art, with a skillfulness shown by no other Sanskrit dramatist, and with multiplying effects of signification that can be dizzying. And it is enhanced by the particular moral claims that, as we will see, he seeks thereby to raise.

The second dimension of Bhava-bhuti’s reflexive theater pertains to content rather than form, and at first glance it stands in some tension with the subliminal persuasiveness of the former. For here the poet seems to intentionally subvert the illusion of mimetic truth that furnished the strongest proof of his power. Perhaps most dramatic is Láksmana’s exclamation over Rama when he faints at the portrayal of Sita’s apparent death in the drama in Act 7: “Help, Valmíki, help! Is this the moral of your poem?” Rama here ceases to be a “real” person and becomes instead a character in a story, and the whole event, the play itself no less than the play within it, is unmasked as artifice. Our suspension of disbelief is similarly defied with respect to the emotional impact of the work, its rasa.

_Rasa_ literally means flavor or taste, but as a technical term refers to the emotional state created by a literary work (and that literature aims, above all else, to create such a
state was never doubted). These states are canonically eight: the erotic, comic, pitiful, heroic, fearful, disgusting, furious, and wonderful. Literary works were thought, reasonably enough, to produce a single dominant emotional impact, but, again reasonably enough, to also show a range of subordinate states. Sad tales sometimes have comic interludes (Shambúka in Act 2, with his incessant, extravagant descriptions, almost certainly is meant to play a role analogous to the buffoon in the same act in the 'Shakuntala'), comedies often have an erotic dimension, horror stories a heroic one. In the case of 'Rama’s Last Act,' the dominant rasa is identified by the poet himself as karuna, translated here as “pity.”

Sanskrit literary critics are in unanimous agreement that in developing a rasa the writer must, among other things, refrain from actually naming it in the literary text. It requires only a moment’s thought to see that the erotic illusion of a scene will be destroyed by announcing, “Here is an erotic scene.” Naming the rasa, however, and more challengingly still, openly reflecting on rasa is precisely what Bhava-bhuti does throughout the play.  

(The Múrala River speaks:)

Rama has been filled with the rasa of pity,  
kept hidden by his profound demeanor,  
the sharp pain of it held deep within  
like a clay pot baking in embers. (3.4 [31])

***

42
INTRODUCTION

(The Támasa River, in reference to Rama, effectively summarizing the emotional register of the play as a whole:)

*How complex a plot this is.*
There is only a single rasa—
pity—but it takes different forms
since it changes in response
to circumstances that are changing,
just the way that water forms
into whirlpool, bubble, or wave
though in the end it all remains
the same: nothing but water. (3.258 [48])

** * **

(Lava at his meeting Chandra-ketu:)

*Well really, the development of the rasa here is all muddled.*
Night-blooming lotuses rejoice when the moon begins to rise
and so do my eyes when I see him. And yet my arm—
its ghastly wounds agape, throbbing with love for the heavy bow
and its string twanging so cruelly and loud—is hankering for battle.¹⁵ (5.78–5.79 [26])

** * **
(The director of the play within the play:

We have produced a brief composition at once purifying and filled with rasa, the rasas of pity and wonder.

(7.11)

* * *

(Rama, in perhaps the best distillation in the play of the idea of how, in the absence of narrative art, life becomes unintelligible:

Alas for the affairs of life, their incoherent, upside-down events, that lack all rasa, that end in frustrated love, that bring only burning pain. (6.120)

Why does the author insist on such a disenchantment of the emotional impact of his work by constantly telling us that Rama is explicitly said to be “pity incarnate,” Sita “the very image of pity.” Lava “the heroic rasa approaching,” as if he were demanding we recognize in fact, again and again, that “It’s only a play”? Is it a consequence of his attempt to demonstrate the true extent of his power by drawing the viewer out of the charmed circle of rasa only to plunge him back in? Might this feature be understood on analogy with the thematic component just discussed and thus concern the capacity of the poet to show the characters naming, and thereby reconfirming as true, the emotional state he has so skillfully created? Whatever the adequacy of these, or other, explanations, such reflexive features are evidence of a literary practice of supreme self-awareness, something also found, though in far more conflicted form, in the key conceptual problem of the play: the place of moral responsibility in human affairs.

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What Bhava-bhuti attempted to achieve with his ethical rethinking in ‘Rama’s Last Act’ becomes clearer the richer the historical context of reception we can provide. And as often, this is a context that is best reconstructed backward. So let us start from the almost-present.

In late 1947, the year of Indian partition, a young man going to work along his usual route in Bombay, Maharashtra, began to notice a number of women who had taken up living on the streets. Day after day he passed the women—he never saw any men among them—his sympathy for their misery grew. Once he stopped to ask, Who are you and why are your men not with you? and they replied, We are from Sind; as for our husbands, go ask them yourself. The young man did so, and in reply to his asking, Why are you not living with your wives? he was told, Because they have been raped, and we won’t take them back. But why? he pressed, and they answered, Did Rama take back Sita? This was a moment of poetic epiphany for the young man—almost like Valmiki’s in response to the sorrowful event in the epic’s Prelude that marks the beginning of Indian poetry—and he decided to create a new version of the ‘Ramáyana’in Marathi, and along with it, he fondly hoped, a new social dispensation.16

The Bombay poet was only one in a long line of Indian writers who have felt compelled to respond with creative revision to Valmiki’s troubling masterpiece.17 The literary history of rewriting began almost as soon as that work was completed. A ‘Maha-bhárata’ poet included a version of the ‘Ramáyana’ in the great epic; a Buddhist poet
composed a contorted account in Pali, the Dasaratha jāta-ka, making Rama and Sita brother and sister (this sort of subversive contortion being a common Buddhist response to Hindu texts and practices);\textsuperscript{18} the Jain poet Vimala-suri wrote a scathing critique of Vālmiki in his own reworking of the tale, the Prakrit Paūmacariyam. Such rewriting of history—and epic is history for traditional readers—has not only a long tradition, outside of the world of the ‘Ramāyana’ no less than within (the ‘Shakūntala’ rewrote the ‘Maha·bhārata’), but also clear sanction in Sanskrit literary criticism.\textsuperscript{19} So while Bhava-bhuti thus has many revisionist predecessors as well as the authority to rewrite, he may have been the first not only to produce a reworking intended for theatrical performance, but more important, to attempt to tackle the most critical problem of the story, the abandonment of Sītā, the moral valence of the act, and the precise degree of Rama’s personal responsibility.

I say “attempt to tackle” because it is unclear whether this is a problem that, in the context of Indian social and political theory, admits of what can reasonably be called a solution rather than a revelation of insolubility. In the version of the episode in the Uttarakānda, or “Last Book,” of the original ‘Ramāyana’ (while certainly not composed by the author of Books 2–6, it was part of the text as known to Bhava-bhuti), Sītā bitterly refuses reconciliation with Rama when he meets her years later in the forest, rejecting yet another demand for a fire ordeal to test her chastity, and instead beseeching mother Earth to swallow her up (which she does). In many Sanskrit versions, such as the Ramābhuyudaya of Yaśo-varman, Bhava-bhuti’s own patron, the story ends with
the triumphant return of the couple to Ayódhya; the entire episode of the abandonment has been eliminated, as it was in most of the later vernacular versions, including the most celebrated (in the south, Kamban’s *Irāvatāra*, twelfth century, Tamil; in the north, Tulsi-dasa’s *Rāmarītmanas*, sixteenth century, Avadhi). Clearly the original version posed so profound an ethical dilemma that many writers preferred to simply ignore it.

Refusing to accept the *Uttarakanda*’s tale of the wife who can recover a measure of autonomy only in the act of suicide (as in fact Kali-dasa had done before him), let alone to implicitly ratify the tradition by refusing to address it, Bhava-bhuti confronted head-on the problem of reconciling not just fate with human agency but political demands with personal needs. This is a task of no small order, and it is not surprising that the contradictions—intentional tensions of the poet or not we cannot know—come fast and thick throughout. When, for example, in response to an injunction from his preceptor that as new king he is required above all to win the loyalty of his subjects, Rama declares that

*Affection, compassion, pleasure… indeed, Jánaki herself*  
*I wouldn’t scruple to renounce to propitiate the people.* *(1.50 [12])*

Sita herself agrees, responding, “That is why my husband is the mainstay of the Rághava dynasty.” By contrast, when in the play within the play (another antiphonal moment) Earth herself, Sita’s mother, reproves Rama,
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But was that seemly of dear Rama?
To pay no heed to the hand he grasped
in childhood, when he was a child,
or to me or Jánaka or Fire
or her deference or his progeny. (7.42–7.43 [5])

Rama (in the audience) responds (though to no real person), “Mother Earth, I am the man you describe.” (7.47) It is left to the Ganga, presiding deity of Rama’s clan, to make the exonerating argument:

The dreadful infamy had spread abroad
and the purifying trial by fire
took place on Lanka—how were people here
to be expected to give it credence?
The ancestral wealth of the Ikshvakus
lies in propitiating all the world.
So in these straits, most terrible straits,
what was my child supposed to do? (7.49 [6])

Sita’s abandonment was fated. Arúndhati tells Kausálya: “Your family guru… affirmed that what had happened had to be so but that it would all turn out well in the end.” And Ganga herself explains Sita’s abandonment by saying, “Yet what creature has the power to seal the doors / of fate when it is on the verge of bearing fruit?” In other words—if these are indeed appropriate other words—Sita’s abandonment was the only way true exoneration could be secured, the necessary condition for the affirmation of her chastity in public before “the entire world of creatures, moving and unmoving.”
In deciding for himself what was the right thing to do Rama remains ambivalent. His earlier confident assertion had been spoken as a king in a normative political voice, not as a husband whose very existence is unthinkable without the woman he loves. The ambivalence is sharpened by the criticism he incurs not just from Earth but from the forest deity Vasánti in Act 3; from Sita throughout, who calls her being disowned “groundless,” denouncing him repeatedly; and from Rama himself, who, even while recognizing the fatedness of things (“the seed of this reproach was a consequence of fate”), calls himself evil, an untouchable, an outcaste, proclaiming his guilt (“Rama is guilty of terrible wrongdoing”) to the very end—unjustly so, it nevertheless turns out.

Here an instructive parallel may be offered by the slaying of the Shudra ascetic, Shambúka (another episode deeply disturbing to later poets, Sanskrit and vernacular, who usually suppress it). The right thing for the king to do, according to the moral economy of the traditional élites, is to punish the low-caste for the capital offense of violating social norms by performing the ritual acts of a high-caste man (that it is a capital offense is shown by the fact that a Brahman’s son has unaccountably predeceased him, something impossible in a perfectly moral kingdom). The righteousness of the punishment is certified by a heavenly voice demanding Shambúka’s decapitation and by the divine transfiguration of Shambúka after his execution. Yet Rama again shows ambivalence (this is Bhava-bhuti’s invention; Valmíki knows nothing of it in the Uttarakāṇḍa): Few verses in Sanskrit poetry are as caustically self-critical as the one Rama
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speaks as he does the deed—and which closes the circle of the analogy just drawn to his abandonment of Sita:

O my right hand, bring down this sword
upon the Shudra monk
and bring the dead son of the Brahman
back to life. You are a limb
of Rama’s—who had it in him to drive
his Sita into exile,
weary and heavy with child.
Why start with pity now?
(somehow striking a blow) There, you have done a deed worthy of Rama… (2.68 [10]–2.69)

In the end Rama obeys a commandment higher than and in conflict with his personal judgment, and yet is vindicated in his obedience. His personal moral sense, we feel forced to conclude, is in essence flawed, whereas doing what is truly right requires overriding that sense. The fact that the hero’s moral judgment might be impaired was disturbing to later readers. An eleventh-century Kashmiri critic even argued that Bhava-bhuti “destroyed his work by his own words” in allowing Lava to criticize his (as yet unrecognized) father Rama in Act 5.22 But surely the moral ambiguity here is the very point of the play. The same hard, even terrifying logic—renouncing the claims of personal conscience and, in a kind of Abrahamic moment, following some external authority even when this appears to be a sin—would seem to apply to Rama’s abandonment of Sita as well.

Matters may not be quite so cut and dried, however. One of the things that make Bhava-bhuti a great writer is
his refusal to provide any simple, and therefore necessarily simple-minded, answers to the often bitter tension between social and personal ethics. Poets are not ethicists; their business is not to offer actionable solutions but to probe the nature of the human predicament with moral dilemmas that are often irresolvable. It is only at the end of the play, which modern readers are likely to find altogether unsatisfying, that the untranscendable conventions of the Sanskrit theater get the better of Bhava-bhuti: a deus ex machina in the form of “the purifying miracle that Valmiki has vouchsafed” restores Sita to Rama; her innocence is proclaimed, the scandal-mongers are chastised, and everyone lives happily ever after. But the contradictions the poet so powerfully framed—between personal happiness and social obligation, between the need to act and the sense that everything has always already been enacted—remain sharp to the very end in the dispute between Earth and Ganga themselves and in Rama’s almost incoherent exclamation to Sita that this fated “turn of events befell you because of Rama,” and are there to gnaw at the audience as they make their way complacently from the theater.  

TEXT, EDITIONS, COMMENTARIES

There are more than 200 manuscripts of ‘Rama’s Last Act’ catalogued in libraries across the Indian subcontinent and in the West, a relatively large number for a Sanskrit text, which testifies to its great popularity (‘Málati and Mádhavā’ is extant in about half that number, ‘Shakúntala’ in perhaps half again as much). The work was critically edited once, by S. K. Belvalkar, but his edition suffered a curious fate.
The text and apparatus meant to constitute Parts 2 and 3 respectively of his edition for the Harvard Oriental Series were never issued (Part 1, the introduction and translation, came out in 1915). Part 2 was printed at the Nīrṇaya Sagar Press c. 1914 but not published as such; another edition, re-set in the identical font but somewhat less correctly, was later brought out in the Poona Oriental Series. What happened to Belvarkar’s critical apparatus remains a mystery; he was still promising it as late as 1921. A copy of Belvarkar’s rare NSP version forms the basis of the text published here.

Without having access to Belvarkar’s critical apparatus it is impossible to know let alone assess the evidence behind his editorial choices. Despite his claim (in the Sanskrit preface to the Pune edition) that he exhaustively examined regional traditions and commentaries, he did not take into account the Malayalam version of the commentator Nārāyaṇa, far and away the best version of the play so far discovered. It is also clear that he relied heavily on the often less convincing northern tradition represented in the manuscripts from Nepal, though he did not have access to the best manuscript of this group, a copy in Kuṭila script dated 1196 CE (thus among the half-dozen oldest extant manuscripts of a Sanskrit drama). He also seems to have placed too much trust in the often faulty text of the commentator Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, especially for the Prakrit portions (though this commentator provides only the Sanskrit chāya and Belvarkar’s reconstructions are sometimes faulty).
Short of establishing an entirely new edition, I have adopted the following principles: I have generally followed Belvākar, who often presents a text that in countless places is an improvement over anything available. Where the 1196 CE Newari manuscript and Nārāyaṇa agree against Belvākar I have rejected him with full confidence, with somewhat less confidence where he is contradicted by the unanimous testimony of the commentators. Where a clearly superior reading was offered by one or several (though not all) of the commentators, especially Nārāyaṇa, I have tended to consider it seriously if more hesitantly, since here one’s subjective view can most mislead.

Although there are commentaries on ‘Mālati and Mādhava’ from as early as the twelfth century, the oldest one available on ‘Rama’s Last Act,’ that of the Kerala scholar Nārāyaṇa, dates only from the early seventeenth. It must be counted among the more careful and perceptive ever produced for a Sanskrit play. Nārāyaṇa’s text is very frequently corroborated by the eighteenth-century Andhra scholiast Vīrarāghava; the two together may be taken to represent a southern tradition. Inferior both textually and critically is the work of Ghanaśyāma of Maratha Tanjavur, arguably at once the most arrogant and ignorant of Sanskrit commentators (fl. 1725; he was earlier than and known to Vīrarāghava). I have already referred to the less reliable text of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa (also known as Nārāyaṇa Dīkṣita), son of a minor grammarian named Ranganātha Dīkṣita and resident in Varanasi in the first half of the seventeenth century; this, along with the Newari manuscript, may be taken to represent a northern tradition. All this material merits far
more systematic sifting than could be attempted here. Unless Belvalkar’s apparatus somehow turns up, the study of the manuscript history of ‘Rama’s Last Act’ can scarcely be said to have begun. An analysis of its textual dynamics, especially in comparison with those of the two other plays, is a real desideratum.

Variation in the Sanskrit text is on the whole a matter of the occasional reading. There are no serious additions or omissions let alone evidence of revisions major enough to make a case for an authorial second edition, as scholars believe occurred for ‘Málati and Mádhava,’ to say nothing of regional recensions, as are present for ‘Shakuntala.’ Yet these variants are often consequential and in their totality they affect our interpretation of the play in many subtle ways, as the notes to the edition and annotations show. The Prakrit text, as usual, has been rather less reliably transmitted. Again, short of reediting the entire play, I have generally followed Belvalkar, silently correcting obvious errors (though keeping his multiple spellings of the same word) and rejecting his readings only when the commentators, in particular Nṛāyaṇa, offered something that seemed patently preferable.

The text offered is not intended as a variorum let alone a critical edition. The variant readings printed as endnotes record only where I have departed from Belvalkar’s text, providing the evidence in support of my choice as well as the evidence available to me that supports Belvalkar. The annotations have also been kept brief, in accordance with Clay Sanskrit Library style. They are intended to explain the reasons for the translation adopted and to weigh select
alternatives, and do not discuss all the commentators’ interpretations. I have assumed that scholars who seek more information will have access to the two most important annotated editions, those of Kane and Stchoupak, and, accordingly, I have refrained from repeating the information they have already provided.
A number of verses ascribed to him in anthologies cannot be traced in these works, but it is doubtful they are authentic or indicate that texts were lost.

The so-called Bhasa plays (the Pratimānātaka and the Abhijekanātaka are based on the Rāmāyuṇa) are far later than scholars once thought. One other early Rama play, the Kandamālā of Dhiranāga, is almost certainly dependent on Bhava-bhuti (Mirdashī 1974: 292–305). Intriguingly, the Rāmābhīṣyadaya (available only in fragments) is attributed to Yasho-varman, and may have been written as a response to Bhava-bhuti’s work (see Introduction, note 19).

Subhāṣitaratnakāla 1698 (I thank Gary Tubb for the idea of parody here); 1733. On the canonizing function of the literary encomium see Pollock 2003: 76–80.

A similar interest in the poet’s emotional range I now find in Belvarkar (1915: xxxviii–xxxix).

Pollock 1993.

Harṣē seems to have been the first to compare the two plays (1938: 63–66), though his perspective is entirely different from mine. Other works of Kali-dasa are alluded to in the play, including Vikramorvaśīya (in Act 3) and Meghadūta (see endnote to i.136[33])

Kane 1986.

This structural element seems to have first been perceived by Walter Ruben (1956); see also Pollock 2004 and Vasudeva 2006: 22–23. A larger argument, based on the widespread independent discovery of this compositional technique, is offered in Douglas 2007.
For quite different reflections on the theme see Jaspert-Pansu 1997.

An innovation of Bhava-bhuti’s; in the ‘Ramáyana,’ she explicitly rejects suicide so as not to kill the heirs to Rama’s throne (Stchoupak 1935: 48 n.).

A variation on this theme is offered in Act 3: Here Sita, audience-like because made invisible by the Ganga and therefore outside the main action of the scene, learns at last the true depth of Rama’s love for her.

Just this sort of metaliterary trope can be found even in folk literature, see Ramanujan 1991.

For many later Indian thinkers karuna is possible only if the beloved is actually dead; if he or she is merely absent, the mood is the erotic-in-separation. In addition to that problem, “pity” is an inadequate translation, since karuna does not only or even primarily concern outward-directed sadness but rather sadness for oneself. In the case of Rama this comes in part from having lost the sons that are required to help him repay the debt to his ancestors (6.28 [8]).

So that readers can register this fact, and also because of the inadequacy of any English term, the word rasa is left untranslated throughout.

This verse, Act 5.79 [26], and the previous, Act 3.238 [48], at the same time constitute examples of antiphony.


Two useful collections of essays are Richman 1991 and 2000.

I regard as untenable the view that either the Pali or the ‘Maha-bhárata’ version preceeds Vālmiki.

The ninth-century theorist Anánda-várdhana authorizes poets to revise historical accounts in the interests of rasa (see Pollock 57)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

2003: 58). Curiously, Bhava-bhuti’s patron Yasho-varman may have been one of the few who opposed the practice of radical revision, demanding kathāmārgē na cātikramaḥ, “close adherence to the [received] storyline” (see RAGHAVAN 1961: 7).

RAGHAVAN 1961: 10–11.

RAGHAVAMITA 14.

Kshemendra, Aucityavīrācarcā p. 10. Kshemendra’s statement that “the dominant rasa of the whole work” is the heroic, rather than the piteous, as Bhava-bhuti himself affirms, is a jaw-dropping blunder. Or did he misremember the verse as belonging to ‘Acts of the Great Hero’?

See endnote to 7.19.

BELVALKAR 1921: iii–iv.

GRIMAL 1999.

A pupil of the celebrated philosopher-poet Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa Bhāṭṭari he also wrote commentaries on the works of Kāli-dāsa (though largely by paraphrasing the earlier commentator Aruṇa-girinātha). A commentary attributed to the learned Rāmacandra Budhendra (which is unavailable to me) cannot have been written by him, since not a single manuscript of the work bearing his name is known to exist (see also KANE 1971: 43).


58
introduction

Abbreviations

B = the NSP edition of Belvalkar
Bh = Bhavabhuti
BN = commentary of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa [IO 4137 = BL shelfmark
IO San 160b Ox. ms Wilson 165c]
C = commentators
G = commentary of Ghanaśyāma
H = commentary of Harihara on MM
Index = Index des mots de l’œuvre de Bhavabhūti, ed. Grimal
K = edition and notes of Kane
MM = Mahāvīravacara
N = commentary of Nārāyaṇa
Ne = The Newari ms of 1196 CE [National Archives, Kathmandu,
1–344, Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project reel-number
B 15/4]
R = Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki (crit. ed.)
S = edition and translation of Stchoupak
V = commentary of Vīrarāghava
v. = verse
v.l. = varia lectio
a, b, c, d = first, second, third, fourth pāda respectively

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uttararamacaritaR 59 (60, 0)
RAMA’S LAST ACT


**Primary Works**


**Secondary Works**


INTRODUCTION


RAMA'S LAST ACT

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Characters marked with "corner brackets" speak Prakrit.

SŪTRADHĀRA: Director

Naṭa: Actor

Rāma: Rama (king of Ayódhya)

*Sītā: Sītā (wife of Rāma)

Kāncuki: Chamberlain

Aṣṭāvakara: Ashta-vakra (a sage)

Lakṣmaṇa: Lákshman (Rāma’s younger brother)

Pratiḥārī: Female doorkeeper

Durmukha: Durmukha (a harem attendant)

Ātreya: Atri (a female ascetic)

Vasánti: Vasánti (forest spirit)

Śambhu: Shambhūkā (a Shudra ascetic)

Murala: Mūrala (a river spirit)

Tamas: Tāmasa (a river spirit)

Saundhātaka: Saundhātaka (a student)

Bhāṇḍāvana: Bhāṇḍāvana (a student)

Janaka: Jānaka (father of Sītā)

Abundhati: Abūndhati (wife of the sage Vasīṣṭha)

Geṣṭi: Chamberlain to Vālmīki

Kausalyā: Kausālya (mother of Rāma)

Lava: Lava (Rāma’s son)

Bātavai: Students

Puruṣa: An officer

Candrapetu: Chandrapetu (Rāma’s nephew)

Sumantra: Sumāntra (Chandrapetu’s charioteer)

Vidyādha: Vidyādhara man

Vidyādharī: Vidyādhara woman

Kūśa: Kusha (Rāma’s son)

Vālmīki: Vālmīki (author of the Ramāyana)

In the play within the play:

Sūtradhāra: Director

Pṛthivī: Earth

Bhāgirathī: Bhagirathī (the Ganga River)
PROLOGUE
I

DAṂ KAVIBHYĀḥ pūrvebhyo
namo|vākaṁ praśāsmahe.
vandemahi ca tāṁ vācam
amṛtām ātmanāḥ kalāṁ. [1]

nāndyānte

SŪTRA|DHĀRAḤ: alam ativistareṇa. adya khalu bhagavataḥ
Kāla|priya|nāṭhasya yātrāyam ārya|mīśrān vijñāpayāmi.
evam atra|bhavanto vidāṁ kurvantu. asti tatra|bhavān
Kāśyapaḥ Śrīkaṇṭhalpadalāñchano Bhavabhūtīr nāma.

yaṁ brahmaṇam iyaṁ devī
Vāg vaśy “ēv’ ānvavartata
Uttaraṃ Rāma|caritam
tat|pranātāṁ prayokṣyate. [2]

1.5 eṣo ’smi kavi|vaśād Āyodhyakas tadāṁintanāḥ ca saṃvṛttāḥ.
(samanta|d avalokya) bho bhoḥ? yaddā tāvad atra|bhavataḥ
Paulastya|kula|dhūma|ketor mahā|rāja|Rāmasy’ āyam
abhīśeka|samayo rātri|divam a|saṃhṛṭ’|ānanda|nāndikas, tat kim adya viśrānta|cāraṇāni catvarā|sthānāni?

1 A town south of Kanauj; the Lord is probably the Sun god.  ii Śiva.
iii Family name of the demon king Rāvaṇa.
This we offer with an expression of homage* to the poets of old. Let us also pay reverence to language, a deathless thing, a part of the soul.

At the end of the benediction

DIRECTOR: Without further ado, I must now make an announcement to this discerning audience at the festival of the Blessed Lord of Kala-priya. My good sirs have no doubt heard of a man named Bhava-bhuti, who belongs to the Káshyapa family and bears the epithet* Shri-kantha.ii

Goddess Language has always complied with this Brahman as obediently as she does Brahma,* and it was he who composed ‘Rama’s Last Act,’ the play we will perform for you today.

Here I myself, in obedience to the poet,* now transform myself into a sojourner in Ayódhya* of that day and age. (glancing all around) Hello, anyone there? I wonder why the musicians are no longer performing in the court-yards when for days and nights on end the joyful music never stopped for the coronation ceremony of the great king, the honorable Rama, that firestorm to the clan of Paulástyae.iii
RAMA'S LAST ACT

NAṬAḤ: (praviśya) bhāva, preṣitā hi te sva|ghān mahā|rā-
          jena Laṅkā|samara|suḥṛdo mah’|ātmānaḥ plavaṅga|rā-
          kṣaśāḥ sabhājan’|ōpaṭhaḥinaś ca nāṇā|diq|antā|pāvanā 
          brahma’|ṛṣayo deva’|ṛṣayaś ca, yad|ārādhanāy’ āitāvato 
          divasān utsava āsīt. samprati hi
  Vasiśṭh’|ādiśhiti devyo 
          gata Rāmasya mātaraḥ
  Arundhatiṁ puraṣkṛtya
          yaśe jāmātur āśrayam. [3]

SŪTRA|DHĀRAḤ: vaiḍeśiko ’smī ti pṛcchāmi. kāḥ punar jā-
          mātā?

NAṬAḤ:

kanyāṁ Daśaratho rājā
          Śāntāṁ nāma vyajījanat
          apatyākṛtiṁ rājīne
          Lomapādāya yāṁ dadau. [4]

1.10 Vibhāṇḍaka|sutas tām Rṣyaśṅga upayeme. tena dvādaśa| 
          vārṣikaṁ satram ārabdham. tad|anurodhā kathora|gar-
          bhām api vadhūṁ Jānakīṁ vimucya guruljanas tatra ga-
          taḥ.

SŪTRA|DHĀRAḤ: tat kim anena? ehi. rāja|dvāram eva svaḷja-
          tiṣamayen’ ōpatiśthāvah.

---

i Wife of Vasiśṭha, family priest of Rāma’s clan. ii The sacrifice will thus span the time frame of the play’s narrative. iii Sītā.
PROLOGUE

Enter an actor: My friend, the great allies at the battle of Lanka, the monkeys and rākshasas,* have been sent home by the king. The same goes for the Brahmans and deities* who came to pay him their respects, purifying* every region through which they passed. It was to honor these guests that the festival had been going on for so many days. For now*

The queen mothers of Rama have gone off—watched over by Vasīśtha and following Arúndhati—for a ritual at their son-in-law’s ashram.

Director: Say—I ask because I’m not native to these parts—who is this son-in-law?

Actor:

King Dasha-ratha fathered a girl named Shanta and bestowed her on King Loma-pada as an adoptive daughter.

She was married to Rishya-shringa, Vibhándaka’s son, and he’s the one who has just initiated this twelve-year-long sacrifice.ii Out of deference to him the elders have gone on a visit, leaving behind their daughter-in-law Jánaki,iii though she is far advanced in pregnancy.

Director: No matter, come along, we should pay court at the palace gate in accordance with our caste duty.

uttaramacaritaR 67 (68, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

Nāṭaḥ: tena hi nirūpayatu rājāḥ su|pariśuddham upas-thāna|stotra|paddhatim bhāvah.

Sūtra|Dhāraḥ: māriṣa,

sarvathā vyavahartavyam.
      kuto hy a|vacanīyatā?
      yathā striṇāṁ tathā vācāṁ
      sādhu|ve dur|jano janaḥ. [5]

1.15 Nāṭaḥ: ati|dur|jana iti vaktavyam,

      devyām api hi Vaidehyāṁ
      s|āpavādo yato janaḥ:
      rakṣolgha|jṣh|titir mūlam,
      agni|śuddhau tv a|niścayah. [6]

Sūtra|Dhāraḥ: ya|di punar iyam kiṁ|vadanti mahā|rājaṁ
      prati syandet, tataḥ kaṣṭaṁ syāt.

Nāṭaḥ: sarvathā” rṣayo devatāś ca śreya vidhāsyanti. (pari-
kramya) bho bhoḥ? kv’ ēdāniṁ mahā|rājaḥ? (ākarka|ya)
      evaṁ janaḥ kathayanti:

\[1\] Sītā.

68
PROLOGUE

actor: Well then, my friend had better come up with a courtly panegyric whose style* is utterly flawless.

director: My dear fellow,

It is our duty to act no matter what.* There is no escaping criticism. However pure the words—or the woman—there are always people who’ll be malicious.

actor: Worse than malicious, you should have said,

Since the people are reproaching Vaidéhi,¹ the queen herself. The reason? The fact that she lived in the rākṣasa’s house and their doubts about the fire ordeal.*

director: It would be awful if this gossip were ever to reach the king.

actor: At all events the seers and deities will see to their welfare. (walks around) Hello, anyone there? Where is the king at present? (listening) The people are saying...
RAMA’S LAST ACT

snehāt sabhājayitum etya dināny amūni
nītv’ōtsavena Janako ‘dyā gato Vīdehān.
devyās tato vimanasaḥ parisāntvanāya
dharm’ōsanād viśāti vāsalghaṃ nar’ēndraḥ. [7]

1.20

nīkrāntau.

Prastāvānā

\[\text{i Father of Śiṭā.}\]

70
PROLOGUE

Jánaka came to pay his respects out of deep affection, passed some days in celebration, and now has returned to Vidéha. The queen is therefore distraught, and to console her the king has left the throne of dharma and gone back to his dwelling.

Exeunt both.

End of the Prologue
ACT I
AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION
tataḥ praviṣayte upaviśto Rāmaḥ, sītā ca.

Rāmaḥ: devī Vaidhei, saṃśvasiḥi saṃśvasihi. te hi guravo na śaknuvantā asmān vimoktum.

kin tv anuṣṭhānāṇityatvaḥ
svātantryam apakāraṣṭi.
saṅkaṭā hy āhitāṅgīnāṁ
pratyaśāvair gṛhaṁstātā. [8]

1.25 sītā: tāṇāmi, ajjalutta, tāṇāmi. kin du sandāvaśāriṇo bandhulaṇalvippaṇā hontiṣa

Rāmaḥ: evam etat. ete hi hṛdayaṁmarmaḥcchidāḥ saṃsāraḥ
bhāgā yebhyo bilbhatramsānāḥ saṃtaiya sa rvān kāmān
aranye viśramyanti maniśīnāḥ.

kaṇcuki: (praviṣya) Rāmaḥbhadra… (ardhbhokte sāśāṅkam)
mahaṁrāja…

Rāmaḥ: (saṁsmitam) ārṣya, nanu «Rāmaḥbhadra ity» eva māṁ
pratyaṇceraḥ śobhate tataḥparijanasya. tad yathāyābh-
yāsām ucyaṭāṁ.

kaṇcuki: Rṣyasṛṅgāśramād Aṣṭāvakraḥ samprāptaḥ.

1.30 sītā: tāja, tado kiṁ vilambiādiṣa

Rāmaḥ: tvaritaṁ praveṣaya.

kaṇcuki nīkṇāntaḥ.

74

uttararamacarita 74 (74, 0)
The scene opens on Rama, seated, and Sita.

Rama: Queen Vaidéhi, please don’t be upset. It wasn’t easy for our elders to leave us.

But the constant press of observances restricts one’s freedom.
For the religious, domestic life is fraught with obstacles.*

Sita: I know, my husband, I know. It’s just that parting from loved ones is a source of such sadness.

Rama: It’s true. These are the things of life that tear at the heart’s soft core and make sensitive people feel such revulsion* they’re ready to give up all objects of desire and seek peace in the wilderness.

Enter the chamberlain: Dear Rama… (breaks off, then anxiously) Your Majesty…

Rama: Good man, come now, the salutation “dear Rama” for me is entirely appropriate from someone of my father’s retinue. So speak to me as was your habit of old.

Chamberlain: Ashta-vakra has arrived from Rishya-shringa’s ashram.

Sita: Good man, why then the delay? 1.30

Rama: Show him in at once.

Exit chamberlain.

75
RAMA’S LAST ACT

AŚṬĀVAKRAH: (pratiṣṭya) svasti vām.

RĀMAH: bhagavann, abhivādaye. ita āsyatām.

1.35 SĪTĀ: rāmaḥ de. avi kusalaṁ me samaggassa guru|anassa, ajjā a Santā?

RĀMAH: nirvighnaḥ somalpītī āvutto me bhagavān Rśyaśr-ṅgah, āryā ca Santā?

SĪTĀ: rāmaḥ amhe vā sumaradi?

AŚṬĀVAKRAH: (upatiṣṭya) atha kim? devi, bhagavān Vasiṣṭhas tvām āha:

“Viśvambharaḥ bhagavatī bhavatīm asūta.
rāja Prajāpatiṣamo Janakaḥ pitā te.
teśam vadhūs tvam asi, nandini, pārthivānāṁ
yesāṁ grheṣu Savitā ca guru vayaṁ ca. [9]

1.40 tat kim anyad āśāmahe? kevalaṁ viṣṭalprasavā bhūyāḥ. »

RĀMAH: anugṛhitāḥ smaḥ.

laukikānāṁ hi sādhūnāṁ
arthaṁ vāg anuvartate.
ṛṣīnāṁ punar ādyānāṁ
vācaṁ artho ‘nudhāvati. [10]

1 A beverage consumed in a solemn Vedic rite.  ii The sun was considered the primal ancestor of Rāma’s lineage.
Enter Ashta-vakra: My blessings on you both.

Rama: Greetings, blessed one. Please be seated.

Sita: Homage to you. Is all well with my elders and my sister-in-law Shanta?

Rama: Is my brother-in-law Rishya-shringa, a man who has drunk soma, prospering as well as my sister Shanta?

Sita: Has she remembered herself to us?

Ashta-vakra: (taking his seat) To be sure. Queen, Vasishtha has this to say to you:

“It was the blessed Earth herself, the All-supporting, who gave you birth, your father is King Jánaka, peer of the cosmic demiurge, and you are the daughter-in-law, my child, of a family of kings who have two gurus in their home: ourselves and the very Sun. What else, then, could we wish for you aside from giving birth to heroes?”

Rama: We are deeply gratified.

In everyday life a good man’s words correspond with facts. But in the case of a primal seer the facts conform with his words.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

AŚṬĀVAKRAH: idaṁ bhagavaty” Ārundhatyā, devibhiḥ, Śan-
tayā ca bhūyo bhūyaḥ sandiṣṭam: “yaḥ kaś cid garbha|
dohado ’yā bhavati so ’vāyam a’cirān mānayitavyaḥ.”

RĀMAH: kriyate yad eṣā kathayati.

1.45 AŚṬĀVAKRAH: nanandr̥ paryā ca devyāḥ sandiṣṭam Ṛṣya-
śṛṅgeṇa: “vatse, kāṭhorna|garbha” eti n’ ānīt” āsi. vatsō ’pi
Rāma|bhadr̥s tvad|vinod’|ārtham eva sthāpitaḥ. tatra
utra|pūṛ̣ṇ |ōtsaṅgām āyuṣmatiṁ drakṣyāmaḥ.”

RĀMAH: (saḥṣa|lajjālajīṣmitam) tath” āstu. bhagavatā punar
Vasiṣṭhenā na kīṁ cid aḍiṣṭō ’śmi?

AŚṬĀVAKRAH: śṛṣyātām:

«jāmātriyajñena vayaṁ niruddhās.
 tvam bāla ev’ āsi, navaṁ ca rājyam.
yuktaḥ praJaṇām anuraṅjane syās.
 svasmād yaśo yat paramaṁ dhanaṁ vaḥ.” [11]
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

ASHTA-VAKRA: Arúndhati, the queens, and Shanta were insistent on directing you as follows: “Whatever cravings Sita may have in her pregnancy are to be satisfied without hesitation.”

RAMA: We will do whatever she asks.

ASHTA-VAKRA: Rishya-shringa, the husband of her sister-in-law, directed the queen as follows: “Child, you were not asked to come because your pregnancy is so far advanced.* Dear Rama, our son, was charged with the sole task of providing you some diversion. We hope to see you soon, flourishing, with a son filling your embrace.”

RAMA: (smiling with joy and embarrassment) So be it. Has Vasishtha sent me no message?

ASHTA-VAKRA: Listen:

“We have been detained at the sacrifice of your brother-in-law. You are but a child and your kingship has just begun. Dedicate yourself to the conciliation of your subjects since reputation is a treasure more precious than life itself.”*
RAMA'S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: yath’ āha bhagavān Maitrāvaruṇīḥ:

1.50 snehāṁ dayāṁ ca sauḫyaṁ ca
 yādi vā Jānakin api
 ārādhanāya lokasya
 muñcato n’ āsti me vyathā. [12]

SĪTĀ: ṛdo jjevva Rāhavajdhurandhoro ajjaṭutro,

RĀMAH: kaḥ ko ’tra bhoḥ? viśrāmyatām Aṣṭāvakraḥ.

AṢṬĀVAKRAH: (uṭṭhāya, parikramya) aye, kumāra Lakhṣma-

niḥ prāptaḥ. (niśkrāntah)

LAKŚMAṆAṆAṆA: (pravṛtiya) javayāryaḥ. ārya, tena citraṅkaṛṇ’
 āśmad | upadīṣṭam asyāṁ vāhikāyām āryasya caritaṁ
 abhilikhitaṁ. tat paśyataṁ ārya.

1.55 RĀMAH: jānāśi, vatsa, durmanāyamānāṁ devīṁ vinodayi-
tum. tat kiyantam avadhīṁ yāvat?

LAKŚMAṆAṆAṆA: yāvad āryāyaḥ hūt’āśane viśuddhiḥ.

RĀMAH: śāntam.

utpattilparipūtāyāḥ
 kim asyāḥ pāvan’jāntaraiḥ?
 tīrth’ōdakaṁ ca vahniś ca
 n’ ānyataḥ suddhimaḥ arhataiḥ. [13]

1Vasiṣṭha.

80
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

RAMA: It will be as Maitra-váruní says.

Affection, compassion, pleasure… indeed, Jánaki herself
I wouldn’t scruple to renounce to propitiate the people.*

SITÁ: That is why my husband is the mainstay of the Rághava dynasty.

RAMA: Hello, anyone there? Have Ashta-vakra take his rest.

ASHTA-VAKRA: (stands and walks around) Ah, Prince Lákshmana has arrived. (exit)*

Enter LÁKSHMANA: Long live my brother. The painter has completed his depiction of your life story in the picture gallery, just as we recounted it to him.* Sister-in-law is invited to view it.

RAMA: Dear brother, you’re good at finding ways to divert our dejected queen. How far does the story go?

LÁKSHMANA: Up to sister-in-law’s purification by fire.

RAMA: Silence!

What need had she of absolution who was wholly absolved at birth?
Neither holy water nor fire requires cleansing from some secondary source.

81
RAMA’S LAST ACT

devi deva|yajana|sambhave, prasīda. eṣa te jīvīṭ|āvadhiḥ pranāmaḥ.

1.60 kaṣṭo janaḥ kula|dhanair anuraṅjanīyas.
tan me yad uktam aśīvaṃ na hi tat kṣamaṃ te.
naisargiki surabhiṅaḥ kusumasya siddhā mūṛdhīni sthitir na caraṇair avatādītāni. [14]

sītā: ṃbhodu, ajja|utta, bhodu. ehi pekkhamha dāva de cari-
damya

utthāya parikrāmati.

lakṣmaṇah: idaṃ tad śeke śhityām.

sītā: (nirvarṇya) ke dāṇ[iʃ] ede uvari niharantara|ṭhitā dāva uva-
thuṇānti via ajja|uttaṃ2a

1.65 lakṣmaṇah: etāni tāṇi sa|rahasya|ṛṣibhak’|āstraṇī yāni bhagavataḥ Kṛṣṇa Kauśikam rṣiṃ viśvasya mitraṃ Vi-
śvāmitram upasaṅkrāntāni. tena ca Taṭakāvadhe prasā-
dīkṛṣṭāny āryasya.

rāmaḥ: vandasva, devi, divy’āstraṇī.

1=Soporific “Yawn-maker.” ii An ancient sage. iii A female
demon who had been disrupting Viśvāmitra’s ritual practices.

82
Dear queen, you who were born at a sacred rite, I beg your forgiveness. This deference I pay to you I will pay for the rest of my life.*

Those for whom true wealth is family honor must conciliate their critics.
The ungodly thing I thus was forced to ask should never have been asked of you.
As everyone knows the most natural place to display a rare and fragrant flower is on the very crown of the head, not lying trampled underfoot.*

stíṣṭa: Let it be, my husband, let it be. Come, let’s just have a look at your life story.

*He stands up and walks around.*

lá́kṣhmána: The murals are over here.

stíṣṭa: (gazing) Who are the beings in this episode crowding together overhead and appearing to sing my husband’s praises?

lá́kṣhmána: Those are the magic Jrímbhaka weapons with their secret invocations. Krisháśvä bestowed them upon the seer, Káushika Vishva-mitra, “friend to all the world,”* and he gifted them to brother upon his killing Táṭaka.%

ráma: Queen, do obeisance to the divine weapons.

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uttarárama-carita 83 (84, 0)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

Brahm’ādayo brahmaḥhitāya taptvā
dehasahasraḥ śaradas tapāṃsi
etāny apaśyan guravaḥ purāṇāḥ
svāny eva tejāṃsi tapayāṇā. [15]

sītā: "nāmo edānāṁ,

rāmaḥ:  sarvath” ēdānīṁ tvatḥprasūtim upasthāyanti.

1.70 sītā: "āṅugahida mhi,

lakṣmaṇaḥ: eṣa Mithilāvṛttāntaḥ.

sītā: "āmhahe. dalantaḥ navaḥ-nil’|uppalaḥ|sāmalaḥ|siṃiddhaḥ|
masiṅaḥ|maṃsa-leṇa dehaḥohaggeṇa vimhaḥ|thimidaḥ|tādaḥ|
disantaḥ|sommaḥ|sundaraḥ|siriḥ|ādaraḥ|kkhuḥ|Saṅkaraḥ|
ṣaṇḍāḥ|aśaṇḍāḥ|muddhaḥ|maṇḍano ajjaḥ|utto álīhido,

lakṣmaṇaḥ: ārye, paśya paśya:

sambandhino Vasiṣṭhaḥ|ādīṁ
eṣa tātatas tav’ ārcati,
Gautamaḥ ca Śatānando
Janakānāṁ purolīhitāḥ. [16]

1Śiva.  ii The reference is to the tonsure worn by boys.

84
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

Brahma and the other gods, for the good of the Vedic way of life, undertook ascetic acts for a thousand years and more, and what those ancient gurus then were able to behold were these very weapons, their own ascetic energies.

sita: Homage to them.

rama: From now on without fail they will serve your offspring.

sita: I am honored.

lákshmána: Here is the Míthila episode.

sita: Ah, there my husband is depicted. He has just broken the bow of Shánkara¹ with utter nonchalance,* and my father is staring at the gentle splendor of his appearance, almost speechless with astonishment at his physical beauty, smooth and soft and strapping and dark as a blossoming blue lotus, with the simple ornamentation of his single forelock.ii

lákshmána: Have a look at this:

Here your father pays his respects to his new relations, Vásíshtha and the others,* and so does Shatánanda Gáutama, the family priest of all the Jánaka kings.

[*] nonchalance
[ii] single forelock
RAMA’S LAST ACT

1.75 RĀMAH: draṣṭavayam etat.

Janakānāṃ Raghūṇāṃ ca
sambandhaḥ kasya na priyah,
yatra dātā grahiṭā ca
svayaṃ Kuśika[nandanaḥ]? [17]

sītā: ‘ede kkhu tak[kāla]kida|go|dāṇa|maṅgalā cattāro vi
bhādaro vivāha|dikkhidā tumhe. ammo, jānāmi tassim
jevva padese tassim jevva kāle vattāmi,

RĀMAH:

samayāḥ sa vartata iv’ āiṣa yatra māṁ
samanandayat, sūtmukhi, Gautam’|ārpitaḥ
ayam āgrhīta|kamaniya|kaṅkanas
tava mūrtimān iva mah’|ōtsavaḥ karaḥ. [18]

LAKŚMANAHAH: iyam āryā, iyam apy āryā Maṇḍavi, iyam api
vadhūḥ Śrutakīrtiḥ.

1.80 sītā: ‘Vaccha, iāṁ vi avarā kā?

LAKŚMANAHAH: (sa|lajjaj|smitam, apavārya) aye, Ürmilām pṛ-
cchaty āryā. bhavatu. anyataḥ saṅcārayāmi. (prakāśaṁ)
ārye, drśyatāṁ, draṣṭavayam etat. ayaṁ ca bhagavān Bhār-
gavaḥ.

sītā: ‘kampida mhi,

1 Viśvāmitra. In most genealogies he is the son of Gāḍhi and great-
grandson of one Kuśa.  ii The wives of Bharata and Śatrughna, respec-
tively. iii Lākṣmaṇa’s wife. iv The Brahman ascetic Paraśurāma.
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

RAMA: This is something worth seeing.

Who would not welcome the bond between the
Raghus and the Jánakas,
where the son of Kúshika was both giver and receiver?*

SITA: Here are the four brothers, after presenting the ceremo-
nial gift of a cow required on the occasion. And here
you all are consecrated for the wedding. Why, I almost
feel as if I were now there and this was then.

RAMA:

It is almost as if it were now the very moment,
my lovely wife, when Gáutama delighted me
in extending—like the rite itself in physical form—
this hand of yours aglitter with the marriage
bracelet.*

LÁKSHMANA: Here you are, and here is our other sister-in-
law Mándavi, as well as our daughter-in-law* Shruta-
kirtí.ii

SITA: And who, dear boy, is this other girl?

LÁKSHMANA: (smiling with embarrassment; aside*) Oh, my
sister-in-law must be asking about Úrmila.iii Well, I’ll
turn their attention elsewhere. (aloud) Oh look, this is
worth seeing. It’s Bhárgava.iv

SITA: I shudder to look.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: ṛṣe, namas te.

LAKŚMANAH: ārye, paśya paśya. ayam asāv āryeṇa...

1.85 RĀMAH: (ś/ākeśpam) ay, bahutaraṁ draṣṭavyam. anyato darśaya.

SĪTĀ: (saṁśeṇah/bahumāṇam nrīvarṇya) suṣṭhu sohasi, ajja| utta, edinā vinā|māhappenā
g

LAKŚMANAH: ete vayam Ayodhyāṁ prāptāḥ.

RĀMAH: (i/āram) smarāmi, hanta, smarāmi.

jīvatsu tātalpādeṣu
nūtane dāra|saṅgrehe
māṭṛbhīś cintyamāṇānāṁ...
te hi no divas gatāḥ. [19]

1.90 iyam api tadā Jānaki

patana/virulaiḥ prāṇṭ/ōṁmilan
manohara|kuḍmalair
daśāna|kusumair mugdh|ālokaṁ
śīṣur dadhati mukham
lalita|lalitair jyotsnā|prāya|vār
akṛtrima|vibhramair
akṛta madhurair aṅgānāṁ me
kutūhalam aṅgakahī. [20]

LAKŚMANAH: eṣā Mantharā...

RĀMAH: (an/uttaram anyato gatvā) devi Vaidēhi,

88

uttararamacaritaR 88 (88, 0)
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

rama: Seer, homage to you.

lákshmanā: Look, here my brother’s about to...

rama: (testily*) Come now, there’s so much more worth seeing. Show us something else.

sītā: (gazing with affection and admiration) How well this noble modesty becomes you, my husband.

lákshmanā: This is us returning to Ayódhya.

rama: (tearfully) I remember, alas, how well I remember.

   The days when father was alive,
   and married life was new,
   and our mothers worried over us...
   days now gone forever.

And here is Jánaki at the time,

   A child with a face lit up with innocence,
   a few flowerlike teeth—
   her baby ones had fallen out—emerging
   in front, budding beautifully,
   and with her tender little limbs ever so graceful,
   sheer moonlight, with charms
   taught by nature, exciting the curiosity
   of these limbs* of mine.

lákshmanā: Here is Mánthara…

rama: (without answering moving elsewhere) Queen Vaidéhi,
RAMA’S LAST ACT

śrṅgaverapure purā
Niṣādalpatinā yatra
snigdhēn’ āsit samāgamaḥ. [21]

1.95 LAKŚMAṆAJH: (vīhaya, svaḷgatam) aye, madhyam’āṃbāvṛ-  
ttam antaritām āryeṇa.

SĪṬĀ: “ammo, eso jaḍājaṅjamaṇaḥvuttanto,ḥ

LAKŚMAṆAJH:

putraṣaṅkrāntaḷakṣmikair
yad vṛddhāikṣvākubhir dhṛtam
dhṛtāṃ bāye tad āryeṇa
puṇyam ārāṇyakaṃ vratam. [22]

SĪṬĀ: “esā pāṣaṇḍapuṇṇaḥsalilā bhaavadi Bhāīradhī,ḥ

RĀMAH: devi, Raghukula-devate, nāmas te.

1.100 turagaḥvyacayajvyagrāṇ urvībhiddhaḥ Sagar’āḥdhvare
Kapilaḥmahas” āṃsrāt puṣṭān pītus ca pitāmahān
algaṇitaṭāṃṭāṃ taptvā tapāṃsi Bhagiratho
bhagavati tava spṛṣṭān adbhiś cirād utaditarat. [23]

sa tvam, amba, sruṣāyām Arundhat” iva Sitāyaṃ śiv’ānu-  
dhyānā bhava.

1 The Gaṅgā, literally “descendent of Bhagiratha.”

90

uttaramacaritaR 90 (90, 0)
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

Here is the īngudi tree in Shringavēra-pura, where long ago we met with our dear friend, the overlord of the Nishādas.

LĀKSHMANA: (laughing; aside) Ah, so brother is trying to skip over the episode with our middle mother!*

SĪTA: Why, here is the episode of tying up the ascetic’s hair you were forced to wear.

LĀKSHMANA:

The vow Ikshvākus of old observed once power was passed on to their sons brother observed in childhood—the holy vow of wilderness life.

SĪTA: Here is Bhagi-rathi with her clear holy water.

RĀMA: Goddess, deity of the Raghu clan, homage to you.

Singlemindedly they sought the horse at Sāgara’s rite, boring through the earth until burnt to ash by mighty Kāpila in a rage, long ago, those great grandfathers of Bhagi-ratha. It was his fierce acts of asceticism, without the least regard for his body, that saved his ancestors at last—when your waters touched them, blessed one.*

Mother, I beg you to be as kindly disposed to your daughter-in-law Sīta as Arūndhati is.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

LAKŚMAṆAṆI: ayam asau Bharadvāja' āvedita|Cittrakūṭa|āyī- 
ni vartmani vanas|patih |Kālindī|tā|va|Śyāmo nāma.

SĪTĀ: ‘sumaradi edaṁ padesaṁ ajjā|uto?

RĀMAH: ayi, kathaṁ vismāryate?

1.105 alasa|lulita|mugdhāṇy adhva|sāmpāta|khedād  
     a|śīthila|parirambhār datta|sāṁvāhanāni  
     parimṛditā|mṛṇāli|durbālany aṅgakāni  
     tvam urasi mama kṛtvā yatra nidrām avāptā. [24]

LAKŚMAṆAṆI: ēsa Vindhyāṭavā|mukhe Virādéha|sāṁrodhaṁ.

SĪTĀ: ‘alaṁ dāṇiṁ dāvā edinā. pekkhāmi dāva ajjau|utta|sa| 
hatta|dharidā|tālā|vattā|vāṇa|ama|attano akkhiḥim  
dakkhīṁ|āraṇa|ppavesaṁ,

RĀMAH:

etāni tāni giri|nirjhariṇī|taṭesu  
     vaikhānas|āśrīṭa|taṇūni tapojvanāni  
     yeṣvāt itheyaj paramāḥ śāmin bhajante  
     nivāra|muśṭilpacanā grhiṇo grhaṇī. [25]

1 A nākṣatara who tried to abduct Sita and was slain by Rama.

92
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

LÁKSHMANA: Here is Shyama, that “Black” banyan tree on the bank of the Kálindi along the road leading to Chitrakuta, where Bharad-vaja directed us.

SÍTA: My husband remembers this place, doesn’t he?

RAMA: Why, how could I forget?

It was there your soft limbs grew tired and sore from the hardships of traveling the road, and then you placed them, limp as trampled lotuses, in my lap and I massaged them with firm strokes, until you fell fast asleep.

LÁKSHMANA: Here is Virádha blocking the way at the entrance to the Vindhya wilderness.

SÍTA: Please, no more of that! Here I see myself entering the southern wilderness, as if it were before my very eyes, with my husband holding over me a palm leaf for a parasol.

RAMA:

These are the groves on the banks by the mountain waterfalls where hermits would perform ascetic acts beneath the trees, where householders in search of peace would make their homes, men kind to guests, while living on a handful of grain a day.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

LAKŚMAṆAH: ayam a[virala]nokaha[nivaha]nirantara[snig-
kandaraḥ satatam abhiṣyandamāna[megha]medurita[nī-
limā Janasthāna]madhya[go girih Prasravanaḥ].

RĀMAḥ:

1.110  
smarasi, suṭanu, tasmin parvate Lakṣmaṇena  
prativihita|saparyā|svasthaya tāny ahāni?  
smarasi sa|rasa|nirāṇtatra Godāvariḥ vā?  
smarasi ca tad|upāntey avayor vartanāni? [26]

api ca,

kim api kim api mandam mandam āsakti|yogād  
a[vicalita]kapolam jalpator ajkrameṇa  
aṣṭihila|parirambha|vāpyṛt śāi̇k Śāi̇kados̄nor  
a[vidita|gata]yāmā rātrir eva vyaraṃsit. [27]

LAKŚMAṆAH: eṣā Pańcavatyāṁ Śūrpaṇakhā.

śīrā: ‘hā ajjaḷutta. ettikaṁ de daṁśaṇaṁ 

94
LÁKßHMÁNA: This is Mount Prásravana in the middle of Jana-sthána. Its caves echoed with the sound of the Godávari River where it lay in the embrace of the surrounding forest, a lush black forest dense with thickets of trees, and the mountain’s own darkness thickened still more by the ever-gathering clouds.

RÁMA:

Do you remember, my lovely wife, those days upon the mountain when Lákshmana saw to our needs and we felt so much at home?

Do you remember the nearby Godávari with its fresh water,* and do you remember our many walks upon its banks?

And more,

How we would lie cheek by cheek in our deep passion talking of this and that at random ever so softly, holding each other tight in our embrace, while the hours passed unnoticed till night—and night alone—had ended.*

LÁKßHMÁNA: Here is Shurpa-nakha at Pancha-vati.

SÍTA: Oh my husband, this is the last sight I’ll have of you!

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*uttararámacaráita R 95 (96, 0)
1.115 RĀMAH: ayī viprayoga|traste. citram etat.

sītā: 'jadhā tadhā bhodu. dujjano a|suhaṁ uppañca

rāmaḥ: hanta, vartamāna iva Janasthāna|vr̥ttāntaḥ prati-

bhāti.

lākṣmaṇaḥ:

athī 'edāṁ rakṣobhiḥ
kanaka|harinā|cchadma|vidhinā
tathā vr̥ttam pāpair
vyathayati yathā kṣālitam api.
Janasthāne śūnye
vikalajkaraṇa|ārya|caritair
api grāvā rodicty
api dalati vajraya hṛdayam. [28]

sītā: (s’āram, ātma|gatam) 'āi deva Rahu|ul'|āṇa|da. ev-
vaṁ mama kāraṇādo kilanto āsi,

1.120 LĀKṢMAṆAṆH: (RĀMAṆ nirvartya, s’ākutam) ārya, kim etat?

ayaṁ te bāsp’āugas truṭita iva muktā|manī|saro
visarpān dhārābhir lagati dharaṇīṁ jarjara|kaṇaḥ
niruddho ‘py āvegō svūra|dhara|nāśā|pūṭatayā
paresāṁ unneyo bhavati ca bhar’ādhi|mātā|hṛdayaḥ.

[29]
ACT 1: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

rama: Now, now, so afraid of separation. It’s only a pain-
ing.

sīta: That may be, but bad people can cause trouble.*

rama: My, it’s as if the episode at Jana-sthana were actually
taking place.

lākṣmanā:

Now, here those evil rākṣasas, with their trick
of the golden deer,
committed the deed that still brings heartache
though avenged in full.
My brother’s half-mad acts when Jana-sthana was
left deserted
can still make a stone shed tears and break a heart
of iron.*

sīta: (tearfully, aside) Ah my lord, delight of the Raghu clan,
how troubled you were on my account!

lākṣmanā: (gazing at rama; with curiosity) Brother, what
is this now?

This flood of tears welling up in streams
is splashing on the ground
in drops that shatter like a broken
necklace of fine pearls
and your distress, though you repress it,
is perfectly clear to others
from your quivering lips and nostrils,
and your chest heaving under the burden.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: vatsa,

tat[kālaṃ priyajana]viprayogajanmā
tivro 'pi pratiśṭijvāńchayā visodhaḥ,
duḥkh[aṅg̥ir manasi punar vipacyamāno
hṛṇjarmājvrāṇa iva vedaṅam karoti. [30]

sītā: "haddhi, haddhi' aham vi adibhūmiṇi gadena raṇaraṇaṇeṇa ajanā|utta|suṣṭhaṇaḥ via attaṅgaṃ pekkhāmi,"

1.125 LAKŠMANAH: (svaṅgatam) bhavatv, anyataḥ kṣipāmi. (citram vilokya, prakāśam) tad etan manvantara|purāṇa|gr̥dhra|rājasya tatraf|bhavatas tata|Jaṭāyuṣaś caritra|vikram'|oḍā-ḥaraṇam.

sītā: "hā tāda niśvūḍho de avaccalśiṇeḥ,"

RĀMAH: hā tāta Kāśyapa śakunta|rāja, kva punas tvādṛśasya mahatas tirthasya sādhoḥ sambhavah?

LAKŠMANAH: ayaṃ asau Janasthāna|paścimaś Citrakuṇja-vān namā danu|Kabandḥa|daṇḍakaśāran|bhāgaḥ. tad idam Ṛṣyamūka|parvate Mataṅgasy' aśramā|padam. iyaṃ ca Śramaṇā namā siddha|Śabarī. tad etat Pampā'abhidhānāṃ padma|saraḥ.

98
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

RAMA: Dear brother,

At the time, the fire of sorrow ignited by losing the one I love,
though sharp, was something the thirst for vengeance made bearable.
But it continued to ripen in my mind and now produces
the pain of a wound that reaches to the softest core of my heart.

SīTA: Oh dear god, in boundless terror I am seeing myself left alone without my husband!

LĀKŚHMANA: (aside) Well, I had better distract them. (glancing at the painting; aloud) Here is an illustration of the heroism of father Jatáyus, the vulture-king, older than the ages.

SīTA: Alas, father, you met the obligations of affection to your child.

RAMA: Alas, father, king of birds, son of Káshyapa. Where shall we ever again find the likes of so great a benefactor?

LĀKŚHMANA: Over there lying to the west of Jana-sthana is the part of Dándaka wilderness called Chitra-kúnjavat. It was haunted by the headless monster Kabándha.* This is the ashram of the sage Matánga, atop Mount Rishya-muka, and here is the wonder-working Shábara woman named Shrámani.* That over there is the lotus pond called Pampa.*

uttararamacaritaR 99 (100, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

sītā: "ettha kila aśja|utteṇa vicchaḍ̐id̐j|āmarisa|dhīratta-
naṁ pamukka|kaṇṭhaṁ ruṇṇaṁ āsi,  

1.130 ṚĀMAṆ: devi, ramaṇiye etat sarāḥ.

etasmin mada|kalajmallikākṣa|pakṣa|  
vyaḍhūta|ṛṣphura|ṛuru|daṇḍa|puṇḍarikāḥ  
bāsp’|āmbara|paripatan’|ōdgam’|āntaraṇe  
sandṛṣṭāḥ kuvalayino mayā vibhāgāḥ. [31]

LAKŚMĀṆAṆ: ayam ārī Henūman.

sītā: "eso so cirā|niśvīṇa|jiśa|loa|samuddharaṇa|garu’|  
ōvaāri mahāḷbhāo Mārudi,  

ṚĀMAṆ:

diṣṭyā so 'yaṁ mahāḷbāhur  
Aṇjaṇ’|ānanda|vardhanaḥ  
yasa viryeṇa kṛtino  
vayaṁ ca bhuvanāni ca. [32]

1.135 sītā: "vaccha, eso kusumida|kaṁba|tāṇḍavida|barahiṇo  
kiṁ|nāma|dheo girī jatthā anubhāva|sohaṇa|metta|  
parisesa|dhūṣara|sīri mucchanto tuce paruṇṇeṇa avalamb- 
bido tārujale aśja|utto ālihiḍō?  

100
A CT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

sītā: It was here, I’m told, my husband could no longer master anger* and cried at the top of his lungs.

rāma: My queen, it was a beautiful pond.

There were patches of white lotuses, their broad stems swaying when stirred by the wings of geese honking lustily, but they seemed dark blue as I* looked in the interval between one tear falling and the next welling up.

lākṣmana: This is the noble Hānuman.

sītā: Yes, here he is, the Wind god’s great son, who did such signal service in rescuing this long-suffering world.

rāma:

Thank god for the mighty son of Ánjana whose power secured us—and the worlds—our welfare.

sītā: Dear boy, what’s the name of this mountain, where the peacocks were roused to do their wild tándava dance on the blooming kadamba trees?* My husband is depicted here at the foot of a tree, with you in tears lending support and him on the point of fainting, his natural glow dulled, a mere vestige of his once-captivating majesty.
LAKŚMANAṆA}$/
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

LÁKSHMANA:

That is Mount Mālayavan, fragrant with kākubha flowers,
its peak dark and moist with ever-fresh clouds…*

RAMA:

Dear brother, stop, please stop, I cannot take any more.
Separation from Jánaki seems all but to befall me once again.

LÁKSHMANA: From here on there are countless miraculous feats for viewing, each one greater than the next, of brother and the monkeys and rākṣasas. But sister-in-law must be tired; I would ask her to rest now.

SĪTA: Husband, looking at the paintings has awakened a craving in me, and I have a favor to ask.

RAMA: You’ve only to command.

SĪTA: I feel like visiting the unspoiled deep forest and bathing in the pure, placid, cool waters of the Bhagi-ṛa-thi.

RAMA: Dear Lákshmana?

LÁKSHMANA: At your service.

RAMA: Our elders just directed us to satisfy her cravings instantly. So bring the smooth-riding, comfortable chariot.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

1.145 Sītā: "āja|utta tumhehiṃ pi tahiṃ gantavvaṃu
Rāmaḥ: ayi kāṭhiṅaḥṛdaye, etad api vaktavyam eva?
Sītā: "teṇa hi piaṇi meu
Lakṣmaṇaḥ: yad ājānāpayaty āryah. (niṣkrāntah)

1.150 Sītā: "evvaṃ bhodu. ohirāmi kkhu parissama[jaṇidāe]ṇid-ḍāe,u
Rāmaḥ: tena hi nirantaram avalambasva māṃ anugamanā-ya.

jīvayann iva sa[śā]dhrvaśa[śrama]j
svedābindur adhikaṇṭham arpyatām
bāhur aindavajmayūkhajcumbita]
syandijcandra[maṇiḥhāra]vibhramah. [35]

(tathā kāṇyaṇ, s'ānandam) priye, kim etat?

viṃścetum śayo
na sukham iti vā duḥkham iti vā
pramoḥo nīdā vā
kim u viṣajvisarpaḥ kim u madah?
tava sparṣe sparṣe
mama hi parimūḍh[ē]ndriyalganaṃ
vikāraś caitanyaṃ
bhramayati ca sammilayati ca. [36]

1Moonstones were represented as liquifying when brought into moonlight.

104
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

sītā: Husband, won’t you come along too?

rama: Why, hard-hearted lady, do you even need to ask?

sītā: I’m so pleased at that.

lākṣīmana: As my brother wishes. (exit)

rama: Let’s sit a minute in the recess of this window.

sītā: Yes, alright. I am actually tired from all the exertions.

rama: So come, lean your full weight on me and let me lead you.

Place your arm round my neck—it seems to revive me.

Beaded with sweat from your exertions and your fright your arm is like a necklace of moonstones running with liquid when kissed by the rays of the moon.

(doiing so; blissfully) My beloved, what can this be?

Every single time you touch me a kind of transformation—
it can’t be described as joy or sorrow, ecstasy or sleep, a state of intoxication or all-suffusing poison—confuses my senses and at once excites and dulls my awareness.*
RAMA’S LAST ACT

1.155 Sītā: (vihasya) thira|ppāsādā tumhe. ido dāníṁ kim avaraṁ?

RĀMAH:

mlānasya jīva|kusumasya vikāsanāni
santarpanāni sakal’|endriya|mohanāni
etāni te su|vacanāni saroruh’|āksyāḥ
karn’|āmṛtāni manasaś ca rasāyanāni. [37]

Sītā: pīm | vada, ehi saṁvisamha, (saṁnāya samantato
nirūpayati)

RĀMAH: ayi kim anveṣṭavyam?

ā vivāha|samayād grhe vane
saśave tad|anu yauvane punaḥ
svāpa|hetur an|upāśrito ’nyayā
Rāma|bāhu| upadhānam eṣa te. [38]

1.160 Sītā: (nidrām nātayanti) atthi edaṁ ajja | utta, atthi
edaṁ... (svapiti)

RĀMAH: katham, priya|vacanā vakṣasi supt’ āива? (nirvartay-
ya, saṁnēham)

106

uttararamacaritaR 106 (106, 0)
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

SITA: (laughing) You have always been constant in your affection for me. What could it be but that?

RAMA:

They make the faded flower of life
bloom for me again,
they reinvigorate me
and infatuate my every sense,
those sweet words of my lotus-eyed wife,
ambrosia to the ears, elixir to the mind.

SITA: My sweet-talker, come let’s relax. (looking this way and that for a place to lie down)

RAMA: But there’s no need to search:

From the moment we were wed,
at home or in the forest,
in childhood and then in youth,
this sole cause of repose,
where not a single other woman
has ever laid her head,
this very arm of Rama here
will serve you as a pillow.

SITA: (miming falling asleep) That’s true, my husband, that’s true… (sleeps)

RAMA: What’s this, has my sweet-talking wife fallen fast asleep on my chest? (gazing; affectionately)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

iyāṁ gehe Lakṣmīr, iyam amṛta|vartīr nayanayor,
asāv asyaḥ sparśo vapuṣī bahalāś candana|rasaḥ,
ayaṁ kaṇṭhe bāhuḥ śiśirā|mauṣṭikā|saraḥ,
kim asyā na preyo yadi param āṣahya tu virahāḥ? [39]

PRATĪHĀRĪ: (praviṣṭa)ṝ deva, uvatthido,
RĀMAḤ: ayi kaḥ?

1.165 PRATĪHĀRĪ: āsaṇṭalparicārao Dummuho devāṣa,
RĀMAḤ: (sva|gatam) schütz'|āntacāri Durmukhāḥ? sa maya
pauraljānapadān asarpitum prayuktaḥ. (prakāśam)
āgacchatus.

PRATĪHĀRĪ niṣkrāntā.

DURMUKHĀḤ: (praviṣṭa, sva|gatam) ṃ ā Kadhaṃ dāṇīṃ Śi-
dā|deviṃ antareṇa idisaṃ aj[cintaṭījaṃ jan]|āvavādaṃ
devāṣa kadhaṭ̃ṣamaḥ? ahava nīoo kkhu me eriso manda|
bhāṣa,

SĪṬĀ: (utsvapnāyate) ṃ ā ajja|utta somma, kahiṃ si?

1.170 RĀMAḤ: aye sā āiva ranṭaṇaka|dāyini citra|dāṣanād viraha|bhāvanā devyaḥ svapn'|ōdvegaṃ karoti. (sa|mehaṃ
tāmṛtaṁ)

1 Goddess of wealth and royalty.  ii Literally “Gloomy-looking” (perhaps also/or “Defamer”).

108
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

She is Lakshmi herself living
in my house, ambrosial balm
for my eyes, the touch of rich sandalwood
cream upon my body;
this arm of hers around my neck
is a cool and smooth pearl necklace.
What don’t I love about her—except
the torture of being apart?

Enter female DOORKEEPER: Present, my lord.

RAMA: Present? What is present?*

DOORKEEPER: My lord’s personal attendant, Dúrmukha.ii

RAMA: (aside) Dúrmukha, the harem attendant? I employed
him to gather intelligence among the people of the city
and countryside. (aloud) Show him in.

Exit DOORKEEPER.

Enter DÚRMUKHA: (aside) How in the world am I going
to report to the king these unspeakable rumors about
Queen Sita? But such is my charge, cursed as I am.

SITA: (crying out in her sleep) Oh my gentle husband, where
are you?

RAMA: Those terrifying anxieties of separation roused by
viewing the paintings are disturbing the queen’s dreams.
(stroking her affectionately)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

advaita sukha-dukhayor anugunam
sarvasv avasthasa yad
visoramo hridayasya yatra jaraa
yasminn ahar yo rasah
kala' avaran' atyayat pariinate
yat sneha'sare sthitam
bhadram tasya su'manusaasya katham apy
eka hi tat prapyeate. [40]

DURMUKHAH: (upasrya) jaadu devo.
RAMAH: brahi yad upalabdham.

DURMUKHAH: uvarthunanti devam pora janaavad visumaravid amhe maharasa Rama devenattii.

1.175 RAMAHA: artha vada eash. dosa tu ka cit kathaya yena pratividhiyate.

DURMUKHAH: (jansam) sunda devo. (karne, evam eva)
RAMAHA: ahaha tivra sajne vajrha. (murchati)

DURMUKHAH: assadu devo.
RAMAHA: (asvaya)

110

uttararamacaritaR 110 (110, 0)
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

Identity in joy and sorrow,
consonance in every condition,
where the heart can find respite,
whose rasa old age cannot spoil,
what alone abides as time
removes all veils and pure love ripens—
that singular blessing is only bestowed
on a good man, and only then with luck.*

DÚRMUKHA: (approaching) Long live the king!

RAMA: Tell me what you have learned.

DÚRMUKHA: The people of the city and countryside sing
my lord's praises, saying "Lord Rama has made us forget
the great king Dasha·ratha."

RAMA: That is mere flattery. Inform me of any lapses so that
countermeasures can be taken.

DÚRMUKHA: (tearfully) Listen, my lord. (in his ear, explai-
ning*)

RAMA: Oh god, your words are thunderbolts piercing me
to the quick! (falls faint)

DÚRMUKHA: My lord, compose yourself!

RAMA: (regaining his composure)

uttararamacaritaR 111 (112, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

1.180  há há dhik! paraśgṛhā|vāsa|dūṣaṇaṁ yad
Vādehyāḥ praśāmitam adbhutair upāyaṁ
etat tat punar api dāiva|dūṣaṇaṁ ālākṣaṁ
tat kim atra mandalbhāgyaḥ karomi? (vimṛṣya, sa|karuṇaṁ)
atha vā kim anyat?
satāṁ ken' āpi kāryena
lokasyārādhanaṁ vratam
yat pūritam hi tātena
māṁ ca prāṇāṁśa ca muñcata. [42]
samprayāt bhagawatā Vasiṣṭhena sandiṣṭam. api ca:
yat Sāvitrair dipitam bhūmilpālair
loka|śreṣṭhaiḥ sādhu sūddhaṁ caritram
mat|śambandhā kaśmalaṁ kiṁ|vadanti
syāc ced asmin hanta dhīṁ māṁ aḥdhanyam. [43]

1.185  há deva|devala|vajanjana|sarmanāh. há svajjan|māṇugraha|pavitra|vasundhare. há Nimi|Janaka|vāmśa|sandini. há Pāvaka|Vasiṣṭha|Ārundhati|prasastajīla|jālini. há Rāmama-
yajīvite. há mah'āranyya|vāsa|priya|vāki. há tātajīye.
hā priyā|stoka|vādini. katham eva|vidhāyās tav' āyam
iHṛśaḥ pariṇāmaḥ?

1 Indian kings traditionally have traced their origins either to the sun or the moon.  
2 An ancestor of Janaka.
No, oh no! The scandal of living in another man’s house
had been wiped away by Vaidéhi—and by wondrous means—
but here it has reappeared through a fated turn of events,
to spread far and wide like the poison of a rabid dog.

What am I to do about it, cursed as I am? (reflecting; with pity) But then, what else can I do?

A good man’s vow is to propitiate
the people by any necessary means.
This is the vow my own father fulfilled
at the cost of losing me—and his own life.*

And that is what Vasíshtha just directed me to do. Then,

If the pure good conduct made lustrous
by the eminent Solar kings of old
should be stained by slander connected with me
then truly am I doomed, and damned as well.

Oh my queen, you who were born at a sacred rite, you
purified Earth herself by honoring her with your birth,
you brought joy to the lineage of Jánaka and Nimi.ii
Your good character has been praised by Fire, Vasíshtha,
and Arúndhati. Rama is your whole life, you were the dear companion in my sojourn in the deep wilderness,
the darling of my father, with your sweet and measured words… How could such a woman as you suffer a reversal such as this?

*uttaramacaritā R 113 (114, 0)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

tvayā jaganti punyāni,
tvayy alpunyā jāntoktayaḥ.
nāthavantas tvayā lokās,
tvam aṁānāthā vipatsyase. [44]

Durmukha, brūhi Lakṣmaṇam esa te nūtano rājā Rāmaḥ samājñāpayati. (karne, evam eva)

durmukhaḥ: "kahaṁ dāniṁ aggī | parisuddhāe gabbha | ṭṭhida|pavitta|Rahu|ula|santāṇe devie dujjana|vaanādo evvaṁ vavasidaṁ deveṇa?

rāmaḥ: sāntam! kathaṁ durjanāḥ pauraṇjānapadāḥ?

1.190    Ikṣvāku/vaṁśo 'bhimataḥ prajānāṁ
jātaṁ ca daivād vacaniyalbijam
yac c’ ādbhutaṁ karma viśuddhiṅkāle
pratyetu kas tad yadi dūraṅṛttaṁ? [45]

tad gaccha.

durmukhaḥ: "hā deviḥ (nīkrāntaḥ)

rāmaḥ: hā kaṣṭam! atibibhatsa|karmā nṛ|sāṁso 'smi saṁ-\nvrītaḥ.

114

uttaramacaritaR 114 (114, 0)
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

Because of you all beings in the world are blessed and yet on you these cursed rumors have fallen; in you the people have a true protector yet you face ruin yourself all unprotected.

Dúrmukha, tell Lákshmana that the novice* king Rama has an order for him. (in his ear, explaining)

dúrmukha: The queen, already purified by fire, is purified the more by the continuation of the Raghu line she carries in her womb. How can my lord have reached such a decision* on the basis of malicious gossip about her?

rama: Silence!* How dare you call the people of the city and countryside malicious?

The Ikshváku dynasty has earned the people’s esteem; the seed of this reproach was a consequence of fate; as for the wondrous act at the time of purification, who could give it credence since it occurred far away?

Go then!

dúrmukha: Alas, my queen! (exit)

rama: How awful! What a repulsive deed I am about to do, what a cruel man I have become!
RAMA'S LAST ACT

śaiśavāt prabhṛti poṣitāṁ priyaiḥ
sauhṛdād aprthagāsāyāṁ priyām
chadmanā paridadāmi mṛtyave
sauniko gṛhaśākuntikāṁ iva. [46]

1.195 tat kim a śparśāniyaḥ pārthi devīṁ duṣṭayāmiḥ? (śīrṣāh
śīrṣa svairam unnamayya bāhum ākāraṇāḥ)

alpūrvakarmaṇaṁ,
ayi mugdhe, vimuñca mām.
śrīt” āsi candanaḥbhrāntyā
durvīpākaṁ viṣaḍrumam. [47]

(utthāya) hanta, samprati viparyasto jīvaṁlokaṁ, paryavasitaṁ
jīvaṁprayojanaṁ Rāmasya. śūnyam adhunā jīṛṇ’
āranyāṁ jagat. aśāraḥ saṃsāraḥ. kāśṭhalprāyaṁ śariram.
aśāraṇas tu kim karomiḥ kā gatiḥ? atha vā:

duḥkhasambhāvvedanā’ āiva
Rāme caitanyam āḥitam.
marm’ōpaghātibhīḥ prāṇair
vajraḍikāyitaṁ sthiraiḥ. [48]

116

uttaramacaritaR 116 (116, 0)
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

From childhood my delicate love fed on delicacies and was never parted* from me because of our deep affection.
And now I am ready to use deceit and deliver her over to death, like a man who butchers a small pet bird.

How dare I then—an untouchable and outcaste myself—pollute the queen with my touch? (carefully lifting Sita’s head and withdrawing his arm)

Innocent woman, let go of me, a pariah capable of anything.
You thought you were reposing on sandalwood, and not a noxious poison tree.

(standing) My god, this world has now been turned upside down. There is no longer any point to Rama’s living. Suddenly the earth is empty, a desolate wilderness. Life is lifeless, this body mere matter. I have no recourse, what am I to do? Where am I to turn? I suppose

It was only to let him register pain that Rama was endowed with consciousness.
Life itself is wounding me to the quick* and seems bolted in place by an iron bolt.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

amba Arundhati, bhagavantau Vasiṣṭha|Viśvāmitrau, bha-
gavan Pāvaka, devi Bhūtadhātri, ātā, ātā, Janaka, ātā
matahr, ātā priyɔ sakha maha|raja Sugriva, ātā saumya
Hanuman, ātā param|opakārin Lāṅk̄|ādhipate Vibhīṣa-
ṇa, ātā sakhi Trīṣṭe, muṣṭīḥ stha, paribhūtāḥ stha Rā-
ma|hatakena. atha vā, kas ca teṣam aham idānim āhvā-
ne?

1.200
te hi manye mahajatmanah
kṛtalghnena durjatmanā
mayā gṛhitanāmānaḥ
sprīyanta iva pāpmanā. [49]

yo 'ham

visrambhad urasi nipaṭya labdhajnīdram
unmucya priyaṅghinim gṛhasya sōbhām
ātāṅka|phurita|kaṭhara|garbhagurvīṁ
kravyādbhyo balim iva nirghṛṇaḥ ksipāmi. [50]

(sītāyāḥ pādau śirasi kṛtvā) devi devi, ayam a|paścīmas te
Rāmasya śirasā pāda|paṅkaja|spārṣaḥ. (roditi)

Nepathye: a|brahmanyam! a|brahmanyaṁ!

1.205 RĀMAH: jñāyatāṁ, bhoh kim etat?

1 King of the monkeys and ally of Rāma. ii Monkey scout and ally of Rāma. iii Rāvaṇa's brother and ally of Rāma. iv A female nākṣata
who took pity on Sītā.

118
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

Mother Arúndhati, blessed Vasíshtha and Vishva-mitra, and Fire, and goddess Earth that bears all creatures! Oh father, Jánaka, mothers, dear friend King Sugríva, best benefactor and lord of Lanka, Vi-bhíshana,—you have all been deceived and disgraced by this contemptible Rama. But then, who am I to invoke these people now?

For me even to use their names, 
base ingrate that I am, 
is tantamount to defiling 
these high persons with my own sin.

I who

Push her from my chest where she had fallen peacefully asleep, 
this beloved wife of mine, this ornament to my house, 
heavy with unborn child—how anxiously it kicked!—and throw her unpitied to the dogs, like an offering of meat.

(bowing his head to Sita’s feet) My queen, my queen, this is the very last time that Rama will touch his head to your lotus feet. (weeps)

OFFSTAGE: Sacrilege! What sacrilege!

RAMA: Find out, someone, what is going on.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

PUNAR NEPATHYE:

ṛśṇāṁ ụgrātapasāṁ
Yamunātirāvāsinām
Lavaṇātrasītaḥ stomaḥ
sāranyam tvām upasthitah. [51]

RĀMAH: āḥ katham adya’ āpi rākṣasātrāsah? tad yāvad asya
dur̥jātmanah Kumbhīnasī|putrasya’ onmūlanāya Śatrughnaṁ preṣayāmi.
(kati cīt padāṇi gātvā, punah pratini-vṛtya) ha devi, katham evaṁ|gatā bhaviṣyasi? bhagavati
Vasundhare, śūnyāṁ duhitaram aveauśasva Jānakīm,
Janakānām Raghūṇāṁ ca
yat kṛṣṇām gotra|mangalam
yāṁ devalyajane punyē
pūrya|ilāṁ ajjanaḥ. [52]

(niśkrāntah)

1.210 SĪTĀ: (svapnāyate) ṣha somma ajjā|uttā...ṣa (sahas” ottāya)
ḥaddhi, ḍaddhi! dus|siviṇaena vippaladdha aham ajjā|uttaṁ akkandāmi. (vilokyā) ḍaddhi, ḍaddhi! eainiṁ
mam pāsuttaṁ ujjhia gado ajja|utto. kim dāṇiṁ edam?
bhodu. se kuppissam—jaī taṁ pekkhami attaṇo paha-
vissam. ko ettha pariṇo?_

DURMUKHAH: (praviṣya) ṣdevi, kumāra|Lakṣaṇo viṇṇave-
di: “sajjo radho. āruhado devi.”

1 A female rākṣasa, sister of Rāvana.

uttararamacaritaR 120 (120, 0)
A host of seers, mighty ascetics who live on the banks of the Yāmuna, have been terrified by Lāvana and have taken refuge with you.

RAMA: What, are rākṣasas still causing trouble? I had better send Shatrúghna to root out Kumbha·nasi’s son. (taking a few steps forward, then returning) Oh my queen, what will become of you in these desperate straits? Blessed Earth, watch over your helpless* daughter Jānaki,

The good fortune entire of the Raghu and Jānaka clans, the blessed child you gave birth to at the blessed sacrifice of the gods.

(exit)

SITĀ: (dreaming) Dear husband… (suddenly rising) Oh dear god, I had a nightmare that I became separated from my husband and was crying out for him. (looking around) But where has he gone leaving me asleep and alone? I’ll show him some anger—if I can remain mistress of my heart when I set eyes on him. Who is in attendance?

Enter Dūrmukha: Your Highness, Prince Lákshmana wishes to inform you that the chariot is all set for Your Highness to board.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

siṭā: 'iṁ āruhāmi, (uttāya) paripphuradi via me gabhā| bhāro. saṁjaṁ gacchamha,

Durmuṅkaḥ: 'ido ido devi,

siṭā: ṇamo Rahujula|devadānaṁ,
iṣkrāntau.

iti maha[kavi|ṛi]Bhavabhūtī|pranīta
Uttara[Rāma|carita|nāṭake
Citra|dariano nāma
prathamo 'ṅkaḥ.

122
ACT I: AT THE PAINTING EXHIBITION

sītā: I'm ready to board. *(standing)* My baby keeps kicking, we must go slowly.

dūrmukha: This way, Your Highness.
sītā: Homage to the deities of the Raghu clan!

*Exeunt both.*

*End of Act I*
PRELUDE TO ACT II
NEPATHYE: svāgataṁ tapo|dhanāyaḥ.

tataḥ praviṣaty adhvagāvesā tāpasi.

TĀPASI: aye, vana|devat” īyaṁ phala|kusuma|pallav”ārghyaṁ māṁ upatiṣṭhate.

VANA|DEVATA: (praviśya, arghyaṁ vikirya)

2.5 yath”|ēcchāḥbhogyam vo
    vanam idam. ayaṁ me suḍīvasaḥ.
    satāṁ sadbhīḥ saṅgaḥ
    katham api hi punyena bhavati.
    taru|cchāyaṁ toyaṁ
    yad api tapaso yoṣyaṁ aśaṁ
    phalaṁ vā mūlaṁ vā
    tad api na par’|ādhisam iha vaḥ. [1]

TĀPASI: kim atṛ’ōcyate?

priyalprāyā vrṭtir,
    vinaya|madhuro vāci niyamaḥ,
    prakṛtyā kalyāṇi
    matir, anjavagitaḥ paricayaḥ,
    puro vā paścād vā
    tad idam alviparyāsitaḥ|rasaṁ
    rahasyaṁ sādhūnāṁ
    anjupadhi viśuddhaṁ vijaye. [2]

upaviśataḥ.

VANA|DEVATA: kāṁ punar atra bhavatim avagacchāmi?

126

uttararamacaritaR 126 (126, 0)
OFFSTAGE: Welcome, holy one!

Enter a female ascetic dressed as a traveler.

ASCETIC: Ah, the forest deity herself is here to wait on me with an offering of fruits and flowers and fronds.

Enter the forest deity: (spreading out the offering)

Enjoy this forest to your heart’s content.
This is a happy day for me:
It is rare for good people to meet and happens only thanks to merit.
Shade of a tree, water, whatever food is fit for ascetic acts—
fruits and roots and the rest—
is all at your disposal.

ASCETIC: What can I say?

Loving ways, measured speech sweetened with courtesy,
a heart well-disposed by nature,
and ungrudging service,
a rasa that never goes bad,
before or after—long live this secret of the holy ones,
which knows no pretence or stain.

The two sit.

FOREST DEITY: Who am I to understand my honored guest to be?
2.10 TĀPAŚI: Ātreyy asmi.

VAṆAṆ DEVĀṬĀ: ārye Ātreyi, kutah punar ihā āgamyate? kim|prayojano va Daṇḍaka)”āranya|pracāraḥ?

ĀTREYI:
asminn Agastya|pramukhā pradeśe
bhūyāṃsa udgithā|vido vasanti.
tebhyo ‘dhigantum nigam|ānta|vidyāṃ
Vālmikipārśvād iha paryātāmi. [3]

VAṆAṆ DEVĀṬĀ: yadā tāvad anye ’pi munayas tam eva hi purāṇa|brahma|vādinaṃ Prāctasam |śiṣṇ brahma|pārāyaṇāy’ āpāsate, tat ko ’yam ārāyāḥ pravāsāḥ?

ĀTREYI: tatra mahān adhyayana|pratyāha ity eṣa dirgha|pra-vāso ‘ṅgilktāḥ.

2.15 VAṆAṆ DEVĀṬĀ: kidṛṣāḥ?

ĀTREYI: tasya bhagavataḥ keṇ’ āpi devatā|viśeṣaṇa sarval|pra-kār’ādbhutaṃ stanyāḥ|yāga|mātrake vayase vartamānaṃ
dāraka|dvayam upaniṭam. tat khalu na kevalaṃ tasya, api tu sa|ca|tā|acaraṇāṃ bhūtānāṃ āntarāṇi tattvāny upa-snehayati.

VAṆAṆ DEVĀṬĀ: api tayor nāmaśaṃvijñānāṃ asti?

ĀTREYI: tay” āiva kila devatayā tayoḥ “Kuṣa|Lavāv” iti nāmanī prabhāvaś c’ ākhyātaḥ.

1Vālmiki.

128
ASCETIC: I am Atréyi.

FOREST DEITY: Atréyi, where do you come from, and for what purpose are you wandering the Dándaka wilderness?

Atréyi:

In this region there live many masters of the Veda’s essence, Agástya and others. It is to learn Vedánta knowledge from them that I am roaming here, far from Valmíki.

FOREST DEITY: But since other sages worship that ancient spiritual master, the seer who is son of Prachétas, in order to attain spiritual mastery, why is the noble woman absenting herself from him?

Atréyi: I have resigned myself to this long absence because there is now a major obstacle to studying with him.

FOREST DEITY: Of what sort?

Atréyi: Some deity—it was a wonder—once brought the blessed one a set of twin boys who had barely been weaned. And as you can imagine they won his heart, and not just his but that of all moving and unmoving beings.

FOREST DEITY: Is anything known about their names?

Atréyi: They say the deity itself revealed to him their names —Kusha and Lava—and their power.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

VANAJDEVATA: kidṣṭāḥ prabhāvah?

2.20 ĀTREYI: tayoh kila sa|rahasya|mbHak|āstrāṇy ājianma|sid-dhānī.

VANAJDEVATA: iti hi bhoś citram!

ĀTREYI: tau ca bhagavatā Vālmikinā dhātri karya vastutaḥ parigṛhya poṣitau pariraksita u ca. vṛtta cūdau ca trayī| varjam itarās tisro vidyāḥ s’|āvadhānena paripāḥhitau. samanantaraṃ ca garbhā|āikādaśe varṣe kṣatreṇa kalpen’ ópanīya trayī|vidyām adhyāpitau. na hy etābhāyām ati-pradīpta|prajñā|medhābhīyām asmad|jādeḥ saḥ’ ādhya- nalyogo ’sti. yataḥ:

vitarati guruḥ prajñāḥ vidyām
yath” āiva tathā jaḍe,
na tu khalu tayor jñāne śaktiṇā
karo ty apahanti vā.
bhavati ca punar bhūyān bhedāḥ
phalāṃ prati. tad yathā:
prabhavati śucir bimbā|ōdgrāhe
maṇir na mṛdāṃ cayaḥ. [4]

VANAJDEVATA: ayam asāv ādhya- nalya|pratyūhaḥ?

2.25 ĀTREYI: aparaś ca.

1 3 0

uttararamacaritaR 130 (130, 0)
forest deity: What sort of power?

atréyi: They say that magic weapons along with their secret invocations were at their disposal from the moment of their delivery.

forest deity: Remarkable indeed.

atréyi: And Valmíki accepted what was effectively the task of a nurse and raised the two of them and cared for them. After their tonsure ceremony had taken place he attentively schooled them in the three forms of knowledge,* the triple Veda excepted; eventually, on their eleventh birthday, he initiated them according to Kshatriya custom and taught them the triple sacred knowledge. It is hardly proper to have people like us studying alongside two boys of such luminous understanding and insight.

For

A guru transmits knowledge to the dull no less than to the bright but he can neither make nor break their aptitude for learning, and a great difference in outcome arises between them. A polished gem can reflect an image; a clump of dirt cannot.

forest deity: This is the obstacle to study, then?

atréyi: There is another.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

VANA|DEVATA: ath’ āparaḥ kaḥ?

ĀTREYI: atha sa brahma’|ṛṣir ekadā madhyan|dina|savane
nadiṃ Tamasām anuprapannaḥ. tatra yuṣma|cārinoḥ
krauṇcyor ekaṃ vyādhena vidhyamānaṃ apasyat. āka-
smika|pratyavabhāsāṃ deviṃ vācam a|vyattikīrṇa|var-
ṇām ānuṣṭubhena chhandasā paricchinnām abhyudairya-
yat.

«mā niśāda pratiṣṭhāṃ tvam
agamaḥ śāśvatiḥ samāḥ,
yat krāuṇca|mithunād ekam
avadhīḥ kāma|mohitam.» [5]

VANA|DEVATA: citram, an|āmnāyo nūtanaś chhandasām ava-
tāraḥ.

2.30 ĀTREYI: tena khalu punaḥ samayena taṃ bhagavantam āvir-
bhūta|śabda|brahma|prakāśāṃ ṭiṃ upasāṅkraṃya bhag-
avān bhūta|bhāvanaḥ padma|yonir avocat, «ṛṣe, prabu-
ddoḥ śi vāgīṭmanī brahmaṇī. tad brūhi Rāma|ca
taram. aśyāhata|jyotir ārsam te prātibhamaḥ caśṣh. ādyah kavi
asi,» ity uktv” āntarhitah, atha bhagavān Prācetasah pra-
thanam manuṣyesu śabda|brahmaṇas tādṛṣaṃ vivartam
itiḥśaṃ Rāmāyaṇam ṭiṣṭaḥ prāṇināya.

1 Brahmā.

132

uttararamacaritaR 132 (132, 0)
forest deity: And what is that?

atréyi: Well, once upon a time the Brahman seer went down to the Támasa River for his noontime bath, and there he saw a hunter killing one of a pair of cranes. Suddenly the goddess Language flashed before his mind's eye, each sound distinct and measured by the eight-syllable meter, and he gave voice to her thus:

“Nisháda man, may you never
for all of time find fulfillment*
since you’ve slain one of this pair
of cranes in the very act of love.”

forest deity: How remarkable, a new* incarnation of verse forms unconnected with the Vedas.

atréyi: On the same occasion when the light of the sacred mystery of language had manifested itself to the seer, he was approached by the god born in the lotus,¹ the enlivener of living things, who spoke as follows: "O seer, you have gained knowledge of the mystery known as language. Tell then the story of Rama. You will possess the eye of inspiration, the seer’s eye whose light is never dimmed. You are the primal poet,” and with this, he vanished into thin air. Then the seer, the son of Praché-tas, composed the 'Ramáyana,' a history that represents the first such manifestation among men of the mystery of language.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

VANADevaTā: hanta, maṇḍitaḥ saṃśāraḥ.

ĀTreyī: tasmād avocaṃ, «tatra mahān adhyayanaḥ pratyū-ha,» iti.

VANADevaTā: yujyate.

ĀTreyī: viśrāntī āsmi, bhadre. sampratya Agastyāśramasya panthānaṃ brūhi.

2.35 VANADevaTā: itaḥ Paṇcavaṭīṃ anupraviśya gamyatām anena Godāvartītena.


VĀSANĪ: tad etat sarvam.

ĀTreyī: vatse Jānaki,

sā ṣa te vallabha|vastuvargāḥ,
prāsaṅginināṃ viśayaḥ kathānām,
tvāṃ nāma|ṣeṣāṃ api ṛṣyamānāḥ
pratyakṣa|ṛṣyāṃ iva nāḥ karoti. [6]

2.40 VĀSANĪ: (sa/ḥhayam, sva|gatam) kathaṃ, «nāma|ṣeṣāṃ,»
ity āha? (prakāśam) ārye, kim atyāhitaṃ Sitādevyāḥ?

ĀTreyī: na kevalam atyāhitaṃ, s’ āpāvādam api. (karṇe, evam eva)

uttararamacaritaR 134 (134, 0)
Prelude to Act II

FOREST DEITY: Ah, life itself has been enriched.

ĀTREYI: That's why I spoke of a great obstacle to study.

FOREST DEITY: That's understandable.

ĀTREYI: My good lady, I am rested. Tell me now the way to
the ashram of Agástya.

FOREST DEITY: From here you enter Pancha-vati and go
along the bank of the Godávari.

ĀTREYI: (tearfully) Is that Pancha-vati, the celebrated pe-
nance grove? Is that river the Godávari, and that moun-
tain Prásravana—and are you Vasánti, the deity of Jana-
sthana?

VASÁNTI: It is all just as you say.

ĀTREYI: O child Jánaki,

This is the host of things you cherished,
object of so many passing conversations,
and as I behold them they seem to make you
visible—
though nothing is left of you now but your name!

VASÁNTI: (fearfully, aside) What does she mean, "nothing…
but your name?" (aloud) Noble lady, has some calamity
befallen Queen Sita?

ĀTREYI: Not just a calamity, but a calumny as well. (in her
ever, explaining)
vāsanti: ahaha, dāruṇo daiva|nirghātaḥ. (mūrchati)

ātreyi: bhadre, samāśvasihi, samāśvasihi!

vāsanti: hā priya|sakhi, hā mahā|bhāge, īḍrśas te nirmā|nā|bhāgaḥ. Rāma|bhadrā, Rāma|bhadrā... atha v ṛ alaṃ tva|yāl ārye ātreyi, atha tasmād aranyāt parītyaja nivrṣte Laksmana Svīyāḥ kim vr̥ttam, iti kā cid asti pravṛttih?

2.45 ātreyi: na hi, na hi.

vāsanti: hā kaṭṭam. Arundhati|Vasiṣṭhī|ādhiṣṭheṣu Ra|ghu|kadambakeṣu, jivantiṣu ca vrddhāsu rājīṇīṣu, ka|tham iḍaṃ jātam?


vāsanti: atha sa rājā kimja|cagaraḥ samprati?

ātreyi: tena rājīṇā kratur āśva|medhaḥ prakrāntaḥ.

2.50 vāsanti: hā dhik. pariṇītām api?

ātreyi: śaṁtam, śaṁtam.

136
Prelude to Act II

VASANTI: Oh no! What a cruel blow of fate. *(falls faint)*

ATREYI: Compose yourself, dear woman, I beg you!

VASANTI: Oh my beloved friend and most honorable woman, that such should be your lot in life. Dear Rama, dear Rama… No, enough of you! Atreyi, is there any news of what happened to Sita when Lákshmana left her and returned from the wilderness?

ATREYI: Alas, none at all.

VASANTI: How awful. How could such a thing have happened with Arúndhati and Vásíshtha presiding over the Raghu clan, and the aged queens still alive?

ATREYI: At the time, the elders were away at the ashram of Rishya·shringa. Now the twelve-year-long sacrifice has been concluded, and Rishya-shringa, after honoring the elders, was about to send them home when Arúndhati declared, “I will not return to an Ayódhya bereft of my daughter-in-law,” and Rama’s mothers concurred. And in compliance with her Vásíshtha, too, expressed the sensible view that they should all go to Valmíki’s penance grove and stay there.

VASANTI: As for the king, what is he doing?

ATREYI: The king has commenced the Horse Sacrifice.*

VASANTI: Dear god, has he already remarried then?

ATREYI: Heaven forbid, no.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

vāsantī: kā tarhi yajña saha|dharmā|cārīṇī?
ātreyī: hiraṇmayī Sitāpratikṛtīḥ.
vāsantī: hanta bho|h.

2.55 vajrād api kathorāṇī,

mṛdūni kusumād api,
lok’|ottaraṇāṃ cetāṃsi
ko hi vijnātum arhāti? [7]

ātreyī: visṛṣṭā sa Vāmadev’|ābhimantarītī|medhyo ’śvāh.
upakalpiśa ca yathājāśtrām tasya rakṣitārāh. teṣām adhi-
sthātā Lākṣmaṇ’|ātma, Candra|ketur, avāptra|divy’|ās-
tra|sampradāyaś catur|ānga|śadhan’|ānvīto ’nuprahi|hā.

vāsantī: (sa|sneha|kautuk’|āsram) kumāra|Lākṣmaṇa|śya|śī
putra|h. hanta, mātara, jīvāmi.
ātreyī: atr’|ānātre brāhmaṇena mṛtaṃ putram āropya rā-
ja|dvāri s’|ōrā|tadām «a|brahmaṇyam» udgho|sitaṁ. ta-
to «na rāj’|āpaca|ram antareṇa prajāyām a|kāla|mṛtyuś 
carat’, ity ātma|doṣaṃ nirūpayati karuṇāmaya Rāma|
bhadre sahas” āiv’ ājarvini vāg udacarat:
«Śambūko nāma vrṣalaḥ
prthivyāṁ tapyate tāpah.
śīrṣa|chedyah sa te Rāma.
ntaṃ hatvā jivaya dvijam.» [8]

1 A family priest substituting for Vasiṣṭha.
vasānti: Then who is the wife in dhārma at the ritual?*

atrēyi: A golden image of Sītā.

vasānti: My word,

Who can possibly fathom the minds
of such supernatural men?
They can at once be harder than steel
and softer by far than flowers.

atrēyi: The sacrificial horse has been released, duly blessed
by Vama-deva, and guardians have been assigned for it,
in accordance with the ritual texts. They are led by Lāk-
shmana’s son Chandra-ketu, who has acquired the tradi-
tion of the divine weapons. He has been sent on ahead
with an army of four divisions.

vasānti: (tearfully, with affection and surprise) Prince Lāk-
shmana has a son, too? Ah mother, this gives me
strength.

atrēyi: In the midst of all these goings-on, a Brahman
came and laid his dead son before the palace gate and
exclaimed “Sacrilege!” with a breast-beating cry. At that
point, while dear Rāma—pity incarnate he seemed—
was reflecting on the fact that an untimely death could
never befall one of his subjects in the absence of some
wrong-doing on the part of the king himself, a disem-
bodied voice suddenly proclaimed,

A lowcaste man named Shambūka
is practicing austerities somewhere on earth.
You must behead him, Rāma, for only
by slaying him can you revive the Brahman child.
Rama's Last Act

2.60 ity upasrutiya krpañalpañih Puspakaṁ vimānam āruhya sar-vā diśo vidīśāś ca śūdra[tāpaś]ānveṣāya jagati[patiś cari-tum ārabdhavān.

Vāsantī: Śambuko nāma dhūmapaḥ śūdro 'śminn eva Ja-nasthāne tapaḥ carati. tad api nāma Rāma|bhadrāḥ pu-nar idaṁ vanam alaṅkuryāt?

Ātreyi: bhadre, ganyate 'dhunā.

Vāsantī: ārye Ātreyi, evam astu. kaṭhorilbhūtas tu divasaḥ. tathā hi:

\[
\text{kaṇḍūla|dvipalgandālpinda|kaśaṇṭā|ā-
kampena sampāṭibhir}
\]
\[
\text{gharma|saṃsita|bandhanaḥ sva|kusumair}
\]
\[
\text{arcanti Godāvarīṁ}
\]
\[
\text{chaḥ|āpaskiramāṇa|viśkīra|mukha|}
\]
\[
\text{vyākṛṣṭa|kīta|vacah}
\]
\[
\text{kūja|klānta|kapota|kukkuta|kulaḥ}
\]
\[
\text{kūle kulāyā|drumāḥ. [9]}
\]

2.65 \[\text{parikramya niṣkrante.}
\]
\[\text{viṣkambhakaḥ}
\]

\[1\] Rāvaṇa's flying chariot.

140
When he heard this the lord of the world, sword in hand, ascended the Púshpaka chariot, and set out to search far and wide for the ascetic Shudra.

VASÁNTI: There is a Shudra named Shambúka who is engaged in austerities in Jana-sthana itself, breathing in smoke as a penance. If only dear Rama might once again adorn this forest.

ATRÉYI: Dear woman, I must be going now.

VASÁNTI: So be it, Atréyi, though the day has turned brutally hot:

On the riverbanks the nesting trees pay worship to the Godávari with offerings of their own flowers dropping in heaps from heat-softened stems when shaken by elephants come to rub their swollen itchy cheeks; and in the trees the birds scratch about in the shade and draw insects from the bark with their beaks, while heat-stricken doves and cocks are moaning.*

Walking about, exeunt both.

End of the Prelude
ACT II
THE ENTRANCE INTO PANCHAVATI
tataḥ praviṣati Puspakalsthah sa[day]jōdyutalkhaḍgo Rāmah.

Rāmah:

he hasta dakṣiṇa, mṛtaśya śisor dvijasya
jivātave visṛja śudraṃunau kṛpānakam.
Rāmasya gātram asi. durvahalgarbhā[khinna]|
Sitāpravāsanapātōḥ karuṇā kutas te? [10]

(kathaṁ cit prabṛttya) kṛtaṃ Rāmaśadrṣaṃ karma. api jivet
sa brāhmaṇaḥputraḥ!

2.70 DIVYAPURUṢAḥ: (praviṣya) jayati, jayati devaḥ.

datt’ābhaye tvayi Yamād api daṇḍajdhāre
sañjivitaḥ śīśur asau, mama c’ āyam ṛddhiḥ.
Śambūka eṣa śirasa carṇau nataḥ te.
satiṣaṅgajāni nidhanāny api tārayanti. [11]

Rāmah: dvayaṃ api priyaṃ naḥ. tad anubhūyatām ugrasya
tapasaḥ paripākaḥ.

---

1 The god of death.

144
The scene opens on RAMA aboard the Pushpaka, filled with compassion, his sword upraised.

RAMA:

O my right hand, bring down this sword upon the Shudra monk
and bring the dead son of the Brahman back to life. You are a limb
of Rama’s—who had it in him to drive
his Sita into exile,
weary and heavy with child.
Why start with pity now?

*(somehow striking a blow)* There, you have done a deed worthy of Rama. Let the Brahman’s son live again!

Enter a heavenly being: Long live the king.

Thanks to you, who grant safety from Yama himself,
by meting out just punishment
that child has been revived—and I too have been exalted:
Here Shambuca bows his head to your feet.
Whatever comes from contact with the good,
be it death itself, will bring salvation.

RAMA: Both outcomes are welcome to me. Enjoy then the fruition of your fierce austerities.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

yatṛ’ ānandāś ca modāś ca
yattra puṇy’|ābhisambhavaḥ,
Vairājā nāma te lokās
taijasāḥ santu te dhruvāḥ. [12]

ŚAMBŪKAH: yuṣmat|pādalprāsādan'|ōpāya esa mahimā. kim
atra tapasāḥ? atha vā mahad upakṛtaṁ tapasā.

2.75

anveṣṭavyo yad asi bhuvane
bhūtāṇṛṭhāḥ sarayyo
mām anvisyaṁ iha vṛṣalakaṁ
yojanānāṁ śatāni
krāntvā prāptaḥ sa iha tapasāḥ
samprasādo. ‘nyathā cet,
kv’ Āyodhyāyāḥ punar upagamo
Daṇḍakāyāṁ vane vah? [13]

RĀMAH: kiṁ nāma Daṇḍak” ēyam? (sarvato ‘valokya) āṁ.

snigdha|yāmāḥ kva cid aparato
bhīṣan’|ābhoga|rūksāḥ,
sthāne sthāne mukharālkakubho
jāṅkṛtair nirjarānām,
ete tīrtha|ā śrama|giri|sarid|’
gartajkāntāra|miśrāḥ
sandṛśyante paricita|bhuvo
Daṇḍakā|Vindhya|bhāgāḥ. [14]

1 A divine feminine power of the Vedic pantheon.  2 A mountain range in central India.

146
ACT II: THE ENTRANCE INTO PANCHA-VATI

May the refulgent heavenly worlds of Viraji be yours forever, worlds of bliss and pleasure accumulated through merit.*

SHAMBÚKA: This high status was made possible by the reverence paid to your feet— austerities have no role. Then again, austerities may have been of great service to me:

I would have had to search the earth for you, lord of beings and my refuge, but you instead sought me, a lowcaste, traversing hundreds of leagues to reach me. That can only be a blessing conferred by my austerities— why else should you have left Ayódhya to come once more to Dándaka Forest?

RAMA: What, do you mean to say this is Dándaka? (looking all around) Yes,

Here soft and dark green meadows, and there rough menacing tracts, in every quarter echoing to the horizons with the roar of rushing rivers, with fords, ashrams, mountains, streams, caves, and forests interspersed… yes, the grounds I see here are familiar: the Dánadaka side of the Vindhyas.ii
RAMA’S LAST ACT

śAMBŪKAḤ: Daṇḍak” āiv’ ēyam. atra kila pūrvaṁ nivasatā devena
caturdaśa sahasraṇī
rakṣasāṁ bhīma[karmanām
traya ca Dūṣañā|Khara|
Trimūrdhāno raṅe hatāḥ, [15]

2.80 yena siddha[kṣetre Janasthāne māḍśāṁ api bhūrjanānāṁ
ālkuto|bhayaḥ saṅcāro jātaḥ.

RĀMAḤ: na kevalaṁ Daṇḍakā, Janasthānam api?

śAMBŪKAḤ: bāḍham. etāṇi khalu sarva[bhūta|loma|harṣa-
ṇāṁy unmatta[caṇḍa|śvāpada[kul|ākṛṇta|vīkṣaṇa|giri|ga-
hvarāṇi Janasthāna|paryanta|dirgh|āranyāni daksināṁ
dīṣam abhivartante. tathā hi:

niśkūjajāstimitāḥ kva cit, kva cid api
proccandā|sattvavalvanāḥ
sv’ēcchā|ṣupti|gabhīrā|ghoraḥ|bhujaga|
śvāsa|pradīpt’āgnayaḥ
simāṇaḥ pradar’ōdareṣu vilasaṭ|
svalp’āmbhoso yāsv ayaṁ
trayadbhiḥ pratisūryakāiṣ ajagara|
sveda|dravaḥ piyate. [16]

148
shambūka: This is indeed Dāndaka. They say that when my lord was living here

He killed fourteen thousand fearsome rākṣasas in battle—
and three more: Dūshana, Khara, and Tri·shiras.

This made Jana-sthana a holy land where even fearful folk like me could move about in safety.

rama: What, not only Dāndaka, but Jana-sthana too?

shambūka: Yes of course. Those vast stretches of wilderness—they will make your hair stand on end no matter who you are, with their gruesome mountain caves swarming with packs of vicious wild dogs—border on Jana-sthana and lead to the south.*

Its tracts are deathly silent in one place, in another, wild animals howl; fires are ignited by the hissing of huge, dreadful snakes sleeping peacefully,* and water is scarce there, to be found only deep within crevasses, and thirsty lizards drink the sweat from the very backs of serpents.
RĀMAH:

paśyāmi ca Janasthānaṁ
bhūtalpūrvaṁ Kharājālayam,
pratyakṣāṁ iva vr̥tāntāṁ
pūrvān anubhāvāmi ca. [17]

2.85 (sarvato vilokya) priyaḥRāmā hi sarvathā Vaidehy āṣite. etāṁ
tāṁ nāma kāntarāṇi. kim ataḥ paraṁ bhayānakasya? (ś/ āram)

«tvayā saha nivatsyāmi
vanaśu madhulgandhiśu»
it' ih' āramat' āiv' āsau.
snehas tasyāḥ sa tādṛśāḥ. [18]

ākiṅcid api kurvāṇaḥ
saukhyaṁ duḥkhaṁ apohati.
tat tasya kim api dravyaṁ
yo hi yasya priyo janaḥ. [19]

ŚAMBŪKAH: tad alam ebhir dur|āsadaṁ. ath' āitāṁ mada| kala|mayūra|kaṇṭha|komala|cchavibhir avakirṇāṁ par-
vatair a|virala|niviṣṭa|nila|bahala|cchāya|taruṇa|taru|ṣa-
ṇḍa|maṇḍitāṁ a|sambhrānta|vividha|mrga|yuthāṁ pa-
śyatū mahaṁ'jñabhāvaḥ praśanta|gambhirāṇi madhyam'|
āraṇyāṇi.

150

uttarakamacaritam 150 (150, 0)
As I gaze at Jana-sthana, the place where Khara used to live,
I relive the events that once occurred as if they were
right before my eyes.

(looking all around) How deep was Vaidéhi’s love for Rama:* 2.85
Here are those very forests, for heaven’s sake, what could be more terrifying? (tearfully)

Yet she said, “I will live with you
in the honey-scented woods,” and indeed she actually enjoyed it here—
such was the measure of her affection.

The person need do nothing at all,
the mere joy of being together dispels sorrow. What a gift it is,
to have someone who loves you.

shāmbúka: Have done with memories that bring only pain.
Let my lord turn his eye toward the wilderness in the middle distance, calm and deep woods surrounded by mountains the color of the soft neck of a lusty-throated peacock, adorned with clumps of thickly packed, dark and dense shade-trees, with herds of animals of every sort calmly reposing.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

Iha salmandaśakuntājākrānta-vānīravirut
prasava-surabhi-jītaśvacaḥ toya vahanti
Phala-bhara-parināma-śyāmala-jambūnīkūṇja
Skhalana-mukhara-bhūri-srotaso nirjharinyah.

[20]

2.90 api ca:

dadhati kuhara-bhājām atra bhallūkajyūnām
anurasita-gurūni styānam ambū-kṛtāni.
śīrājātuḷkaṣāyaḥ styāyate śallakinām
ibhajdalitajvīkīra-granthiṣyandagaṇdhāḥ.

[21]

RĀMAḤ: (aḥbāpāiṣṭambham) bhadra, śivas te paṅhānaḥ.
devalyānam pratipadyasva puṇyebhya lokebhyaḥ.

ŚAMBŪKAḤ: yāvat purāṇaḥ brahmaś-ṛṣim Agastyam abhivād-
yā śāsvataṃ padam anupraviṣāmi.

nīkrāntaḥ.

152

uttararamacaritara 152 (152, 0)
Here mountain streams run with water cold and clear and fragrant
with the flowers of vines and rushes shaken by the lusty birds,
and their strong currents noisily tumble amidst the arbors
of rose-apple trees dark with their ripened loads of fruit.

What’s more,

On the mountains there are caves
where bear cubs have their lairs,
and their growls are amplified by their resounding echo;
amplified as well is the scent of succulent shällaki leaves,
cool and sharp and tangy, torn from stems and scattered by elephants.

Rāma: (choking with sobs) Good fellow, may your path be an auspicious one, may you follow the heavenly route* to the worlds of merit.

Shambuśka: After I pay my respects to the ancient Brahman seer Agāṣṭya I shall enter the eternal abode.

Exit.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

RĀMAH:

2.95 etat tad eva hi punar vanam adya dṛṣṭaṁ
yasminn abhiṁma ciram eva pūrā vasantaḥ,
āraṇyaśāś ca grhiṇaś ca ratāḥ svajdharme,
sāṁśārikeśu ca sukheśu vayaṁ rasajñaḥ. [22]
ete ta eva girayo viruṇṇmayūrās,
tāṁ eva mattajharināni vanaṣṭhālāni,
āmaṇjuvaṇjulaṭāṇi ca tāṁ amūni
nirandhraṇilaṇīculāni sariṭṭaṇi. [23]

meghaṁal" ēva yaś ca ōyam
ārād api vibhāvyate,
girīḥ Prasravaṇaḥ so' yaṁ
yatra Godāvari nadi. [24]

asy' ēivaś aśīn mahatī śikhare
gṛdhraṇājaya vāsas.
tasy' adhastād vayam api rātās
teṣu parṇoṭajēsu
Godāvaryaṁ payasi vītaṭā-
nokahaśyāmalāśīr
antahkujaṇmukharaśakuno
yatra ramilyo vaṁjantaḥ. [25]
ACT II: THE ENTRANCE INTO PANCHA-VATI

RAMA:

This is the very same forest I am seeing again today
where once—it was many years ago—I long
sojourned,
both hermit and householder devoted to my own
dharma,
who came to know the sweet taste of worldly
pleasures.

Those are the same mountains, where peacocks
used to cry,
those, the same forest-reaches with their deer in
heat,
those, the riverbanks with their lovely reeds and
vines
and rushes blue-black and thickly clumped
together.

And what looms in the distance there like a wreath
of clouds
is Mount Prásravana, where the Godávari River
runs.

On that mountain’s high peak the king of vultures
once lived
and on the lower slopes we enjoyed our leaf-
thatched huts
by the Godávari, where the forest lay spread out
alive with cooing birds, splendid with dark trees.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

atr’ āiva sā Pañcavaṭi yatra cīra[nvāseṇa vividha|visrambh’]
ātiprasāṅga|sākṣiṇaḥ pradesāḥ priyāyaḥ priya|sakhi Vā-
santi ca. tat kim idam āpatitam adya Rāmasya? samprati
hi:

2.100

cirād vega|ārambhī
prasṛta iva tīvra viṣārasaḥ,
kutaś cita sanvegāc
caḷita iva sālasya sākalaḥ,
vraṇo rūḍhaigranthiḥ
spuṣṭa iva ṭṛṇ|marmāṇaḥ punaḥ,
purābhūtaḥ śoko
vikalayati māṃ nūtana iva. [26]

tath” āpi tān pūrva|suhṛdo bhūmi|bhāgān paśyāmi. (nirūp-
yā) aho, anjavasthito bhūṣannivesaḥ.

purā yatra srotāḥ
pulinam adhunā tatra saritāṃ,
viparyāsaṃ yāto
ghanalvīralbhāvāḥ kṣīti|ruḥāṃ.
bahor drṣṭaṃ kālād
aparam iva manya vanam idaṃ.
nīvesaḥ śailanāṃ
tad idam iti buddhiḥ draḍhayati. [27]

hanta, pariharantam api māṃ itaḥ Pañcavaṭi|sneho balād
ākarsaṭ’ iva. (sa|karunam)

156
ACT II: THE ENTRANCE INTO PANCHA-VATI

Right here is Pancha-vati, whose different locales witnessed, in the course of our long residence, our many intimate conversations, and where my beloved’s friend Vasánti lives. But what’s happening to Rama?* For now

Like a slow-working poison that spreads with sharp and sudden potency or an arrowhead lodged deep within that moves from some external shock or a wound within the heart’s soft core scarred over but bursting apart again, my ancient* grief has suddenly begun anew to tear me apart.

Still, I want to visit those expanses of land that were once our friends. (looking) My, how the lay of the land has changed.

Where once there was a flowing stream is now dry riverbed, where once the trees were dense they’re sparse, and sparse where once they were dense. Seen after so long a time I find this forest completely changed—the placement of the hills alone persuades me it’s the same.

Ah, despite my unwillingness my affection for Pancha-vati seems to draw me on by force. (with pity)
Rama's Last Act

yasyāṁ te divasās tayā saha tathā
nītāḥ punah sve grhe
yatśambandhijkatābhir eva satataṁ
dirghābhir asthiyata,
ekaḥ samprati nāśitaṃ priyatamas
tāṁ eva Rāmaḥ kathām
pāpah Pañcavaṭīṁ vilokayatu vā
gacchatv ājāmbhāvyā vāḥ [28]

2.105 ŚAMBUKAḤ: (praviśya) jayatu devaḥ. bhagavān Agastyo ma-
taḥ śrutaḥ bhavatḥ sannidhānas tvāṁ āha: «parikalpit’|
āvataraṇaḥ maṅgalaḥ pratikṣate vatsalā Lopāmudrā sarve
cā maha’ḥṛṣayaḥ. tad ehi sambhāvayā” āsmān. atha praja-
vīnā Puspakeṇa svaḷḍeṣam upagamyā ‘āśvajmedhāya saijo
bhav’ēti.

RĀMAḤ: yathā ājnāpayati bhagavān.

ŚAMBUKAḤ: itas tarhi devaḥ pravartayatu Puspakam.

RĀMAḤ: bhagavati Pañcavaṭī, gurūjan’ḥopaṛodhāt kṣaṇam
kṣaṃyatāṁ atikramo Rāmasya.

ŚAMBUKAḤ: deva, paśya paśya:

158

uttararamacaritaR 158 (158, 0)
ACT II: THE ENTRANCE INTO PANCHA-VATI

The place where all those days were passed with her, and which later, when at home, was a topic constantly brought up, a subject of endless conversation—
how can evil Rama—all alone now that he killed* his most beloved—either behold Pancha-vati or pass by without paying his respects?

Enter SHAMBÚKA: Long live the king. Agástya learned of your presence from me and addresses you as follows:
“Lopa-mudra has made all the necessary welcome preparations and awaits you affectionately in the company of the great seers. Do come and honor us with a visit. You can then return to your own country on the swift Púshpaka chariot and prepare yourself for the Horse Sacrifice.”

RAMA: As the blessed one wishes.

SHAMBÚKA: Then let my lord turn the Púshpaka in this direction.

RAMA: Pancha-vati, please forgive for a moment the disrespect Rama must show in order to comply with his elders.

SHAMBÚKA: Look, my lord, look:
2.110  guñjat|kuñja|kuṭir|kausika|ghaṭā|  
ghūṭkāravat|kañcaka|  
stamb|āḍāmbara|mukā|maukuli|kulaḥ  
Krauṅcāvato 'yaṃ giriḥ.  
etasmin pracaḷākinaṃ pracaḷatām  
udvejitāḥ kūjitaḥ  
uudvallanti purāṇajrohiṇa|taru|  
skandheṣu kumbhināsāḥ. [29]  

api ca,  
ete te kuhresu gadgadā|nada|d|  
Godāvari|vārayo  
meghā|la|mbita|māuli|nīl|āṣikharāḥ  
kṣoṇi|bhṛto daksināḥ.  
ananyalpratighaṇā|saṅkula|calat|  
kallola|kolaḥalair  
uttālās ta ime gabhirā|payasāḥ  
puṇyāḥ sarit|saṅgamāḥ. [30]  

niskrāntau.  

iti mahaḥ|kavi|mṛti|Bhavabhūti|pranita  
Uttara|Rāma|carita|nāṭake  
Paṅcavatī|praveśo nāma  
dvitiyo 'īkaḥ.
ACT II: THE ENTRANCE INTO PANCHA-VATI

There’s Mount Kraunchávata,* where flocks of crows are silenced by the raucous din of wind in the bamboo groves redoubled by owls hooting in the rustling bowers; where the snakes hanging in the branches of the ancient sandalwood trees writhe about frightened by the cries of peacocks strutting down below.

What’s more,

Over there are the southern mountains, the waters of the Godávari gurgling in their caves, their summits darkened by clouds hovering on the peaks; and there are the holy spots where the rivers meet, their deep waters roaring with the crash of waves that rise helter skelter as the currents meet head on.

Exeunt both.

End of Act II
PRELUDE TO ACT III
tataḥ praviṣati NADI/dvayam.

ekā: sakhi Murale kim asi sambhrānt’ ēva?

muralā: bhagavati Tamase, preśit’ āsmi bhagavato 'gasya-

syapatnyā Lopāmudrayā sarid/varāṁ Godāvarīm abhi-
dhātum: «jānasya eva yathā vadhūḥtyāgāt prabhrīti

aṁnirbhinnō gabhiratvād

antarlūḍhalghana|vyathaḥ

putālpākā|pratikāśo

Rāmasya karoṇo rasaḥ. [1]

3.5 tena ca tathā|vidh’|ēṣa|lōjana|kaśṭa|vinipāta|janmanā pra-

karṣaṁ gatena dirgha|soka|santānena sampratī nitarāṁ

parikṣīṇo Rāma|bhadraḥ. tam avalokya kamptam iva

saṁbandhanaṁ me hṛdayam. adhunā ca pratiniwartamā-
nena Rāma|bhadreṇa niyatam eva Paṅcavati|vane va-
dhū|sahā|vāsa|visrambha|sākṣīnaḥ pradeśā draṣṭavyāḥ.

teṣu ca nisargadḥirasya’ āpy evaṁ|vidhāyām avasthayāṁ

aṭigambhir’|ābhoga|soka|kṣobha|śaṁvegāt pale pade

mahānti pramāda|śthānāni śaṁkanyāni. tad, bhagavati

Godāvari, tvayā tatra s’āvadhānayā bhavitavyam.

viṣī|vātaiḥ śikara|kṣoda|śītair

ākarṣadbhiḥ padmalkīn̄jalgaṇḍhān

mohe mohe Rāma|bhadrasya jvaṇāṁ

svairāṁ svairāṁ preritaṁ tarpaṁ’,» ēti. [2]

164
Enter two rivers.*

FIRST: Múrala my friend, you seem somehow distraught.

MÚRALA: Támasa, I have been sent by Lopa-mudra, wife of Agástya, with a message for Godávari, the best of rivers:
“You are well aware how, from the moment he disowned my daughter-in-law,
Rama has been filled with the rasa of pity,
kept hidden* by his profound demeanor,
the sharp pain of it held deep within
like a clay pot baking in embers.

And as a result, an unending stream of grief, springing from
the calamity that befell that cherished woman and growing with such intensity, has now completely shattered
dear Rama. My heartstrings almost break to look at him. Today he is set to return to Pancha-vati forest to have a
last look at the places that witnessed the intimacies of his
sojourn with my daughter-in-law. He is self-possessed
by nature but still, one fears that the shock of overwhelming grief in such a place will produce great turmoil for him every step of the way. Be on the watch for
this, Godávari.

The breeze off your waves cooled with water
droplets
and wafting the scent of lotus filaments—
ever so gently direct it toward dear Rama
and soothe his soul if ever he grows faint.”
Rama's Last Act

Tamasā: ucitam eva dākṣīṇyāṃ snehasya. saṁjīvan'śopāyas
tu maulika eva Rāmaḥbhadrasya ādyā saṁnihitaḥ.

Muralā: katham īva?

Tamasā: śrūyatāṃ: purā kila Vālmīki|tapo|van'śopakaṇṭhāt
parityajya nivṛttte Lakṣmana Sītā|devi prāpta|prasava|ved-
danam ātmānam atiduḥkhā|saṁvegād Gaṅgā|pravāhe
nikṣiptavati. tad" āiva tatra dāraka|dvayaṃ prasūtā. bhag-
gavatībhyaṃ Prthivi|Jāhnaviḥbhyaṃ abhyupapannā rasā|
talam ca nītā. stanyā|tyāgāt parena ca dāraka|dvayaṃ
tasyāḥ Prācetasasya maha"|ṛṣer Gaṅgā|devyā svayaṃ sa-
marpitam.

3.10 Muralā: (sa|vismayam)

idṛṣśāṃ vinipāto 'pi
jāyate param'ādbhutaḥ
yat' śopakaraṇībhāvam
āyāty evaṃ|vidho janah.[3]

Tamasā: idānīḥ tu Śambūka|vṛttānten' ānena sambhāvita|
Janasthāna|gamanam Rāma|bhadram Sarayū|mukhād
upāśrutya bhagavati Bhāgirathi yad eva bhagavatyā Lop-
pāmudrayā snehād āsāṅkitaṃ tad ev' āsāṅkya Sītā|same-
tā kena cid īva graḥ|āpacaṇā|vyapadeśena Godāvariṁ vi-
lokaḥitum āgatā.

1 The Gaṅgā. 2 The river that flows on the outskirts of Ayodhya. Rā-
ma's capital city. 3 By the ritual of the birthday bracelets mentioned
below.

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PRELUDE TO ACT III

TĀMASA: Such thoughtfulness is entirely in keeping with Lopa-mudra’s affection. But a more basic means of revi-

talizing dear Rama is at hand right now.

MŪRALA: How so?

TĀMASA: Listen. Years ago, they say, no sooner had Láksh-

mana returned from Valmíki’s penance grove after dis-

owning her than Queen Sita went into labor, and such

was the force of her pain that she hurled herself in the

Ganga River.* But right then and there she gave birth
to two little boys. Earth and Ganga came to her aid and

spirited her away to the underworld. After the boys were

weaned, Goddess Ganga herself committed them to the
care of the great seer, the descendent of Prachétas.

MŪRALA: (in astonishment)

For such persons even ruin* is a source of sheer

wonder,

with beings of that sort coming to their aid.

TĀMASA: Now Bhagi-rathi learned from the Sárayuii that
dear Rama was likely to have come to Jana-sthana be-
cause of the Shambúka affair, and she was seized with
the very same tender-hearted worries as Lopa-mudra.
Along with Sita and under the pretext of warding off
the evil eyeiii she has therefore come to pay a visit to the
Godávari.

uttararamacaritāR 167 (168, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

MURALĀ: su | vicintitaṁ bhagavyā. rāja | dhāni | sthitasya khalu tais tair jagatāṁ abhyudayikaṁ kāryair vyāptasya Rāma|bhadrasya niyataś citta|vikṣepāḥ. āvyagrasya punar asya śoka|mātra|dvītyasya Paścavaṭṭi|praveso mahān anartha iti. tat katham idāniṁ Śītā|devyā Rāma|bhadra āśvasaniyaḥ syāt?

TAMASĀ: uktam atra bhagavyā Bhāgirathī|devyā: «vatse, devalyajana|sambhave Śīte, adya khalv āyuṣmatoḥ Kuśā| Lavayor dvādaśasya janma|saṃvatsarasya saṅkhyā|maṅgala|granthir abhivardhate. tad ātmanaḥ purāṇa|śva- śuram etāvato mānavasya rāja|ṛṣi|vaṃśasya prasavitāraṁ Savitāram apahata|pāṃmāṇaṁ devam sva|has’t|āvaci- tāṁ ṃuspair upatiṣṭhasva. na ca tvām avanipṛṣṭhalavarti- nīṁ amāvatprabhāveṇa devata āpi drakṣyanti, kim punar mārtīyāḥ?» iti. ahaṁ c’ ājnāpitā: «Tamase, tvayi prakṛtya|preṁ” āiva vadhūr vatsā Jānakī. atas tvam ev’ āṣyāḥ pray antar[li]bhava» iti. s” ahaṁ adhunā yath’|ādiśtaṁ anuṣṭhitām.


TAMASĀ: tad iyaṁ Godāvarīḥrajdān niśkramya,

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1 The amulet bracelet would be tied around the boys’ wrists. 2 The Gaṅgā is often represented as the mother of the Raghu clan.
múrala: That was very prescient of Ganga: Of course, so long as King Rama remained in the royal capital and was preoccupied with the many pressing affairs of his subjects, he would certainly have been distracted. But now that he has nothing to divert him and no companion other than his grief, his return to Pancha-vati is fraught with danger. Is there then some way Queen Sita might be able to comfort dear Rama?

támasa: The goddess Bhagi-rathi has already anticipated this. “My child Sita,” she said to her, “you who were born at a sacred rite: Today, as you know, the amulet for counting the birthdays of Kusha and Lava (long may they live!) has reached twelve. You must accordingly collect some flowers with your own hands and worship the stainless Sun, who is both progenitor of the Mánavas, your sons’ royal lineage, and your own primeval father-in-law. Thanks to my power no god, let alone mortal, will be able to perceive that you are present here on earth.” And she gave me the following order: “Támasa, the child Jánaki, my daughter-in-law, is especially fond of you, so it’s up to you to attend upon her.” And now I am doing as I was directed.

múrala: I will inform the Lopa-mudra of this plan. I suspect that dear Rama himself has already arrived.

támasa: And there, emerging from a pond by the Godávari,
RAMA’S LAST ACT

paripāṇdu|durba|kapola|sundara|ṁ
dadhati vilola|kabarikam ānanam
karunasya mūrtir atha vā śāririnī
viraha|vyath” ēva vanam eti Jānakī. [4]

MURALĀ: iyaṁ hi sā,
kisalayam ēva mugdham bandhanād vipralūnaṁ
ḥṛdayalkusumajōṣi dāruṇo dirgha|śokaḥ
glapayati paripāṇḍu kṣāmam asyāḥ śāritaṁ
śaradija ēva dharmah ketak|garbha|patram. [5]

3.20
parikramyā niśkrānte.
viśkambhakaḥ

uttararamacaritaR 170 (170, 0)
PRELUDE TO ACT III

Her face covered by her disheveled hair,
all the more beautiful for her wan and sunken
cheeks,
the very image of pity, the embodiment of the pain
of love’s parting, is Jánaki entering the woods.

MÚRALA: Yes, that must be her,

Like a tender bud sheared off from its stem
her pallid and haggard body has been withered
by long hard grief parching her heart’s flower
like autumn heat a leaf in a kétaki bud.*

Walking about, exeunt both.

End of the Prelude
Nepathye: pramādaḥ! pramādaḥ!

tataḥ praviṣāti puspaḥ āvacayaḥ vyagrāḥ saḥ karun'ḥ autsukyaṃ ākarnayanti sītā.

sītā: 'ammahe, jānāmi piaṣahi me Vāsanti vāharadi?

Nepathye:

3.25 Sītā(devyā svakaraṃkalitaḥ sallakīpallavāḥ grair agre lolah kariṃkalabhako yah purā poṣito 'bhūt, [6ab]

sītā: ‘kim tassa?

Punar Nepathye:

vadhvā sārdhaṃ payasi viharan so 'yam anyena darpād uddāmena dviradalpatinā sanniṃpatyāḥ abhīyuktāḥ. [6cd]

sītā: (sa/sambhramāṃ kati cit padāni dadbati) 'ajja|utta, parittāhi, parittāhi mama taṃ puttaṃ! (smṛtim abhinīya, sa/vaiklavyam) ‘hadhi, hadhi! tāṁ jeyva cira| paricidāṃ akkarāriṃ Pañcavaḍīḍaṃsāṃśeṇa maṃ maṇḍaḥbhāinīṃ anubandhanti. āha ajja|utta! (murchatī)

Tamasā: (praviṣya) vatsa, samāśvāsihi samāśvāsihi.

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uttararamacaritaR 174 (174, 0)
OFFSTAGE: Danger! Danger!

*Enter sita* engrossed in picking flowers and listening with growing pity and anxiety.

sita: What, is it the voice of my beloved friend Vasánti that I’m hearing?

STILL OFFSTAGE:

The elephant that long ago
Queen Sita raised as a calf
on *shállaki* leaf tips picked by hand—
and how impatient it stood before her—

sita: What about him?

STILL OFFSTAGE:

was busy playing with his mate
in the river when an elephant,
a wild bull, fell upon him
in the most brazen attack.

sita: (in alarm taking a few steps forward) Husband, save my little son, save him! (miming the return of her memory; crestfallen) Oh dear god, the sight of Pancha-vánti has brought back to me, cursed as I am, those words familiar from long ago. Oh my husband! (falls faint)

*Enter támasa:* My child, compose yourself, I beg you.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

3.30 NEPATHYE: vimāna|rāja, atr’ āiva sthīyatām.

sītā: (āśvasya, sa/sādhvāt’/āḷāsam) ’āmmahe, jala|bharida|
meha|manthara|ttanīda|gambhīra|maṃsa|kudo ṇu
eso bhāradi|niggoso bharanto kaṅṣa|vivaṅga maṃ pi
manda|bhāñīṁ jhatti uddhūsarei? 6

TAMASĀ: (sa/smit’/āśram) ayi, vatse,

alparisphuṭa|nikvāne
kutastye ’pi tvam ādṛśī
stanayitor mayūr” iva
caṅkī’ōtkanṭhitam sthitā? [7]

sītā: ’bhaavadi, kiṃ bhaṅgasi, »alparipphuḍaṃ« ti? mae uṇa
sarajāṅjoena paccabhāṃdāṃ ajjalutto jjeva vāharadi,

3.35 TAMASĀ: śrūye: »tapasyataḥ śūdrasya daṇḍa|dhāraṇ’|ār-
tham Aikṣvāko rājā Janasthānam āgataḥ« iti.

sītā: ’diṭṭhiā alpariṅga|rāja|dhanno kkhu so rāah,

NEPATHYE:

yatra drunā āpi mṛggā āpi bandhavo me
yāni priyā|saharā|ciram adhivātsam,
etāni tāni bahu|nirjhar|kandaṇāni
Godāvarī|parisarasaya gires taṭāni. [8]

1 An ancestor of Rāma; the name is also used for Rāma’s dynasty.

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

OFFSTAGE: King of chariots, station yourself right here.

SITā: (regaining her composure; with a flash of panic) Why, how is it that this sound of human speech, rich and deep as the low rumble of a water-laden cloud, should fill my ears and all of a sudden unsettle* me, cursed as I am?

TĀMASA: (smiling and crying at once) Ah my child,

How can someone like you become so uneasy and wistful at a sound so indistinct and uncertain, like a peahen at distant thunder?

SITā: Blessed one, why do you say “indistinct”? It can only be my husband speaking. I recognize the sound of his voice.

TĀMASA: I’ve heard that an Ikshvāku king has come to Jānāsthana to punish a Shudra for practicing austerities.

SITā: How fortunate the king has not renounced the practice of kingly dharma.*

OFFSTAGE:

A place where the trees and beasts themselves were kinsmen, where I sojourned so long with my beloved… there are the mountain slopes by Godāvari studded with caves, crisscrossed by rushing streams.

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Rama's Last Act

sītā: (drītva) ṣa kadhaṁ, pabhāda|canda|maṇḍal|āvaṇ-ḍularpiṇkkhaṁa|dubbaleṇa āreṇa aṁ |ṇia|somma|ga-ṃbhīr|āṇubhāva|mettal|paccabhīتاणio ajja|utto jeyva.
tā maṁ dhārehi, (tamasāṁ āliya mṛcchati)

tamasā: (dhārayanti) vate, samāśvasihi, samāśvasihi.

3.40 nepathyē: anena Pañcavaṭṭil|darśanena

antar|linasya duḥkh|āgner
ady’ ōddāmaṁ jvalisyataḥ
utpīda iva dhūmasya
mohah prāg āvṛṇnoti mām. [9]

hā, priye Jānaki!

Tamasā: (sva|gatam) idaṁ tad āśāṅkitaṁ gurujjanen’ āpi.

sītā: (samāśvasya) ṣa kadhaṁ edaṁ?

3.45 nepathyē: hā devi Daṇḍak””āraṇya|vāsa|priya|sakhi. hā Vi-
dehā|raja|putri.

sītā: ṣa haddhi, haddhi. maṁ maṇḍal|bhāinīṁ vāharia āmila-
nta|vettal|gil|uppal ha|machido jeyva. hā kadhaṁ dhara-
ṇi””vaṭṭhe niṣrussāha|niṣaḥaṁ vipalhattho? bhaavadi Ta-
mase, parittāhi, parittāhi. jivāvehi aja|uttaḥ, (pada-
yōḥ patati)

1 The Gaṅgā.

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

SITA: (observing) Oh, what in the world... a form pale, wasted, and weak as the disk of the moon at dawn but with a gentle yet profound bearing all its own—the only thing that enables me to recognize... yes, it must be my husband. Take hold of me. (falls faint in TÁMASA's embrace)

TÁMASA: (holding her) My child, compose yourself, I beg you.

OFFSTAGE: The sight of Pancha-vati

Rekindles now the fire of sorrow
that had long been dormant in my heart
but first, like a dense pall of smoke,
a delirium envelops me.

Oh my beloved Jánaki!

TÁMASA: (aside) This is exactly what my guru feared.

SITA: (regaining her composure) Oh, how is this possible?

OFFSTAGE: Oh my queen, beloved companion in my sojourn in Dándaka wilderness. Oh princess of Vidéha.

SITA: Dear god, with my name on his lips—the name of cursed me—his dark blue lotus eyes rolled back and he fainted dead away. How can we leave him lying sprawled upon the naked ground, friendless and helpless? Save him, Támasa, save him. Bring my husband back to life. (falls at her feet)
**RAMA’S LAST ACT**

**TAMASĀ:**

tvam eva nanu kalyāṇī
sañjivaya jagat|patim.
prīya|sparśo hi pāṇīs te
tatvā āiva niyato bharaḥ. [10]

sītā: "jaṃ bhodu taṃ bhodu. jadhā bhaavadi ānavedi, (sa/
sambhramam niṣkrāntā)

tataḥ praviśati bhūmau nipatatāḥ s'āśrayā sītāvat spriyamā-
nah s'ābladāccchvāso Rāmaḥ.

3.50 sītā: (kim cīt saḥbaraṃ) "jāne puṇo vi paccāgadaṃ vya jīvi-
daṃ telloaṣa,

**RĀMAḥ:** hanta, bhoḥ, kim etat?

praścyotanaṃ nu hari|candana|pallavānāṃ?
nispīdit'endukara|kandalaljo nu sekaḥ?
ātaptajīvita|punah|paritarpaṇo me

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

TĀMASA:

But surely only you, my lovely child,
can bring the lord of the world back to life.
Beloved is the touch of your hand
and on it alone the entire burden rests.*

SITA: Whatever will be will be. As the blessed one wishes.
(exit in alarm)

The scene opens on RAMA, collapsed on the ground, being stroked
by the weeping SITA, and recovering with an expression of
bliss.

SITA: (with muted joy) I feel as if the life of the entire uni-
verse has returned.

RAMA: But, what is happening here?

Is this some kind of distillation
of heavenly sandalwood leaves,
or are these droplets come from stalks
of moonbeams squeezed in a press?
Or is someone dripping on my heart,
to soothe again a life once burned,
the extract of the magic herb
that brings the dead back to life?
RAMA’s LAST ACT

sparṣaḥ pura pariṣṭha niyataḥ sa eṣa
saṃjīvaṃ ca maṇasaḥ pariṃohanaḥ ca,
saṁtāpaḻjāṃ sapadi yathā pratiṣṭhaya mūrcḥāṃ
ānandanaṇa jaḍatāṃ punar ātanaṇī. [12]

Sītā: (sa)sādhrasaḥ(karuṇam aparistha) aṣṭikamaḥ jevva dāṇīṃ
me bahudāmaṃ,

3.55 Rāmaḥ: (upaviṣṭa) na khalu vatsalayā devyāḥ ābhuyapapanno
‘smi?

Sītā: ḫaddhi, ḫaddhi. kiṃ ti ajjajutto maṃ bhaṃṣisadi?

Rāmaḥ: bhavatu, paśyāmi.

Sītā: ḫhaavadi Tāmase, osaramha! jadi dāva maṃ pekkhi-

saḍadi tado anjlabhaṇuṇṇāḍā|saṇḍidhāṇena adhiṃ ma-

ma rāa kuppissadi,

Tamaśa: aye vate, Bhāgirathaḥ|varalprasādāḥ devatānam apy
aḍṛṣyāḥ saṃvṛtt” āsi.

3.60 Sītā: ḫaṃ. atthi edaṃ,

Rāmaḥ: priye Jānaki! nanu priye Jānaki…

Sītā: (sa)munyagadgadam) aḍḍa|utta, aṣarisaṃ khu edaṃ
imāsa vuttantassa, (s)āsram) ḫaḥa vā kiṃ ti vajjamaṅgā
jammatare vi puṇo aṣambhāvita|laddha|daṃṣaṇassā

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uttararamacarita

182 (183, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

Surely I am familiar with this from long ago, this touch that both restores my consciousness and induces a deep delirium: no sooner does it dispel the faintness arising from my anguish than it produces the stupefaction of an absolute bliss.

**sītā**: (withdrawing in apprehension and pity) This is as far as I should go for now.

**rāma**: (taking his seat) Surely it cannot be that the queen in her affection for me has come to my aid?

**sītā**: Oh dear, why should my husband be talking* about me now?

**rāma**: Well, let me just look around.

**sītā**: Tāmasa, we must leave! If the king sees me he'll be furious I am here without his permission.

**tāmasa**: But dear child, the grace of Bhagirathi has made you invisible, even to gods.

**sītā**: Ah yes, you are right.

**rāma**: Beloved Jānaki! Surely, beloved Jānaki…

**sītā**: (her voice breaking with anger) My husband, really, this is hardly in keeping with all that has happened. (tearfully) But then why should I be so hard-hearted and pitiless toward my husband when it is me, cursed me, he's affectionately addressing and when I never thought

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RAMA'S LAST ACT

maṃ jeyva mandaḥbhāṇiṃ uddisia vacchalassa evvaṃ|
vādiṇo ajjaḥuttassa uvari niraṇukkosā bhavissaṃ? ahaṃ|
edassa hiaṃ jāṇami, mama eso tti,

RĀMAH: (sarvato 'valokya, sa/nirvedam) āhā, na kaś cid atra.

SĪṬĀ: 'bhaavadi Tamase, tadāḥ niṣkāraṇajpariccāno vi eda-

ssa evvaṃ|vidheṇa daṃsaṇeṇa kilisio via me hiaḥ|āvatthā|

tti ṇa āṇāmi,

3.65 TAMASĀ: jāṇāmi vate, jāṇāmi.

taṭaḷsthāṃ nairāsyād,

api ca kaluṣaṃ vipriyaḥvāśād,

viyoj ge dirghaḥ 'miṇ

jhaṭiti ghaṭanāt stambhitam iva,

prasannaṃ saujaṇyād,

dayitaṃKarunār gāḍhājkaruṇaṃ,

draviḍbhūtaṃ premṇā
tava hṛdayam asmin kṣāna iva. [13]

RĀMAH: devi,

prasāda iva mūrtaś te

sparśaḥ sneh'ārdraśśitaḥ

ady' āpy ānandaya ti māṃ.
tvaṃ punaḥ kv' āsi, nandini? [14]

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uttararamacaritaR 184 (184, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

for a moment that I would see him again,* not even in a future life? I know his heart—as he knows mine.

RAMA: (looking all around; despondently) No, no one is there.

SITA: O Támasa, though he disowned me like that so groundlessly, when I see him in this state my heart reacts in ways I cannot understand.

TÁMASA: I know, my child, I know. 3.65

Cold because of your despair,
bitter because of his unkindness,
in a state of near paralysis
at meeting after long separation;
forgiving because of your goodness,
with deep sympathy for all your husband’s pathos,
melted by love—such is your heart
and all, it seems, in a single moment.

RAMA: O my queen,

Your touch is like forgiveness incarnate,
cool as it is and moist with love.
It is there to delight me in spite of all—
but where are you, my heart’s delight?

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RAMA’S LAST ACT

3.70 RĀMAH:  atha vā kuṭah priyatamā? nūnaṁ saṅkalpa|ābhyaśaḥ
pāṭav’|āpādana eṣa Rāmasya bhramah.

Nepathyē: pramādaḥ! pramādaḥ!

Sītā|devyā sa|va|karaj|kalitaḥ
śallakilpallav’|āgrair
agre lolaḥ kari|kalabhako
yaḥ purā poṣito ‘bhūt, [1 5ab]

RĀMAH: (sa|karun’|atsukyam) kiṃ tasya?

Punar Nepathyē:

vadhvā sārdhaṁ payasi viharan
so ‘yam anyena darpād
uddāmena dviradalpatina
sannipati’ abhiyuktah. [1 5cd]

3.75 Sītā: ṇo dāṇiṁ abhiujiṣṣadiḥ?

RĀMAH: kv’ āsau, kv’ āsau durātmā yaḥ priyāyaḥ putrakaṁ
vadhūdviṣṭiṁ abhiḥavaḥ? (utthiṣṭhate)

Vāsantī: (pṛtvīṣṭa, sambrānta) katham, devo Raghu|nandanaḥ?

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

sita: My husband’s protestations over Sita are filled with a deep affection and overflow with love’s bliss. To believe them is to make me think that being born was worth it—however sharp the arrow of having been groundlessly disowned.*

rama: But then, what would my beloved be doing here? 3.70
This is a pure delusion on Rama’s part, brought on by his long-honed skill in wishful thinking.

offstage: Danger! Danger!

Rama: (with growing pity and anxiety) What about him?

Still offstage:

was busy playing with his mate
in the river when an elephant,
a wild bull, fell upon him
in the most brazen attack.

sita: Who can come to the rescue now? 3.75

rama: Where’s the wretch that dares assault my beloved’s little son and his mate? (stands up)

Enter Vasánti in alarm Can it be king Raghu-nándana?

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RAMA'S LAST ACT

sītā: 'kahaṁ, piaśahi me Vāsanti,
vāsanti: jayatu devaḥ.

3.80 RĀMAH: (nirūpya) kathaṁ, devyāḥ priyaśakhi Vāsanti.

vāsanti: deva, tvaryatām, tvaryatām. ito Jātāyuśikharasya
dakṣinena Sītā|tīrthena Godāvarīṁ avatīrya sambhāva-yatu devyāḥ putrakaṁ devaḥ.

sītā: 'hā tāda Jaḍāo. sunṇaṁ ūr viṇā Janāṭhāṇam,

RĀMAH: ahaha, ṛṛdaya|marmajchīḍhaḥ khalv amī kath'ōdghatāḥ.

vāsanti: ita ito devaḥ.

3.85 sītā: 'bhaavadī, saccakaṁ jevva vaṇḍaṁ añc vi maṁ ṇa pe-kkhandi,

TAMASĀ: ayi vate, sarvaṁdevatābhyaḥ prakaṛṣṭam aiśvaryaṁ
Mandakini|devyāḥ. tat kim ity āśāṅkase?

sītā: 'tado aṁusaramha,

parikrāmataḥ.

RĀMAH: bhagavati Godāvari, namas te.

1 The Gaṅgā.

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

sītā: Why, it’s my beloved friend Vasánti.

vasánti: Long live the king.

rāma: (looking) Why, it’s the queen’s beloved friend Vasánti.

vasánti: Hurry, my lord, hurry. If you head out from here and go down to the Godávari by Sītā’s Ford to the south of Jataýūs’ Peak you will see the queen’s little son.

sītā: Oh father Jataýūs. Without you Jana-sthana is empty.

rāma: Ah, allusions that tear at my heart’s soft core.

vasánti: This way, my lord, this way.

sītā: Blessed one, it’s really true, even the forest deities can’t see me.

tāmasa: Dear child, Mandakini’s power far surpasses that of all other deities. There’s no need to worry.

sītā: So let’s follow behind.

The two walk about.

rāma: Blessed Godávari, homage to you.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

3.90 Vāsanti: (nirūpya) deva, modasva vijayīnā vadhūkdvitiyena devyāḥ putraṇa.

RĀMAḤ: vijayatām āyuṣmān.

sītā: "ammahe, idiso so saṃvutto,="

RĀMAḤ: devī, diśṭyā vardhase.

yen' odgacchad[bisajkisalaya] snigdha[dant’āṅkureṇa vyākṛtās te, suṭanu, lavali] pālavaḥ karnaṃmulāt so ’yaṃ putras tava madā[mucāṃ vāraṇānāṃ vijetā yat kalyāṇāṃ vayasi tarune bhājanāṃ tasya jātāḥ. [16]

3.95 sītā: "a|viutto dāṇiṃ dih‘āū imāe somma|daṃsaṇāe bho-" du,="

RĀMAḤ: sakhi Vāsanti, paśyā paśyā. kānt” [ānuvṛtti|cātur- yam apy ardhāṃ śiṣṭitaṃ vatsena:

lit’”ōtkhāta[mṛṇālakānda[kavala] cchedeṣu sampāditaḥ pusyat[puskara]vāṣītasya payaso gaṇḍūṣa[satkrāntaye sekāḥ śīkariṇā kareṇa vīhitaḥ kāmaṃ virāme punar na snehād anjaralā[nālaṇālini] pat’ātapatraṃ dhṛtam. [17]"
ACT III: THE SHADOW

vasánti: (looking) My lord, rejoice that the queen’s little son along with his mate has won the day.

rama: Victory and long life to him.

sita: My, how big he’s grown.

rama: My queen, how fortunate you are.

That son of yours, my lovely wife, who once would pluck the lávalí leaf from behind your ear with his budding sprout of a tusk glossy as a lotus petal has now won a victory over rutting bull elephants—clearly he continues to enjoy the good fortune* of his childhood.

sita: Long may he live and from this day on may he never be separated from his kindly mate.

rama: Look, friend Vasánti, look: The child has almost learned the art of deferring to his beloved.

In the intervals between her chewing morsels of lily stalks dug up in play, he offers her mouthfuls of water scented with just-blooming lotuses, spraying water from his drop-filled trunk. And yet at rest he fails to show the proper concern by shading her with the leaf of a straight-stemmed lotus.*
RAMA'S LAST ACT

sītā: ʻbhaavadi Tamase, aam dāva idiso jādo. te unā na aṅāmi Kusa|Lavā ettikeṇa kāleṇa kāleṣā via honti,

TAMASĀ: yāḍrśo 'yaṃ tāḍrśau tāv api.

3.100 sītā: ʻidisī ahaṃ manda|bhāṇi jāe na kevalaṃ niṛantarau ajja|utta|virahohu putta|virahohu vi,

TAMASĀ: bhavatavyat' ēyam idṛśī.

sītā: ʻkiṃ vā mae pasūdāe jena tādīsam pi mama puttakāṇaṃ isijkalida|viralaj|komalad|dhavala|dasan|ujjala|kavolaṃ anubaddhaj|muddha|kālīvihasidaṃ niibaddha|kā|sihanḍaam amala|muhal|pūndariī|julaam na paricum-bidam ajja|utteṇa,

TAMASĀ: astu devatā|prasātāt.

sītā: ʻbhaavadi Tamase, edinā avacca|sambharaṇeṇa ussasi-dā|pahudha|thānaṃ tānaṃ ca piduṇo saṃnidhamēna khaṇalmetam saṃsārinī mhi saṃvuttā,

3.105 TAMASĀ: kim atr' ōcyate? prasavaḥ khalu prakarṣa|paryantaḥ snehasya. param c' ātad anyonya|samsileṣaṃ pitarḥ.

antah|karana|tatrtvasya
dampatyoḥ snehaiṣamśrayat
ānandal|granthir eko 'yam
aparyam iti badhyate. [18]

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sītā: Tāmāsa, when I see how much he has grown I think about Kusha and Lava and what they might look like after all this time.

tāmāsa: ‘They are just like him.’

sītā: How cursed can I be to have been so cruelly separated not only from my husband but from my sons as well.

tāmāsa: So was it meant to be.

sītā: What good was having children if my husband will never be able to kiss the faces of his sons—faces like two fresh lotuses, shining with the glow of a few delicate bright white teeth just appearing, the innocent laughs and lisps and tufted hair of childhood?

tāmāsa: May the deities show their grace.

sītā: Tāmāsa, at the mere memory of my children my breasts swell with milk, and the presence of their father makes me feel, for a moment, as if I were back among the living.

tāmāsa: What is there to say? A child marks the highest degree of love, and the source of the parents’ ultimate bonding.

Because it is the common object of a couple’s love a child is a knot of bliss that ties their hearts together.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

VĀSANTI: ito 'pi devah pāśyatu.

aṭṭulita|padatāṇḍav|ōtsav|ānte
svayam acir|ōdgata|mugdha|lola|barhaḥ
maṇi|mukuṭa iv' ócchikhaḥ kadambe
nadati sa eṣa vadhū|sakhaḥ śīkhaṇḍī. [19]

SĪṬĀ: (sā|kautuk|āsram) eso so

3.110 RĀMAḤ: modasvā vatsa, modasva.

SĪṬĀ: evvam bhodu

RĀMAḤ:

bhramiśu kṛtalpuṭ|āntar|maṇḍal|āvṛtti caksuḥ
pracalita|catura|bhrū|tāṇḍavair maṇḍayantyā
kara|kisalaya|tālaiv mugdhayā nartyamanāṁ
sutam iva manasā tvam vatsalena smarāmi. [20]

HANTA, TIRYAṑCO 'pi paricayam anurudhyante.

katipaya|kusum|ōdgamaḥ kadambaḥ
priyatamaya parivardhito ya āsit— [21ab]

3.115 SĪṬĀ: (nirūpya, i|āśram) sūṭṭhu paccabhiṇḍidam aja|utte-

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

VASANTI: Look over there as well, my lord:

The very same peacock is calling to his mate from high in the kadamba tree, like a jeweled crest, with his soft tail feathers just now fanning out at the end of his festive, incomparable tāndava dance.*

SITA: (tearfully, with surprise) It is him!

RAMA: All happiness to you, dear child.

SITA: Yes, so be it.

RAMA:

I remember you with a fatherly affection: my simple-hearted wife would make you dance like her child by marking the beat with her hands and rolling her eyes to make you swirl: whirling like mandalas in their sockets, and with all the movements of a tāndava in the skilful flutter of her brows.*

Why, even animals acknowledge old acquaintances:

This kadamba tree just now coming into flower was grown from seed by my beloved queen—

SITA: (looking; tearfully) How sharp my husband’s powers of recognition.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

RĀMAH:

smarati girijmayūra eṣa devyāḥ
svaljana iv’ ātra yataḥ pramodam eti. [21cd]

VĀSANTI: atra tāvad āsanalparigrahaṃ karotu devaḥ.

etat tad eva kadali|vana|madhya|varti
kāntā|sakhasya śayaniya|śilā|talaṃ te
atra sthitā tṛṇam addad bahuśo yad ebhyāḥ
Sītā tato hariṇakair na vimucyate sma. [22]

RĀMAH: idam ajśākyaṃ draṣṭum. (anyato rudann upaviṣati)

3.120 SĪTĀ: “sahī Vāsanti, kiṃ tue kidam ajjauṭtassa mama a edam
dāṃsaante? hadhī, hadhī. so jjevva ajja|utto, tāṃ je-
vva Pañcavadi|vaṇaṃ, ṣa jjevva pia|sahī Vāsanti, te jjev-
va viviha|vissambha|sakkhino Godāvari|kāṇaṃ|uddesā,
te jjevva jāda|ṇivisesā mīa|pakkhi|pādavā. mama uṇa
manda|bhāṅgīe disantaṃ pi savvaṃ jevva edam ṇatthi.
iddiso jiałloassa parivatto,

VĀSANTI: sakhi Śīte, kathaṃ na paśyasi Rāmasy’ āvasthāṁ?

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and the peacock is surely remembering her
in treating the tree as if it were a brother.

VASÁNTI: Let my lord sit here a moment.
Here is the stone bench in the kádali grove
where you and your beloved would rest,
where Sita would feed the fawns so much grass
that they would never let her go.

RAMA: I can't bear to look at this. (sits elsewhere, weeping)

SITA: Vasánti, my friend, what are you doing to my hus-
band, and to me, by showing this? Dear god, here is my
husband, the very same husband, the same Pancha-vati
forest, the same friend Vasánti, the same stretches of for-
est by the Godávari that witnessed our many intimacies,
the same trees and birds and animals that were like my
own offspring—all right before my eyes, and, cursed as
I am, it has all ceased to exist for me. How utterly my
world has been turned upside down.

VASÁNTI: Oh my friend Sita, don't you see the state Rama
is in?*
RAMA’S LAST ACT

kuvalayadala|snigdhair aṅgair
dadu naya|āṅtavaṁ
satam api te sv’|ecchā|drśyo
navo nava eva yaḥ
vikala|karanaḥ pāṇḍu|syaṁaḥ
śucā paridurbalaḥ
katham api sa ity unneta|yas
tath” api drśam priyaḥ. [23]

sītā: pekkhāmi, sahi, pekkhāmi₃

TAMASĀ: putrī, paśyanti priyaṁ bhūyaḥ.

3.125 sītā: “hā deva, eso mae viṇā, aham pi edeṇa viṇ” ētti ke-
na sambhāvidam āsi? tā mעהttakaṁ pi jamm|antarādo
via laddha|daṁśaṇaṁ bāha|salil|antaresu pekkhāmi dā-
va vacchālaṁ ajja|uttam₃ (paśyanti sthitā)

TAMASĀ: (sa|neb’hāraṁ pariṣvajja)

vilulitam atipūraṁ
bāspam ānanda|śoka|
prabhavam vaṣṭjantī
tṛṣṇay” ottāna|dirghā
snapayati hrday|ēśaṁ
sneha|niṣyandini te
dhaval|bahala|mugdhā
dugdha|kuly” ēva drśih. [24]

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uttararamacaritaR 198 (198, 0)
When his body was fresh as a blue lotus petal
he gave the eyes something to celebrate,
and even when you could gaze at him
to your heart’s content, he seemed ever new.
And now, when almost senseless, pale and dark at
once,
and so weak with grief it is almost impossible
to tell it is him, he still delights the eyes.*

But I do see, my friend, I do.

My daughter, may you long continue to behold
your beloved.*

Oh lord, who would ever have believed that he could
be without me and I without him? Let me just look
at my dear husband a moment longer—being able to
see him* is like being reborn—in the gaps between my
falling tears. (continues to look)

(embracing her, weeping affectionately)

A flood of tears surging in spate
arising from your bliss and grief
is released by your eyes wide with longing,
and your glances flowing with love,
white and sweet and innocent,
are drenching the lord of your heart
as if they were a stream of milk.*
RAMA’S LAST ACT

VĀSANTI:

dadatu taravaḥ puspair arghyaḥ
phalaś ca madhuścyutah.
sphuṭita[kamal’āmodal’prayāḥ
pravāntu vaṇ’ānilāḥ.
kalam a[viralam rajat’kaṇṭhāḥ
kvaṇantu sakuntayah.
punar idam ayaṃ devo Rāmaḥ
svayaṃ vanam āgataḥ. [25]

RĀMAH: ehi, sakhi Vāsanti. nanv itaḥ athiyatāṃ.

3.130 VĀSANTI: (upaviṣṭya, s’āśram) Mahā|rāja, api kuśalaṃ ku-
māra|Lakṣmaṇasya?

RĀMAH: (aśrutim abhiniya)

kara|kamala|vitirṇair ambuṇinīvarajśaspais
taruṣakuni|kuraṇgān Maithili yān apuṣyat,
bhavati mama vikāras teṣu dṛṣṭeṣu ko ’pi
drava iva hṛdayasya prasra[ rhyme]yogyaḥ.

VĀSANTI: mahā|rāja, nanu pṛcchāmi: kuśalaṃ kumāra|Lak-
ṣmaṇasya?

RĀMAH: (sva|gatam) aye, «mahā|rāj”, “eti nispraṇayam āma-
ntrana | padam. Saumitri | mātre ca bāṣpa | skhaliś’ | āk-
ṣaraḥ kuśal’ānupraśnaḥ. tathā manye: vidita|Sitā|vṛttā-
nt” eyam iti. (prakāśam) āṃ, kuśalaṃ kumārasya. (rodi-
ti)

1Lakṣmaṇaś.

200

uttararamacaritaR 200 (200, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

VASÁNTI:

Let the trees offer a welcoming gift of flowers and fruits, drizzling them with honey. Let the forest breezes blow, bearing the full scent of freshly blooming lotuses. And let the birds begin a sweet unbroken song in full-throated warbling. For once again King Rama himself has come on a visit to this forest.

RAMA: Come, Vasánti my friend. Why don’t we sit over here?

VASÁNTI: (taking her seat; tearfully) Your Majesty, I trust 3.130 Prince Lákshmana is well?

RAMA: (miming not having heard)

Máithili would give these trees and birds and deer water, seeds, and grass from her lotus hand, and to see them again transforms me, as if my heart were liquefied, ready to burst open and gush forth.*

VASÁNTI: But Your Highness, I was asking whether Prince Lákshmana is well.

RAMA: (aside) Ah, “Your Highness,” how cold the salutation. She asks only after Saumítri’s welfare, and her words are sob-choked. I assume she must know what happened to Sita. (aloud) Yes, the prince is well. (begins to weep)

uttararamacaritaR 201 (202, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

3.135 VĀSANTI: ayi deva, kimiti dārūṇaḥ khalv asi?

SĪṬA: sahi Vāsanti, kim tumaṃ si evvaṃ|vādini? pi'|aruho
kkhu savvassa ajjajutto, visesado mama piṇahie,

VĀSANTI:

«tvam jīvitaṃ, tvam asi me hṛdayaṃ dvitiyaṃ,
tvam kaumudī nayanayor, amṛtaṃ tvam aṅge,»
ityādibhiḥ priyaśatair anubadhya mugdhāṁ
tām eva... sāntam. atha vā kim ih’ ottarena? [27]

(itī mūhyati)

TAMASĀ: sthāne khalu vākyaṇivṛttir mohaś ca.

3.140 RĀMAḤ: sakhi, samāśvasihi, samāśvasihi.

VĀSANTI: (samāśvasya) tat kim idam aṭkāryam anuṣṭhitam
devena?

SĪṬA: sahi Vāsanti, virama, virama,

RĀMAḤ: loko na mṛṣyaṭ iti.

VĀSANTI: tat kasya hetoh?

3.145 RĀMAḤ: sa eva jānāti kim api.

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

VASÁNTI: Ah my lord, why did you have to be so cruel, after all? 3.135

SITA: Vasánti my friend, how can you speak this way to him? My husband deserves kindness from everyone, not least from a dear friend of mine.

VASÁNTI:

“You are my life, you are my second heart, moonlight to my eyes, nectar to my limbs,” and so on—with countless honeyed words you charmed* her, that simple girl… But enough, why bother saying more?

(falls faint)

TÁMASA: It’s to be expected, after all, that she should fall speechless, even become delirious.

RAMA: Compose yourself, my friend, I beg you. 3.140

VASÁNTI: (regaining her composure) But why did my lord commit this unspeakable act?

SITA: Cease, my friend Vasánti, cease.

RAMA: Because of the people’s censure.

VASÁNTI: And what was the cause of that?

RAMA: The people alone have some idea.* 3.145
RAMA'S LAST ACT

TAMASĀ: cirād upālambhaḥ.

VĀSANTI:

ayi kaṭhora, yaśāḥ kila te priyaṃ.
kim ayaśo nanu ghoram atah pariṃ?
kim abhavad vipine hariṇī|dṛśāḥ?
kathaya, nātha, kathaṃ bata manyase? [28]

SĪTĀ: "tumaṃ tesa, sahi Vāsanti, dāruṇa kaṭhorā a já evaṃ
palittam palivesi,"

TAMASĀ: praṇaya evaṃ vyāharati śokaś ca.

3.150 RĀMAH: sakhi, kim atra mantavyam?

trast’|āika|ḥāyaṇa|kuraṅga|vilola|dṛṣṭes
tasyāḥ parisphuralgarbhaḥ|bhar’|ālasāyāḥ
jyotsnāmay” īva mṛdu|mugdha|mṛṇālal|kalpā
kravyādbhir aṅgas|latikā niyataṃ viluptā. [29]

SĪTĀ: "ajjalutta, dharāmi esā dharāmi,"

RĀMAH: hā, priye Jānaki, kv’ āsi?

SĪTĀ: "haddhi, haddhi, ajjalutto vi pamukkajkaṇṭhaṃ paru-

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ACT III: THE SHADOW

TÁMASA: Too late for a reproach.*

VASÁNTI:

Ah, heartless man, you prize your reputation, they say, but what ill repute is worse than this? What can have become of the fawn-eyed woman in the woods, do you suppose? Tell me, my master.

SIṬA: It’s you, Vasánti my friend, who is cruel and heartless for inflaming a man already engulfed in flames.

TÁMASA: It’s love speaking thus, and grief.

RAMA: My friend, what is one to suppose in such a case? No doubt her eyes would have rolled like those of a frightened yearling as she lay exhausted with the weight of the unborn kicking within while her delicate body, soft and tender as a lotus petal or a mass of moonbeams, was torn apart by savage beasts.

SIṬA: My husband, I am alive, here, alive.

RAMA: Oh my beloved Jánaki, where are you?

SIṬA: Dear god, even* my husband is crying out, at the top of his lungs.

**uttaramacaritaR 205 (206, 0)**
RAMA’S LAST ACT

3.155 TAMASĀ: vatse, sāmpratikam ev’ āitat. kartavyāni duḥkhitair duḥkhānirvāpanāni. yataḥ:

pūr’ōtpiḍe taṭākasya
parivāhaḥ pratikriyā.
śokaḥṣobhe ca hṛdayaṁ
pralāpaṁ eva dhāryate. [30]

viśeṣato Rāmaḥbhadrasya bahutaraṁprakāraṁkaśto jīvajlokaḥ.

idaṁ viśvaṁ pālyaṁ
vidhivaṁ abhiyuktena manasaṁ.
priyāḥśoka jīvaṁ
kusumaṁ iva gharmah klamayati.
svayaṁ kṛtvā tyāgaṁ
vilapanaṁvinodo ‘py aṣulabhas
tad ady’ āpy ucchvāso.
abhavati nānu lābho hi ruditaṁ. [31]

RĀMAḥ: kaṣṭaṁ bhoḥ kaṭṣam.

3.160 dalati hṛdayaṁ gāḍhil’ōḍvegaṁ,
dvidhaṁ tu na bhidyate.
vahati vikalāḥ kāyo moham,
na muñcata cetanāṁ.
jvalayati tanūṁ antarjādāhaṁ,
karoṁna bhasmaśāt.
praharati vidhir marmaṁcchedi,
na kṛṇtati jīvatam. [32]

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TĀMASA: But my child, this is beneficial. Those who are sorrowful must try to expel their sorrow, for

When a flood puts pressure on a dam
one counteracts it by releasing water,
and it is weeping that helps the heart
hold out when it’s overcome by grief.

And especially when for dear Rama this world has now become so awful in so many ways.

He must use his sharpest wits to protect
the whole earth according to law
while grief for his beloved withers his soul
as summer heat can wither a flower.
Since he himself is to blame for disowning her
no relief can be found in lamenting,
yet the breath of life stubbornly remains.*
So surely to weep is a blessing.

RAMA: How truly awful.

My heart breaks in sheer agony
but doesn't split apart,
my crippled body is delirious
but doesn't lose consciousness,
an inner fire enflames my limbs
but doesn't reduce them to ash.
Fate strikes me to the quick
but doesn't end my life.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

sītā: “evvam edam,

rāmaḥ: he bhavantāḥ paurājjanapadāḥ!

na kila bhavatāṁ sthānāṁ devyā
gṛhe 'bhimatam, tatas
trāṇam iva vane śunye tyaktā,
na c’ āpy anuśocitā.
ciralparicitās tv ete bhāvāḥ
paridravayanti mām.
idam aśraṇaṁ ādy’ āpy evaṁ
—prasidata—rudyate. [33]

TAMASĀ: atigambhiram avagūraṇaṁ śokasāgarasya.

vāsanti: deva, atikrānte dhairyam avalambyatām.

rāmaḥ: sakhi, kim atr’ocaye «dhairyam» iti?

devyā śunyasya jagato
dvādaśāḥ parivatsaraḥ.
praṇaṣṭam iva nām’ āpi.
na ca Rāmo na jivati. [34]

sītā: “mohida mhi edehi ajja|utta|vaanehim,

TAMASĀ: evaṁ, vatsa.

n’ āitāḥ priyatamā vācāḥ
sneh’ārdrah śoka|da|ruṇāḥ.
etas tā madhuno dhārāḥ
ścyotanti sa|viṣās tvayī. [35]

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uttararamacaritaR 208 (208, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

SITA: Yes, it is so.

RAMA: You people of the city and countryside!

You refused to allow the queen
to continue living in my house,
and so I left her in the empty forest
unmourned, as if not worth a straw.
But these long-familiar sights
are utterly undoing me
and hence this helpless—please forgive me—
weeping of mine, even still.*

TÁMASA: How deep is the roar of the ocean of his grief.

VASÁNTI: Be strong, my lord, in the face of what is past.

RAMA: My friend, what do you mean by “strong”?

This is the twelfth year of the world
left empty by his queen—her name
itself all but blotted out—
yet Rama has not ceased to live.

SITA: My husband’s words are tormenting me.

TÁMASA: Yes, my child.

These are not a beloved’s words,
now gentle with love, now harsh with grief.
They are streams of honey mixed
with poison dripping in your ear.*

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RAMA’S LAST ACT

RĀMĀṆ: ayī Vāsanti, mayā khalu

yathā tiraścīnam alātaśalyaṁ
pratyuptam antaḥ sāviṣaś ca daṁsaḥ
tath‘ āiva tīvro hṛdi śokāśaṅkur
marmāṇi kṛntann api kim na sodhah? [36]

SĪTĀ: evaṁ mhi manda|bhāṇii puṇo puṇo vi āśā|āriṇī
da|Mhī|uttassa,[
RĀMĀṆ: evam atinirutsukasya stambhit’lāntah|karaṇasya’ āpi
mama saṁstuta|priyā|vastu darśanād ady’ āyam āveghah.
tathā hi:

3.175 hel’ōllola|ksubhitakarun’|ōjjṛmbhanā|stambhan’|ārtham
yo yo yatnaḥ
katham api may” ādhiyate, taṁ tam antaḥ
bhittvā bhittvā
prasarati balāt ko ’pi cetolvikāras
toyasy’ ēv’ ā|
pratiḥata|rayaḥ saikataṁ setum oghah. [37]

SĪTĀ: ēdiṇā aja|Mhī|uttassa duv|vāra|dāruṅ’|ārambheṇa duk-
kha|saṅkhohena pamusia|ni|dukkhaṁ via vevadi me
hiaam,[

VĀSANĪ: (sva|gatam) kaśtam abhyāpanno devaḥ. tad akṣi-
pāmi tāvat. (prakāśam) cira|paricitān idānīṁ Janasthā-
nālḥhāgān avalokayatu devaḥ.

210

uttararamacaritaR 210 (210, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

RAMA: Ah Vasánti, have I, after all,
Not borne the fiery goad of grief
in my heart, though it jabs at my vitals,
just like a heated arrowhead fixed
athwart within, or a poisoned sting?*

SITA: So cursed am I that I am still making trouble for my husband.

RAMA: And though I have been broken and my heart rendered insensate, I have been stunned anew today by seeing these things, familiar things that she once loved.

   Every attempt I made with the greatest effort
to control the intensification of pity*
as it was stirred to the point of wild frenzy,
was thwarted within, each and every one,
by an indescribable transformation
of consciousness that then poured out in full
strength,
as flood water surging unabated
pours through a dam of sand it has destroyed.

SITA: The shock of my husband's sorrow, cruelly and implacably welling up, seems to have displaced the sorrow in my own heart, and left it throbbing uncontrollably.

VASÁNTI: (aside) My lord is in an awful state. Let me just try to divert him. (aloud) Would my lord now care to visit those regions of Jana-sthana that are familiar from long ago?

uttararamacaritá R 211 (212, 0)
RĀMAH: evam astu.

utthāya parikrāmati.

3.180 SĪTĀ: sandīvānaṁ jeyva dukkhassa pia|sahī viṇḍanaṁ|ōvō tī maṇṇedi,

VĀSANTI: (sakaraṇam) deva, deva:

asminn eva latā|grhe tvam abhavas
taṁ|mārga|datt’|ekṣanah.
sā haṁsaṁ kṛta|kautukā ciraṁ abhūd
Godāvāri|saikate.
āyantyā paridurmanāyitam iva
tvāṁ vikṣya baddhas tayā
kātaryād aravinda|kuḍmala|nibho
mugdhaḥ praṇāṁ|ānjaliḥ. [38]

SĪTĀ: "dāruṇ” āsi, Vāsanti, dāruṇ” āsi, já edehiṁ hia|mam-
ma|gūḍha|salla|ghaṭṭaṇe hiṁ puṇo puṇo maṁ manda|bhaiṁiṁ ajja|uttam sumarāvesi,

RĀMAH: caṇḍi Jānaki, itas tato dṛṣyasa iva. na c’ āṅukampa-

3.185 hā hā devi, sphuṭaṁ hṛdayaṁ,
dhvaṁsate deha|bandhaḥ.
śūnyaṁ manye jagad, a|vīrataṁ
jvālam antar jvalāmi.
sidann andhe tamasi vidhuro
majjāt’ iv’ āntarātmā.
viśvaṁ|mohah sthaṇyati. kathaṁ
manda|bhāgyah karomi? [39]
RAMA: Yes, alright.

He stands up and walks around.

SITA: What my friend believes will be a means of distraction will instead inflame his sorrow.

VASÁNTI: (with pity) My lord, my lord:

It was in this bower of vines you once stood watching the way back home when she was delayed, enchanted by the geese on the Godávari shore, and on returning, seeing that you looked cross, she anxiously paid reverence by a simple cupping together of hands like a lotus still unfolded.

SITA: You are cruel, Vasánti, so cruel, twisting the knife deeper into the heart’s soft core to remind my husband over and over of me, cursed me.

RAMA: Hardhearted Jánaki, you show yourself in one place after another yet show me no compassion.

Oh my queen, my heart is breaking, my body’s bonds are coming undone, the world is empty for me, and I burn with an unrelenting fire within. My very soul, submerged in blinding darkness, is drowning helplessly, utter* delirium envelopes me. What am I, cursed I, to do?
RAMA'S LAST ACT

(mūrchati)

sītā: ḍhaddhi, haddhi! puṇo vi pamūḍho ajja|utto,

vāsanti: deva, samāśvasihi, samāśvasihi.

sītā: ḍha ajja|utta, maṃ manda|bhāiniṃ uddisā saalajjia|
loa|maṅgal'|ādhārassa de jamna|lāhassa vāraṃ vāraṃ
saṃsāda|jia|dāruṇo dasā|parināmo, tti ḍha hada mhi,
(mūrchati)

3.190 TAMASĀ: vate, samāśvasihi, samāśvasihi. punas tvat|pāṇi|
sparśa eva sañjivani|ōpāyo Rāma|bhadrasya.

vāsanti: kaṣṭam, ady' āpi n'ōcchvasiti. ā ṭhīya|sakhi Site,
kv' āsi? sambhāvay' ātmano jīviṭ'ēśvaram.

sītā saṃsaṃbrāmam upāśtya hṛdi lalāte ca sprāti.

vāsanti: diṣṭyā pratīñpanna|cetano Rāma|bhadraḥ.

RĀMAH:

ālimpann anṛṭamayair iva pralepair
antar vā bahir api vā śarīrajdhātun
saṃsāparśah punar api jīvyanna a|kasmād
ānandād apar|vidham tanoti moham. [40]

3.195 (ananda|nimilīt'ākṣa eva) sakhi Vāsanti, diṣṭyā vardhase.

214

uttaramacaritaR 214 (214, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

(falls faint)

sitā: Dear god, my husband has fallen faint again!

vasānti: Compose yourself, my lord, I beg you.

sitā: Oh my husband, you are the source of blessings to all
the mortal world yet the gift of birth has turned into its
opposite for you, brutalized by constant threats to your
soul—and all because of cursed me. Oh I am lost. (falls
faint)

tāmasa: Compose yourself, my child, I beg you. The touch
of your hand is all it will take to revive dear Rama.

vasānti: Alas, he still hasn’t revived. Oh Sita, my beloved
friend, where are you? Come comfort the lord of your
life.

sitā: approaches in alarm, and touches him on the heart and
forehead.

vasānti: How fortunate that dear Rama has regained con-
sciousness.

rama:

Smoothing an almost ambrosial balm
over all my body’s parts,* inside and out,
a touch has suddenly revived me and spread
a different—a blissful—delirium.

(his eyes still closed in bliss) Vasānti my friend, how fortunate
you are.
RĀMĀ’S LAST ACT

vāsantī: katham iva?


vāsantī: aye deva Rāmaḥbhadra, kva sā?

rāmaḥ: (sparājṣukham abhiniya) paśya, nanv iyaṇ purata eva.

vāsantī: aye, kim|iṭi marma|cheda|dāruṇaḥr atipralāpiḥ
priya|sakhī|duḥkha|dagdhāṃ api punar manda|bhāginiṁ dahasi mām?

sītā: ‘osariduṁ icchāmi. eso una cira|sab|bhāva|somma|sis-
dalena ajja|utta|pphaṃṣena diha|dāruṇaṃ pi sandāvaṃ
jhatti ollavanteṇa vajja|lev’|ōvaṇaddho via sijjanta|ṇisa-
ha|vivalhattho vevadi a|vaso via me hattho,₃.200

rāmaḥ: sakhi, kutaḥ pralāpiḥ?

gṛhito yāḥ pūrvaṃ
parinaya|vidhau kaṅkaṇa|dharaś,
citaṃ sv’ēcchā|sparśār
amṛta|śīrṣāraḥ yaḥ paricitaḥ. [4tab]

sītā: ‘ajja|utta, so evva. dāniṁ jāṇāsi,₃.205

rāmaḥ:

sa ev’ ayam tasyās
tadjitra|kar’āupamya|subhago
mayā labdhah pāṇīr
lalita|lalavilīkandala|nibhāḥ. [41cd]

216
ACT III: THE SHADOW

vasánti: How so?
rama: My friend, what else can it mean but that Jánaki has returned?
vasánti: But my lord, dear Rama, where is she then?
rama: (miming the pleasure of her touch) Look, here she is, right in front of us.
vasánti: Oh, why burn me again, cursed as I am, with this cruel, utter nonsense that cuts me to the quick, when I have already been burned by the sorrow of my beloved friend?
sita: I must leave, but my husband’s touch—how gentle and cool his long and true affection has made it, how it eases my cruel long-lasting pain—seems almost to have cemented my hand in place, so that it’s perspiring, weary, agitated, trembling, and helpless all at once.
rama: My friend, why do you speak of “nonsense”?

The hand I held at the wedding ceremony years ago when it bore the marriage bracelet, a long-familiar hand I once could touch whenever I desired, cool as ambrosia…
sita: My husband, it is the very same. Now you know.*
rama:

this is the very same hand—her hand, as graceful as a lávali stalk and so beautiful it sets the standard of comparison for all other hands.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

(gṛḥnāti)

sītā: ʾhaddhī, haddhī. ajjajurta|ppharma|mohidāe pamādo
kkhu saṃvutto,

rāmāḥ: sakhi Vāsanti, ānanda|nimilīl’|ēndriyaḥ sādhvase-
na paravān asmi. tat tvam api dhāray’ āinām.

vāsanti: kaśtam, unmāda eva.

3.210 sītā saṃbhrānam aṇkipy’ āparpati.

rāmāḥ: hā dhik, pramādaḥ.

kara|pallavaḥ sa tasyāḥ
sahas” āiva jaḍ’ātmanaḥ paribhraṣṭaḥ
parikampināh prakampi
karān mama svidyataḥ svidyan. [42]

sītā: ʾhaddhī, haddhī. ajja vi aṇjāvatthida|thimida|mūḍha|
ghunṇanta|veanam ṇa pājvavatthāvemi attāṇam,

tamāṣā: (sa|snehaṁ nirvarṇya)

3.215 sa|svēda|rom’|āṅcita|kampit’|āṅgi
jātā priyā|sparśa|vasena bālā
maru|ṇa|vā|mdbhah|pravidhūta|ṣiktā
kadambāyaṣṭiḥ sphyṭalkorak” ēva. [43]

sītā: (sva|gatam)” ammahe, a|vase ṇa ede ṇa attāṇaṇa lajjā-
vida ṇi ṇi bhaavadic Tamasāe. kiṃ ti kila esā manṇissadi:
«eso de paricca, eso ahisango» ti?

218

uttararamacaritaR 218 (218, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

*(takes hold)*

**Sita:** Dear god, the rapture of my husband’s touch has led to a terrible blunder.

**Rama:** Vasánti my friend, my senses are benumbed by bliss and I’m so agitated I don’t trust myself. So please, touch her yourself.

**Vasánti:** Alas, this is sheer madness.

**Sita** *in alarm shakes his hand loose and steps back.*

**Rama:** Oh god, what a blunder.

I’m so dazed I suddenly let her petal-soft hand fall from mine that shook as her hand shook and sweated as hers sweated.

**Sita:** Dear god, I still can’t get control* of myself, I’m restive, benumbed, and confused all at once, and the pain is overwhelming.

**Támasa:** *(gazing affectionately)*

At your beloved’s touch, poor girl, your limbs break out in sweat and goose bumps, and you shake like the trunk of a kadámba blown by the wind, drenched with fresh rain, and sprouting suddenly.

**Sita:** *(aside)* Oh dear, I have embarrassed myself before Támasa, by this unruly body of mine. She must be thinking, mustn’t she, that though such was his disowning of me, such remains my infatuation?

*uttararamacaritaR 219 (220, 0)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: (sarruṇa ‘valokya) hā, kathaṃ n’ āṣṭy eva? nanv a| karuṇe Vaidehi!

SĪTĀ: ’saccaṃ a|karuṇa mhi jā evvaṃ|vidhaṃ tumaṃ pek- khanti dharāmi jjeva jīvīdam.ā


3.220  
SĪTĀ: ’aī ajja|utta, vivaridam via,

VĀSANTI: deva, prasida prasida. sven’ āiva lok’ōttareṇa dhair- ryeṇa samstambhay” ātibhūmi|gata|vipralambham āt- māṇam. kuto ’tra me priya|sakhi?

RĀMAH: vaiktaṃ n’ āsti. katham anyathā Vāsanṭy api tām na paśye? api khalu sva|pna esa syyat… na c’ āsmyi sup- tāḥ—kuto Rāmasya nidrāḥ sarvathā sa ev’ āiṣa bhagavān an|eka|vāra|parīkalanāḥ|nirmiito vipra|lambhaḥ punaḥ punar anubadhnāti mām.

SĪTĀ: ’mae jjevva daraṇāe vippaladdho ajjalutto,

VĀSANTI: deva, paśya,

Paulastyasya Jatauṣṇā vighaṭitaḥ
kāṛṣṇāyasyo ‘yaṁ rathaḥ,
pāśyā, āīte purataḥ piśaca|vadanāḥ
kāṅkaḷaśeḥ kharāḥ.
khaḍga|cinna|Jatauṣṭaktisati itaḥ
Sitāḥ jvalanti|m vahann
antar|vyākula|vidyud|ambuda iva
dyām abhyudasthād ariḥ. [44]

1 Ravanaṣ.

220
ACT III: THE SHADOW

RAMA: (looking all around) What, she’s nowhere to be found? Please, pitiless Vaidéhi!

SITA: Pitiless indeed, that I can behold you in this state and still hold on to life.

RAMA: Where are you, my queen? Oh please don’t abandon me in this state.

SITA: Ah, my husband, don’t you have it backward?

VASÁNTI: Please, my lord, please, use your strength, a superhuman strength, to check this sheer delusion. How could my beloved friend be here?

RAMA: Clearly she’s not. How otherwise would Vasánti herself not see her? Yes, it must have been a dream… But no, I wasn’t dreaming—how could Rama ever again find sleep? No, it was surely that blessed mental delusion afflicting me once more, produced by my fantasies time and again.

SITA: No, it was cruel me who deluded my husband.

VASÁNTI: Look, my lord:

There is Paulástyä’s blackiron chariot destroyed by Jatáyus—
look at the imp-faced mules out in front, now nothing but skeletons.
And from here, when his sword had severed Jatáyus’ wings, the enemy took refulgent Sita and mounted the sky like a lightning-wreathed cloud.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

sītā: (sa/bhayam) ʻajja|utta, tādo vāvādiadi. aham pi ava-

harīami. parittāhi,

rāmaḥ: (sa/vegam utthāya) āh pāpa tātā|praṇa|sitʻ|apahārin,

tvā yaśī?

vāsantī: aiy deva rakṣasa|kula|pralaya|dhūma|keto, ady' ʻ

āpi te manyulyāśayāḥ?

sītā: ʻammo, ummattia mhi samvutta,

3.230 rāmaḥ: aye anya ev’ aya adhunā pralayo vartate.

upāyānām bhāvād

a|virata|vinoda|vyatikara

vimardair vīrānām

jagati janitʻ|ātyadbhuta|rasaiḥ

viyoga mugdhʻ|āksyāḥ

sa khalu ripu|hār|āvadhir abhūt.

kāṭuś tūśniṃ sahyo

niravadhir ayaṃ tu pravilayaḥ. [45]

sītā: ʻniravadhi! tti há hada mhi,

1 Jatūyas.

222

uttaramacarita 222 (222, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

sītā: *(frightened)* My husband, father has been put to death, and I myself am being abducted. Save me!

rāma: *(rising with a start)* Ah evil creature, you who stole at once our father’s life and Sītā, where do you think you’re going?

vasānti: My lord, you were a blazing fire of destruction to the tribe of rākṣasas: Is it possible some object of your rage still exists?

sītā: Dear me, I went quite mad for a moment.

rāma: Alas, altogether different is the calamity befalling me today:

Because there were steps I then could take—with heroic battles providing continual distraction, their *rasa* of wonder flooding all the world—that first parting from my wife I knew would end—with the enemy’s death. But how bitter a thing it is to bear in silence an endless parting.*

sītā: “Endless!” Oh, I am truly lost.

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RAMA'S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: ā kaśṭam.

vyarthāṃ yatra kap’jindraśsakhyam api me,

viryaṃ harināṃ vṛthā,

prajñā Jāmbavato ’pi yatra na gatiḥ,

putrasya Vāyor api,

mārgaṃ yatra na Viśvakarmaṭtanayaḥ

kartum Nalo ’pi kṣamaḥ,

Saumitrer api patrinaṃ añvīsaye
tatra, priye, kv’ āsi me? [46]

3.235  sītā: ’bahu|māṇḍāvida mhi puvva|virahaṃ,

RĀMAH: sakhi Vāsanti, duḥkhāyā’ āiva suhṛdām idānīṃ Rā-

ma|darśanam. kiyaściraṃ tvāṃ rodayisyāmi? tad anu-

jānihi māṃ gamanāya.

sītā: (s’|ōdvega|mohaṃ tamasām ālambya)’ bhavadi Tama-

se, gacchadi aja|luttol,

Tamasā: vatse, samāśvasīhi, samāśvasīhi. nanv āvām apy

āyuṣmatoh Kuśa|lavayor varṣa|vardhana|maṅgalāni sa-

mpādayitum Bhāgirathipād’|āntikam eva gacchāvah.

sītā: ’bhavadi, paśīda. khaṇaṃ pi dāva dul|laha janaṃ

pekkhāmi,

3.240  RĀMAH: asti c’ ādānām āśva|medha|saha|dharma|cārini

me...

i Sugrīva. ii Hanumān. iii “All-maker,” the architect of the gods.
iv Lakṣmaṇa.

224

uttararamacaritaR 224 (224, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

RAMA: Alas,

Where even friendship with the monkey king is useless to me, and futile the monkeys' strength; where Jāmbavan's wisdom no longer shows the way or even that of the wind god's son; where even Nala, son of Vishva-karma, is unable to build a road—where can you be, my beloved, somewhere out of range of even the arrows of Saumítri?

SITA: How deeply I now cherish my former separation.

RAMA: Vasánti my friend, the sight of Rama now can only bring his friends sorrow. How long am I to make you weep? Permit me then to take my leave.

SITA: (startled and delirious, clinging to TAMASA) Oh Támasa, my husband is leaving!

TAMASA: My child, compose yourself, I beg you. At all events we must now make our way to Bhagi-rathi, to perform the birthday rites for Kusha and Lava (long may they live).

SITA: Blessed one, please, just one last glance, for just a moment, of this man I'll never see again.

RAMA: I now have another wife in dharma to assist in the Horse Sacrifice…
RAMA'S LAST ACT

śītā: (s'ōṭkampam) ajjalutta, kā?

rāmaḥ: hiraṇmayī Sītā|pratikṛtiḥ.

śītā: (s'ācchvāsam) ajjalutta danīṃ si tumāṃ. ammahe, ukkhāṇidaṃ danīṃ me pariccāla|jāṣallam ajjalutteṇa,

rāmaḥ: tatr’ āpi tāvad bāspa|digdham caṣṣur vinodayāmi.

śītā: dhanāṇa sā jā ajjalutteṇa bahujmaṇṇādi, jā ajjaluttaṃ vinodaanti āsa|ṭhībandhaṇaṃ jādā jialoassa,

tamasā: (sa|smita|sneh’a)nāram pariṣvajja) ayi vatse, evam āt-
mā stūyate.

śītā: (sa|lajjam adho|mukhī, sva|gatam) parihasida mhi

vāsanī: mahān ayam vyatikaro ’mākaṃ prasādaḥ. gama-
naṃ prati punar yathā kārayaḥānir na bhavati, tath” ās-
tu.

śītā: paḍiūla dāniṃ me Vāsanta sanvuttā,

3.245	tamasā: vatse, evam, gacchaśvaḥ.

śītā: (sakṣattam) evam karemha,

3.250	tamasā: kathaṃ vā gamyate yasyās tava

226

uttararamacaritaR  226 (226, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

sita: (trembling) My husband, who?

rama: A golden statue of Sita.

sita: (breathing a sigh of relief) My husband... yes, now you really are. Yes, now at last my husband has extracted from me the sharp arrowhead of shame at being disowned.

rama: There at least my eyes can find distraction, bathed as they ever are in tears.

sita: Fortunate the woman my husband so esteems for distracting him—which makes her the source of hope for this world.

támasa: (smiling, with affection and tears, and embracing her) Ah my child, that is praise owed to yourself.

sita: (hanging her head in shame; aside) The blessed one is mocking me.

vasánti: What has been a source of great turmoil* to you has been a kindness to us. As for leaving, do as you must to fulfil your obligations.

sita: Vasánti has become my implacable foe.

támasa: Child, come, let us go.

sita: (despondently) Yes, I suppose we must.

támasa: But how in fact can you go when

227
RAMA'S LAST ACT

pratyuptasyāiva dayite

trṣṇādirghasya caksuṣaḥ

marma|ccheda|parair yatnair

ākarṣo na samāpyate? [47]

sītā: ūnāmo apuvva|puṇṇa|jaṇiḍa|daṃṣaṇaṇaṇaḥ aija|utta|

carana|kalamaṇaṇam, (mārehati)

3.255 Tamasā: vatse, samāśvasihi, samāśvasihi.

sītā: (āśvasya) kec|ciram vā meh|antareṇa puṇṇa|candassa
daṃṣaṇaṇaṁ?

Tamasā: aho samāvidhānakaṁ.

eko rasaḥ karuṇa eva nimittāḥbhedaḥ

bhinnah pṛthak pṛthag iv āśrayate vivartān

āvartā|budbudā|tarāṅgmayāṇ vikārān

ambo yathā, salilam eva tu tat samagram. [48]

Rāmaḥ: vimānārāja, ita itaḥ.

3.260 sarva uttisthanti.

Tamasā|vāsanvayau: sītā|rāma (prati)

228

uttararamacaritaR 228 (228, 0)
ACT III: THE SHADOW

By no effort however painstaking you can tear away your eyes, wide with longing, that are fixed upon your love?

Sītā: Homage to the lotus feet of my husband—it must have been incomparable good karma that allowed me to see them today. (*falls faint*)

Tāmāsa: My child, compose yourself, I beg you. 3.255

Sītā: (*regaining her composure*) For how long may one glimpse the full moon through the dark clouds?

Tāmāsa: How complex a plot* this is.

There is only a single rasa—pity—but it takes different forms since it changes in response to circumstances that are changing, just the way that water forms into whirlpool, bubble, or wave though in the end it all remains the same: nothing but water.*

Rāma: King of chariots, over here, at once.

*All rise.* 3.260

Tāmāsa and Vasāntī: (*speaking to Sītā and Rāma respectively*)

229
RAMA'S LAST ACT

avanir amara|sindhuḥ sārdham asmado|vidhābhih\ś
sa ca kulapatiḥ adyaḥ chandasāṁ yaḥ prayokta
sa ca munir anuyāt' Ārundhatiko Vasiṣṭhas

tvayi viharatu bhadraṁ bhūyase maṅgalāya. [49]

niskṛнтāḥ sarve.

iti mahā|kavi|ĕri/Bhavabhūti|praṇīta
Utara|Rāma|carita|nāṭake
chāyā nāma tṛtiyo 'ṅkaḥ.
ACT III: THE SHADOW

May Earth and the river of the gods, and others like us, the teacher who was the first to use metrical forms, sage Vasishtha and Arundhati in his retinue—may all these grant you blessings and everlasting good fortune.*

*Exeunt all.

End of Act III
PRELUDE TO ACT IV
tataḥ praviṣatas tāpasau.

ekaḥ: Saudhātaka, drṣṭātām adya bhūyāṣṭha[sa]nīndhāpit’
ātiḥiḥjanasya samadhiḥ[ā]rāmabhā[ra]maṇiḥyatā bhagavato
Vālmiker āśra[ma]lpadasya. tathā hi:
sadyaḥ[pr]asūṭaḥ[pr]iyāḥ
piṭād abhyadhikamaṇ tapo[van][aถ]mṛghaḥ
paryāptam ācāmati.
gandhena sphurata manāg anuṣṭo
bhaktasya sarpiṣmataḥ
karkandhū[pha][lal][miṣr][ā]ṣaka[pan](aṣc)
āmodaḥ parīṣṭryate. [1]

saudhātakīḥ: ‘śādaṃ an[a]jīhā[ṃ]kāraṇāṇam visesaḥ jiṃ-
ṇaṃ[kucchaṇaṃ]aṃ ā

4-5 ekaḥ: (vihaṣa) a[ṃ]pūrvaḥ ko ’pi bahumānaḥ[ṃ]hetur guruṣu
Saudhātaka.

saudhātakīḥ: īho Bhāṇḍāṇaḥ, kim[ṇ]āmadheo eso dāṇiṃ
mahantassa theri[ṃ]satthassa agg[a][dhori][ddhao ad]idhi ā-
do[a]

bhāṇḍāṇah: dhiḥ prahasanaṃ. nanv ayam Rṣyaśṛṅg’
āṣramād Arundhāṭi[ṃ]puraskṛtān mahā[r]āja[ṃ]daśarathasya
dārān adhiṣṭhāya bhagavāṃ Vasiṣṭh[ā]h prāptaḥ. tat kim
evaṃ pralapasi?

234

uttaramacaritaR 234 (234, 0)
Enter two ascetics.

The First: Saudhátaki, how beautiful Valmiki’s hermitage looks with all the different decorations and the crowds of guests who have come. You see,

The buck that lives in the ashram drinks
to his heart’s content
the sweet warm cream of rice left over
by his just-foaling mate.
And the aroma of cooking greens spreads,
mixed with jujube fruit,
along with the just barely perceptible
fragrance of buttered rice.*

Saudhátaki: A most hearty welcome to anyone—above all the graybeards*—whose arrival gives us a break from studying.

First: (laughing) Altogether unprecedented, Saudhátaki, is this respect you show your elders.

Saudhátaki: Say, Bhandáyana, what’s the name of the guest who’s come at the head of this troupe of old crones?

Bhandáyana: No joking now. Surely you know it’s Vasútha, who’s arrived from Rishya·shringa’s ashram, watching over the wives of the great king Dasha·ratha and giving the place of honor to Arúndhati. So why the silly question?

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RAMA’S LAST ACT

SAUDHATAKI: ʻhuṃ, Vasiṣṭho?

BHĀNDĀYANAHI: atha kim?

4.10 SAUDHATAKI: mae ʻunā jāṇidam vagdho vakko* vā eso tti.

BHĀNDĀYANAHI: āḥ, kim uktam bhavati?

SAUDHATAKI: jena parāvādideṇa jevva sa varāiā kallāniā madamaṇāvidāa.

BHĀNDĀYANAHI: sa|māṃso madhu|parka ity āmnāyaṃ ba-hu|manyamānāḥ śrotirīyā’ abhyāgatāya vatsatarīṃ ma-h”|ōkṣam vā mah”|ājām vā nirvapanti grha|medhināḥ. taṃ hi dharmam dharmasūtra|kāraḥ samāmananti.

SAUDHATAKI: 'bho! niṅghido si.

4.15 BHĀNDĀYANAHI: katham īva?

SAUDHATAKI: jena āadesu Vasiṣṭha|missesu vacchadar vi-sasidā. aja jeva paccā ādassā rā|esīno Jānaassa bhaava-dā Vammiena vi dahi|mahūhiṃ jevva niṇvattido madhu|vakk. vacchadari ʻuna visajjidaa.

BHĀNDĀYANAHI: a|niṉṛta|māṃsānāṁ evam ṭṣayo manyante. niṉṛṭta|māṃsas tu tatraiḥbhavāḥ Janakaḥ.

SAUDHATAKI: ‘kimiṇiṣimittaṃ?

BHĀNDĀYANAHI: sa tād” āiva devyāḥ Sitāyās tādṛśanā daiva|durṣvipaṃkam upaśrutya vaikhānasah saṃvṛttah. tath” āsya katipaye saṃvatsaraś Candradvipa|tapo|vane tapas ta-pyamānasya.

236

uttararamacaritaR 236 (236, 0)
PRELUDE TO ACT IV

SAUDHÁTAKI: Hmm, Vasíshtha?

BHANDÁYANA: Yes, of course.

SAUDHÁTAKI: I thought for sure it was a tiger or a wolf.

4.10

BHANDÁYANA: Now what is that supposed to mean?

SAUDHÁTAKI: Well, my poor little calf was completely rattled from the moment he arrived.

BHANDÁYANA: When a scholar of scripture visits, householders who honor the Vedic precept requiring a welcome offering of meat will slaughter a yearling or bull or goat. This is dharma, according to the authors of the ‘Sutras on Dharma.’

SAUDHÁTAKI: Aha! You’re caught in a contradiction.

BHANDÁYANA: How so?

4.15

SAUDHÁTAKI: Although a yearling was slaughtered on the arrival of the honorable Vasíshtha, when subsequently, just today, the royal seer Jánaka arrived, Valmíki made the guest offering of nothing more than milk and yogurt. The yearling herself was set free.

BHANDÁYANA: The seers had in mind those who had not given up meat. Jánaka has done so.

SAUDHÁTAKI: Why’s that?

BHANDÁYANA: He became a hermit the moment he got word of the fated turn of events for Queen Sita. And so for some years he has been practicing austerities in the Moon Island penance grove.

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RAMA’S LAST ACT

4.20 SAUDHÂTAKI: “tado kim ti ādodo?”

BHÂNDÂYANA: cirantana|priyā|suhrdaṁ Prācetasam draṣṭum.

SAUDHÂTAKI: “avi ajja sambandhihiṁ samaṁ saṁvut-taṁ se daṁsaṇaṁ na vetti?”

BHÂNDÂYANA: sampraty eva bhagavatā Vasiṣṭhena devyāḥ Kausalyāyah sakāsāṁ bhagavaty Arundhati praṅhitā, «svayam upetya Vāideho draṣṭavya» iti.

SAUDHÂTAKI: “jadhā ede savhe therā paropparaṁ milidā tadhā amhe vi vaṭuehiṁ samaṁ milia aṁ||ajjhā|mah”|ūśavaṁ khelantā sambhāvemha,

4.25 parikrāmatāḥ.

BHÂNDÂYANA: tad ayaṁ brahma|vādi purāṇa|rāja|ṛṣir Ja- nakaḥ Prācetas|Vasiṣṭhāv upāśya sampraty āśrama|bhā- hiṁ|vaṇa|mulaṁ adhiṁśhathā. ya eṣaḥ

ḥṛdi nitya|januṣaktena
Sitā|śokena taṁyate,
antaha|prasrpta|dahano
jaraṁ iva vanasa|patih. [2]

niskrāntau.
viskambhakah.

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1Janaka.

238

uttararamacaritaR 238 (238, 0)
PRELUDE TO ACT IV

Saudhātaki: So why has he come here?

Bhandāvana: To see his dear old friend, the son of Prachet-
tas.

Saudhātaki: Has he already had a chance to meet with his
kinswomen?

Bhandāvana: Just now Vasíśthasent Arúndhati to Queen
Kausálya to ask her to go pay a visit to the king of
Vidéha.¹

Saudhātaki: Like the old folks gathering we should gather
with our schoolmates and celebrate our holiday with
games.

The two walk around.

Bhandāvana: There’s the ancient royal seer, the spiritual
master Jánaka. He has done obeisance to Prachétas’ son
and Vasíśththa and now is seated at the foot of a tree
outside the ashram—the one who

Is burning with a sorrow over Sita
that is ever-present in his heart
like an old tree burning with a fire
that eats away at it from within.

Exeunt both.

End of the Prelude

¹
ACT IV
THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLYA AND JÁNARA
4.30 *tataḥ praviṣati* JANAKAḥ.

JANAKAḥ:

apatye yat tādṛg
duritam abhavat tena mahatā
viṣaktas tīvṛena
vraṇītāḥṛdayena vyathayatā
paṭur dhāravāhi
nava iva cireṇ’ āpi hi na me
nikṛntan marmāṇi
krakaca iva manyur viramati. [3]

duṣṭam! evaṁ nāma jaraṁ duḥkhena ca duŗjasadena bhūyaḥ
parākalāntapanajrabhrībhīs tapobhir āṭṭaṛasaṇāḥtur
an dupaśṭambhano ’dy āpi na me dārgaḥ dehaḥ patati.
«andḥatāmīśrā hy aṣṭūryā nāma te lokāḥ, tehbhyaḥ prati-
vīdhiyante ya āṭṭaḥghātīna,» ity evaṁ ṛṣayo manyante.
an ekaṁ saṁvatsar’ āṭṭikrame ’pi pratiṣṭaṇกา parībhāvanāṁ
spaṭaṁ nirbhāsaḥ pratyaṅgro iva dāruṇo na me duḥkhīnaḥ
saṁvegāḥ praśāmyati. ayi mātar! yajanaḥvedīṁ sambhaye
Site, iḍṭās te nirmāṇaḥ bhāgaḥ pariṇato yena lajjayā svā
cchandam ākranditum api na śakyate, āha ha putri!

aṇīyataṛuditaśmitam virajat
katiṇaḥkomalaṁ daṇḍaṁ duḥtaṁāgram
vaḍanaṁkamlakaṁ śīṣaṁ smarāmi
skhaladapoṣaṇavāsaluṇghajjalpitam te. [4]

1 A general exclamation.

242
Enter Jánaka.

Jánaka:

The crime* against my child—a monstrous and
heinous crime
that shattered me and pierced my heart—has
provoked
a fierce, cascading anger,* ever new however old,
that cuts me to the quick like a saw and does not cease.

How awful! I cannot believe that this wretched body—from
which old age and unimaginable sorrow have removed
every means of support, and austerities of every kind,
month-long fasts and mortifications have sucked every
drop of pith and sap—that even today it refuses to die.
But then, “Blinding dark and sunless are the worlds to
which suicides are condemned”*— thus the seers have
declared. Even after all these years the shock of my sav-
age sorrow, made fully manifest by my constant worry,*
seems fresh as ever and does not abate. Ah mother!! O
Sita, you who were born at the ritual altar, that such
should be your lot in life, a life so transformed that one is
too ashamed even to weep to one’s full. Oh my daughter!

How I remember your face when you were a child
and you would laugh and cry for no apparent
reason,
with your few baby teeth shining like jasmine buds
and your first words faltering and imprecise.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

bhagavati Vāsumdhare, satyam atidṛḍh” āsi.

4.35 tvam, vahnir, munayo, Vasiṣṭhālgrhiṇī,
Gaṅgā ca yasyā vidur
māhātmyaṁ, yadi vā Rāghoṛ kulaṅgur
devaḥ svayaṁ Bhāskaraḥ;
vidyāṁ vāg iva yāṁ asūta bhavati
tadvat tu yā daivataṁ,
tasyāṁ tvam duhitus tathā viśasarman
kim, dāruṇe, mṛṣyathāḥ? [5]

NEP Thiye: ita ito bhagavatīmahādevyau.

JANAKAḥ: (dṛṣṭvā) aye Grṛṣṭiḥ” Ṛpadiśyamāṇā,mārgā bhaga-
vatya Arundhati. (uttāhaya) kāṁ punar «mahā|dev”» ity
āha? (nirūpya) ā h kathaṁ mahā|rāja|Daśaratasya dhāra-
ma|dārāḥ priya|sakhī me Kausalyā? ka etat pratyeti, s”
āiv’ ēyaṁ iti?
āsid iyaṁ Daśaratasya grhe yathā śrīḥ,
śrīr eva vā—kim upamānalpadena?—s” ēśā?
kaṣṭaṁ bat’, ānyad iva daiva|vaśena jātā
duḥkha|atmakaṁ kim api bhūtaṁ. aho vipākaḥ!
[6]

ayam aparāḥ pāpo Daśā|viparyāṣaḥ.

1 The “senior” among the wives of the king, insofar as she is the one who
participates in her husband’s rituals.
O Earth, how true it is that you are hard as stone.

The woman whose greatness you yourself should have acknowledged,* and likewise Fire, the sages, Vasīṣṭha’s wife, and Ganga, to say nothing of the Sun god himself, Raghu’s family guru; a goddess you yourself gave birth to just as language gives birth to true knowledge—how can you, cruel Earth, have condoned the murder of this woman, my one daughter?

**OFFSTAGE:** This way, blessed one, and Your Highness.

**JĀNĀKA:** (watching) Ah, it’s Arúndhati being shown the way by Grishti. (standing) Whom is he addressing by “Your Highness”? (looking) Oh, it can’t be my beloved friend Kausālya, the wife in dharma of King Dasha-ratha? Who would have believed it’s her?

She who was like the goddess of royalty in Dasha-ratha’s palace or rather—what need of simile?—was royalty herself has been changed by force of fate, alas, into something altogether other, a rare creature of pure sorrow. Ah, what a turn of events!

There is yet another dreadful reversal of my condition:

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*uttararamacaritaR 245 (246, 0)*
RAMA’S LAST ACT

4.40 ya eva me janaḥ pūrvam
āśin mūrto mah”jōtsavaḥ,
ksate kṣāram iv’ ājsahyaṁ
jātaṁ tasy’ āiva darāsanam. [7]

tataḥ praviṣaty ARUNDHATI KAUSALYĀ KAṆCUKVī ca.

ARUNDHATI: nanu bravimi, «draṣṭavyaḥ svayam upetya Vai-
deha,» ity eṣa vah kulaiguror ādesāḥ. ata ev’ āhaṁ preṣi-
tā. tat ko ‘yam pade pade mahān anjadhyavasāyah?

KAṆCUKVī: devi, saṃstabhya’ ātmānam anurudhyasva bhaga-
vato Vasiṣṭhasya’ ādesām iti vijnāpayāmi.

KAUSALYĀ: Ṛide kāle Mithil”jādhivo daṭṭhaṅvo tti saman
jeyva savva | dukkhāṁ samubbhavanti. na sakkaṇomi
uvattamāṇa|mūla|bandhaṇaṁ hiaṁ vavatthāviduṁ,

4.45 ARUNDHATI: atra kaḥ sandehah?

santāna|vāhiny api māṇuśāṇāṁ
duḥkhāṁ sadbandhuviyogaṁjāni
dṛṣṭe jane preyasi duḥṣahāni
srotah|sahāraṁ iva samplavante. [8]

KAUSALYĀ: Ṛaṁ ca vacchae vadhūe evvaṁ gade tassa rā|
ēsīṇo muhaṁ daṃṣemhaṁ

1 Addressed to Kausalyā.

246
People who in the past were like festivity incarnate for me
are unbearable now even to see—
so much salt upon a wound.

Enter Arúndhati, Kausálīya, and the Chamberlain.

Arúndhati: But I am telling you that it is at the bidding of the family priest you were to go see Vaidēha yourself, that is why I was sent to you. Why this crippling hesitation every step of the way?

Chamberlain: Your Highness, I ask you to steady yourself and comply with Vasíshtha’s order.

Kausálīya: The mere thought of encountering the king of Míthila on this occasion brings every sorrow back to me, all at once. The very strings of my heart are breaking and I am unable to keep it still.

Arúndhati: Undoubtedly.

A person’s sorrows from the loss of a dear kinsman may be flowing in spate but the very sight of a beloved friend makes them unbearable as if augmented by a thousand streams.

Kausálīya: How are we to face the royal seer, when such a thing has happened to our dear daughter-in-law?
RAMA’S LAST ACT

ARUNDHATĪ:

esa vah ślāghya|sambandhi
Janakānāṁ kul’|dvahāḥ
Yājñavalkyo munir yasmāi
Brahmalpārāyaṇaṁ jagau. [9]

KAUSALYĀ: "eso so mahājāraaśa hī|ānando vacchāe vadhūe
pidā rā|ēśī. haddī, haddī. sumārīda mhi anūṭhida|mah”|ūsave diase. hā devva, savvaṁ jēvva taṁ naṁthi,

4.50 JANAKAḤ: (upartya) bhagavaty Arundhati, Vaidehāḥ Śīr-
dhvajo ’bhivādayate.

yayā pūtaṁ manyo
nidhir api pavitrasya mahasaḥ
patis te pūrvesām
api khalu gurūnāṁ gurutamaḥ
triloki|māṅgaḷyām
avaniṭaḷaḷolena śirasā
jagadvandyāṁ devim
Uśasam īva vande bhagavatim. [10]

ARUNDHATĪ: paraṁ te jyotiḥ prakāṣatām. ayaṁ tvā punātu
devaḥ paro|rājā ya esa tapati.

JANAKAḤ: ārya Gṛṣṭe, api kuśalam asyāḥ prajā|pālasaṁ mā-
tuḥ?

1 Daśaratha. ii The wedding of Rāma and Śītā. iii Literally, “He whose standard is marked with a plow.” iv The sun.

248

uttararamacarita R 248 (248, 0)
ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLYA AND JÁNAKA

ARÚNDHATI:

He is your esteemed kinsman, mainstay of the Jánaka dynasty to whom the wise Yajña-valkya once transmitted all spiritual wisdom.

KAUSÁLYA: There stands the man who was the heart’s delight of the great king, the father of our dear daughter-in-law, the royal seer. Dear god, it’s all coming back to me, the day we performed the great festival—and now, dear lord, it’s all gone.

JÁNAKA: (approaching) Arúndhati, the king of Vidéha, Sirádhvaja greets you.

The woman thanks to whom alone her husband counts himself pure, though himself a treasure house of purifying power, and among all the gurus who have preceded him the guru supreme… I offer greetings to this blessed goddess, like Dawn herself, whom all the world greets with heads lowered to the ground, a woman who brings good fortune to all the universe.

ARÚNDHATI: May your ultimate light shine bright, and may the god who burns beyond the dust purify you.

JÁNAKA: Grishti, I trust the mother of the people’s protector is faring well?
KAŅCUKI: *(sva|gatam) niravaśeṣam atinīṣṭhuram upālab-
dhāḥ smaḥ. *(prakāśam) rāja | rṣe, areṇ' āiva manyunā
cira|parityakta|Rāmabhadrā|mukha|candra|darśānāṁ
n' ārhasi duḥṣhayitum atiduḥṣkhitāṁ devim. Rāmabhadrās-
dry śūpi āpi daivaivuryogaḥ ko 'pi yat kila samantataḥ pra-
vṛttā|bibhatsa|kimvadantikāḥ paurāḥ. na e' āgni|śud-
dhim alpakāḥ pratiyant' ity ato dāruṇam anuṣṭhitam.

4.55 JANAKAḤ: āḥ ko 'yam āgnir nāṁ' āsmat|prasūṭil|parīśodha-
ne? kaṣṭam, evaṃ|vādinā janena Rāmabhadrā|parīśoda-
tā api vayaṃ punaḥ parīśodha ṣāryāḥ paritām.

ARUNDHATI: *(niśvya) evam etat. «agnir, āgnir» iti vatsāṁ
prāti parilaghuṇy ākṣāṇāti. Sītc' ēty eva paryāptaṃ. ha
vatse,

śīṣur vā śīṣyā vā
yad asi mama tat tiṣṭhatu tathā.
viśuddher utkarṣa

tvayi tu mama bhaktiṃ janayati.
śīṣutvaṃ strāṇaṃ vā
bhavatu, nanu vandy” āsi jagatāṁ.

gunāḥ pūjāṣthānaṃ
gunīṣu, na ca liṅgaṃ na ca vayaḥ. [11]

KAUSAĻVĀ: *'ammo, ummilanti veaṇāo, *(mṛchati)

250

uttararamacaritaR 250 (250, 0)
CHAMBERLAIN: (aside) This is meant as a taunt to us, a pure and biting taunt. (aloud). Royal seer, the queen is already deeply sorrowed by missing the sight of dear Rama's moonlike face for so long,* and you should take care not to increase her sorrow by this anger of yours. A dreadful fate befell Rama, too—malicious gossip was said to have been circulating among the townsmen, and with the petty-minded not believing in the purification by fire, he had to take radical measures.

JÁNAKA: Why, who in the name of heaven is this god of fire to presume to purify my daughter? How dare anyone speak like this and insult us more when Rama has already insulted us enough!

ARÚNDHATI: (sighing) It's perfectly true. The word “fire” is a mere string of empty sounds next to our child; being Sita suffices.* Oh my child,

Whether you were child of mine or pupil is really of no account,
that engenders this affection in me.
Being child or woman does not matter—you have won the whole world's praise.
What should be honored in the virtuous is virtue, and not gender or age.

KAUSÁLYA: Ah, my wounds are opening up again. (falls faint)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

JANAKAḥ: hā, kim etat?

4.60 ARUNDHATI: rājā'ṛṣe, kim anyat?

sa rājā, tat saukhyāṁ,
   sa ca śīṣuljanas, te ca divāśaḥ
smṛtāv āvirbhūtaṁ
tvayi suhṛdi drṣṭe tad akhilam.
vipāke ghore 'śmin
   nanu khalu vimūḍhā tava sakhī.
purandhrinām cetaḥ
   kusumajṣukumāraṁ hi bhavati. [12]

JANAKAḥ: hanta hanta, sarvathā nṛṣaṁso 'śmi yaś cirasya
dṛṣṭān priyā|suhṛdaḥ priyān dārān na snigdham paśyāmi.

sa sambandhi śāṅghyaḥ,
   priyā|suhṛ ṣau, tac ca hṛdayaṁ,
sa c’ ānandaḥ sākṣād,
   api ca nikhiḷam jīvita|phaḷam,
śarīraṁ jīvo vā
   yad adhikam ato vā priyataraṁ
mahā|rājaḥ śrimān
   kim iva mama n' āśid Daśarathaḥ? [13]

kāṣṭam, iyam eva sā Kausalyā?

252

uttararamacaritā R 252 (252, 0)
JĀNAKA: Oh dear, what is it now?

ARŪNDHATI: Royal seer, what else can it be?

That king, that happiness, that pride of children, those by-gone days—
the memory of it all returned when she caught sight of you, her friend.
Surely you see she is distraught at this dreadful event:
an aged mother’s heart can be as tender as a flower.

JĀNAKA: What an utter scoundrel I’ve been that I have not looked kindly on my dear friend’s dear wife, when it’s been so long since I’ve seen her.

Esteemed kinsman, dear friend, my very heart, my joy incarnate, the whole point of existence, my body and soul and whatever else is dearer—
what wasn’t he to me, glorious king Dasha-ratha?

Alas, can this really be Kausālya?
RAMA'S LAST ACT

4.65  
yad asyāḥ patyur vā  
rahasi parimantūyitam abhūd,  
abhūvam dampatyoḥ  
prthag aham upālambhajviṣayaḥ.  
prasāde kope vā  
tad anu madjadhino vidhir abhūd…  
alaṃ vā tar smṛtvā,  
dahaṭi yad avaskandya hṛdayam. [14]

ARUNDHATī:  
ḥa kaṣṭam, cira[niruddha|niśvāsa|niṣṭhura]ṃ  
hṛdayam asyāḥ.

JANKAḤ:  
ḥa priya|sakhi. (kamāṇḍal|jūdakaṇa śīncati)

KAṆCUKĒ:

suḥṛd iva prakaṭayya sukha|pradaḥ  
prathamam ekajṛṣām anukūlatām  
punar alkanḍā|vivartana|dāruṇaḥ  
praviśiṇaṭī vidhir manaso rujam. [15]

KAṆSAUYĀ:  (samijñaḥ labdhvā)  
ḥā vacche Jāṇāī, kahiṃ sī?  
sumarāmi de vivāhā|lacchā|pariggaḥ|ekka|maṅgalaṃ  
upphulla|suddha|hasidam|muddha|puṇḍarīṇaṃ.  
apphuranta|canda|candi|sundarehi|mūnaḥ puṇo vi  
me jāde ujjoehi ucchaṅgaṃ. savvādā mahārāo bhaṅgādi,  
«esā Rahu|ula|mahattaraṇaṃ vadhū. amhāraṇaṃ tu Jaṇa|  
sambandheṇa duhidiā jevva.»

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If ever husband and wife had some argument in private,
apart from the couple I alone was privy to their complaint,
and on me depended what to do next, anger or forgiveness…
But enough of such memories. They assault and burn my heart.

ARUNDHATI: How awful that her heart has been hardened* by sighs too long kept within.

JÁNAKA: Oh my dear friend. (sprinkling her from his ascetic’s cup)

CHAMBERLAIN:

At first, fate was like a congenial friend
that went along with her every whim;
then without warning the cruel transformation arrived, and left her with nothing but heartache.

KAUSÁLÍYA: (regaining consciousness) Oh my daughter Jánaki, where can you be? How well I remember your innocent lotus-like face adorned with nothing but the glow from the wedding, with your pure smile blossoming. Oh my child, brighten my lap once again with those limbs of yours beautiful as first moonlight. The great king always used to say, “This is the daughter-in-law of the head of the Raghu clan. But my kinship with Jánaka makes her my own little daughter.”*
4.70 Kaṃcukī: yathā āha devī.

pañcalprasūter api rājña āsīt
priyo viśeśaṇa Subāhuṣatrih.
vadhūcaṭuske ‘pi yathā hi Sāntā
priyā tanūj” āṣya tathā āiva Sītā. [16]

Janaṁakaḥ: hā priyaṇaṇaka mahājāraṇa Daśarathe, evam asī sar-
valprakāraḥṛdayamajgamah. kathaṁ vismayase?

kanyāyāḥ kila pūjayanti pitaro
jāmāṭur āptaṁ janaṁ.
sambandhe viparītaṁ eva tad abhūd
ārādhanaṁ te mayi.
tvaṁ kālena tathāvadhō ‘sy apahṛtaḥ,
sambandhaṁjana ca tad.
ghore śmin mama jīvālokajñare
pāpasya dhig jīvitam. [17]

Kauśalyā: “jāde Jāṅaṅ, kim karomi? didhi|vajja|leva|paḍi-
bhandhaṁniccalam hadajśivaṁ maṁ mandaṁbhāṁiṁ ṇa
pariccādi, 

4.75 Arundhati: āśvasihi, rājalputri. bāṣpaḥviśrāmo ṭy antaresu
kartavya eva. anyac ca, kim na smarasi yad avocad ṭṣya-
śrīṅg [āśrāme yuṣmākaṁ kula|guruḥ: «tathā āty upajñā-
tam eva. kim tu kalyāṅ’|ōdarkaṁ bhaviṣyat» iti?

Rāma, who slew the demon Subāhu. ii Rāma’s sister. iii Vasiṣṭha.

uttararamacaritaR 256 (256, 0)
ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLIYA AND JÁNAKA

CHAMBERLAIN: It is just as the queen says:

Although the king had five children
his favorite was Subáhu’s foe,
and although four daughters-in-law,
no less a daughter than Shanta was Sita.

JÁNAKA: Oh my dear friend, King Dasha-ratha. This is why you were congenial to me in every way. How could I ever forget you?

It is for the father of the bride, they say,
to honor the son-in-law’s kith and kin,
but it was just the reverse in our kinship
for you were the one who propitiated me.
That someone such as you and the very seed
of our kinship could both be taken by fate…
a curse on me, evil as I must be
for surviving in this dreadful hell of a world.

KAUSÁLIYA: Jánaki my child, what am I to do? This wretched life of mine seems permanently fixed in place by some unyielding cement and will not leave me, cursed as I am.

ARÚNDAHATI: Compose yourself, you are the daughter of a king. You must try as best you can in the interim to control your sobbing. And there is something else. Don’t you recall what your family guru said in Rishya-shringa’s ashram? He affirmed that what had happened had to happen, but that it would all turn out well in the end.
Ramā's Last Act

Kausālāyā: "kudo adikkante maṇo|radheṭ̣̣

Arundhatī: tat kīṁ manyase, rāja|putri, maṁś" ēdyāṁ tad iti? na h’ idam, su|kṣatriye, ‘nyathā mantavyam. bhavitavyam eva tena.

āvīrbhūtajyotiśāṁ brāhmaṇānaṁ
ye vyāhāras teṣu mā saṁśayo bhūt.
bhadṛā āśaṁ vāci Lākṣmīr niśaktā.
n’ āite vācaṁ vīplūtāṁ vyāharanti. [18]

nepathye kalakalaḥ. sarva ākāṃṣayanti.

4.80 Janakaḥ: adya śiśṭ’āṁ|adhyayam iti khelatam baṭuṇāṁ
ayaṁ kalakalaḥ.

Kausālāyā: "su | laha | sokkhaṁ dāṇḍī | bālattanāṁ bhodiḥ
(nirūpya) ṇammahe, edāṇaṁ majhe ko eso Rāma|bhad-
da|lacchi|parisohidehiṁ s’|āvāṭambha|muddha|lalide-
hiṁ aṅgehiṁ amhānaṁ pi loaṇaṁ sīdalāvediṭ̣̣

Arundhatī: (apavārya, sa|harṣa/bāṣpam) idaṁ nāma tad
Bhāgirathī|niveditaṁ rahasyam karṇ’|āmṛtam. na tv
evaṁ vidmaḥ kataro ’yam āyuṣmaṇoḥ Kuśa|Lavayor iti.

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ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLya AND JÁNaka

Kausályá: How can that be so when all my dreams have been shattered?

Arúndhatí: So then, do you think he lied? You are the daughter of a king and the mother of strong Kshatriyas: don’t think otherwise—this had to happen.

Never doubt the utterances of Brahmans to whom the light has been revealed. Gracious Lakshmi inhabits their speech: no word of theirs is false.

A commotion offstage. All listen.

Jánaka: Today there is a break from studying— that commotion must be coming from the boys playing.

Kausályá: How easy to find happiness when you are a child. (looking) My, who is the one in their midst who can soothe even my eyes with his limbs of such remarkable grace and delicacy, adorned with the beauty of dear Rama himself?

Arúndhatí: (aside; with tears of joy) Here indeed is the secret—or rather, nectar—that Bhagiráthi revealed. The one thing I don’t know is which of the two, Kusha or Lava (long may they live), this one might be.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

JANAKAHA:

kuvalaya|dalajsnigdha|śyāmaḥ
śikhaṇḍaka|manda|do,
baṭu|parsi|daṃ|punyajīrīkaḥ
śriy” eva sabhajayan,
punar īva śiṣur bhūtvā vatsaḥ
sa me Raghu|nandano
jhaṭiti kurute ḍṛṣṭaḥ ko ’yaṃ
dṛśor amṛt’|ānjanam? [19]

KAṆĆUKI: nūnaṃ ksatriya|brahmacārī dārako ’yaṃ iti ma-
nye.

4.85 JANAKAHA: evam etat. asya hi

cūḍā|cumbita|kaṅkalapatram abhītas
tūṇī|dvayaṃ prṣthato.
bhasmajomajpavitra|lāṅchanam uro
dhatte tvaca rauravim.
maurya mekhlaya niyantritam adho|
vāsa ca maṇjiṣṭhakaṃ.
pāṇau kārmukam akṣa|śūtra|valayaṃ
daṇḍo ’pare paippalāḥ. [20]

bhagavy Arundhati, kim utprekṣaṇe, kutastyo ’yaṃ iti?

ARUNDHATI: ady’ āiv’ āgatā vayam.

JANAKAHA: ārya Gr̄̄ṣṭe, at’ īva me kautukaṃ vartate. tad bha-
gavanto Vālmikim eva gatvā praṭccha, imaṃ ca dārakam
brūhi, «ke ’py ete pravayasa tvāṃ didṛkṣava» iti.

uttaramacaritaR 260 (260, 0)
ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLya AND JÁNaka

JÁNaka:

With a dark sheen like a blue lotus petal,*
his head crowned by lovely locks,
beautified by goodness, his beauty
almost ennobling the crowd of boys,
he looks like Raghu-nándana,
my dear boy become a child again.
Who can this be, whose very sight
is a salve of nectar to my eyes?*

CHAMBERLAIN: I assume this boy is a Kshatriya seminarian.

JÁNaka: That must be so, for he

Carries on his back two quivers
whose arrows kiss his top knot,
his chest bears a coat of arms—the holy
sign of ash—and a black buck’s skin,
his lower garment is reddened with madder
and tied with a rope of murva grass,
in one hand a bow and a rosary,
in the other* a staff of peepul wood.

Arúndhati, where do you imagine this boy comes from?

Arúndhati: But I am a new arrival here myself.

JÁNaka: Grishti, my curiosity knows no bounds. Please go
straightway to Valmíki and ask him. And tell the boy
that some elders wish to see him.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

4.90 KANÇUKI: yath” ājñāpayasi. (nīkrāntah)

KUSAŁya: । kim manṇadha, evvaṁ bhanido āgamissadī tti?

ARUNDHATI: bhidyeta vā sadvṛttam idṛśasya nirmāṇasya?

KUSAŁya: (nirūpya) । kadhaṁ sa|viṇaṁ niśāmida|Gīthi| vaaño visajjia isi|dārae etto|muhaṁ pasarido jeeva so vaccho?

JANAKAḥ: (cirāṁ nirvarṇya) bhoḥ kim apy etat?

4.95 mahimnāṁ etasmin

vinayajśiśiro maugdhyaṁmasṛṇo
vidagdhaṁ niṅgrāhyo
na punar aḷvidagdhaṁ atiśayaḥ.
mano me sammohaha
sthiram api haraty eva balavān
ayo|dhātaṁ yadvat
parilaghaṁ ayaśkānta|śakalaha. [21]

LAVAḥ: (praviśya) a jñāta|nāma|kram|ābhijātyān pūjyān
api sataḥ katham abhivādayisyet? (vicintya) ayaṁ punar
aḷviruddhaṁ prakāra iti vṛddheyaḥ śrūyate. (sa|vinayam
upasṛtya) eṣa vo Lavasaṁ śirasā pranāma|paryāyaḥ.

ARUNDHATI [JANAKA]: kalyāṇin, āyuṣmān bhūyāḥ.

KUSAŁya: ṇāda, cirāṁ jīva?

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ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLYA AND JÁNAKA

CHAMBERLAIN: As you wish. *exit*

KAUSÁLYA: What makes you think he will come if asked?

ARÚNDHATI: Would his manners belie the figure he cuts?

KAUSÁLYA: *looking* How now? After listening politely to Grishti’s words the child has sent away the seer’s* other pupils and is making his way here.

JÁNAKA: *gazing for a long time* What can be happening to me now?

The true extent of his powers, cooled now by courtesy and softened by innocence, can only be grasped by those with true perception, and by no one else. The boy has the strength to move my heart, immovable though despair has made it, just the way a trifling* fragment of magnet can move a lump of iron.

Enter LAVA: How am I to greet these eminent people without knowing their names and stations? *reflecting* There is one procedure I’ve learned from the elders that is beyond reproach. *approaching deferentially* This is Lava who bows his head successively* before you.

ARÚNDHATI (and) JÁNAKA: Good boy, long may you live.

KAUSÁLYA: Child, live long.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

ARUNDHATI: ehi, vatsa. (LAVAM utsainge gṛhitvā, apavārya) diṣṭyā na kevalam uṣṭaṅgaś cirān manoṣratho ’pi me sampūrṇāḥ.

4.100 KAUSALYA: ājā, ido vi dāva ehi, (utsainge gṛhitvā) āmmahē, na kevalam dārā|vippatā|kandottā|sāmalā|ujiyāne deha|bandhena, kavalī|āravinda|kesara|kasa|kaṃṭha|kala|hamsa|ghosa|ghagghara|niṇāda|dihareṇa a sarenā Rāma|bhaddaṃ anuḥaradi. naṃ kaṭhore|kamala|gabha|pamhala sarīralpphamso vi tādiso jēvva. ājā, pek khāmi dāva de muhaṃ, (cibukam unnamayya nirūpya ca, sa|haṅg|ākutam) rā|esi, kiṃ na pekkhasi? niṃaṃ niṟūvijjanto vacchāe vadhitē muha|candena sampadadi jēvva.

JANAKAH: paśyāmi, sakhi, paśyāmi.

KAUSALYA: āmmo, unmati|bhūdaṃ via me hiaṃ kim pi cintāntie bahu vippalavadi,

JANAKAH:

vatsayaś ca Ragh|ūdvahasya ca śiśāv
asmīn abhivyajyate
sampūrṇa|pratibimbik” ēva nikhilā
s” āiv’ ākṛtiḥ, sā dyutīḥ,
sā vāṇi, vinayayāḥ sa eva sahajah,
punyānubhavo ’py asau.
ḥā ḫā daiva kim upathair mama manaḥ
pāriplavamḥ dhāvati? [22]

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uttararamacaritaR 264 (264, 0)
ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLYA AND JÁNAKA

ARÚNDHATI: Come, child. *(taking LAVA onto her lap; aside*)
How fortunate that not only is my lap full but at long last my dreams are fulfilled as well.

KAUSÁLYA: Child, come to me a moment too. *(taking him onto her lap)*
My, he resembles dear Rama not only in his physique, with its dark gleam of a blue lotus just blossoming, but in his voice, too, its drawn-out murmur like a swan's when its throat is painted by the lotus filaments it has eaten. And surely the body is the same to the touch, it's as downy as the inside of a full-blown lotus. Child, let me just look at your face. *(lifting his chin, and looking; with tears and curiosity)* Royal seer, can’t you see? Take a good look, doesn’t it exactly match the moon face of your child, our daughter-in-law?

JÁNAKA: Yes, I see, my friend, I do.

KAUSÁLYA: Oh dear, my heart is so confused I’m just rambling on amidst my scattered thoughts.

JÁNAKA:
In this child the exact same form
of my child and Rama, Raghu’s heir
is made manifest, the spitting image
as it were: the radiance,
the voice, the same innate comportment,
even that pure majesty…
Oh fate, why is my agitated mind
chasing after this will-o’-the-wisp?
KAUSALYA: "jāda, atti de màdâ? sumarasi và tâdaṃ?

LAVAṆ: na hi.

KAUSALYA: "tado kassa tumaṃ?

LAVAṆ: bhagavato Vālmikeḥ.

KAUSALYA: "āj jāda, kadhavvaṃ kadhehi.

LAVAṆ: etāvad eva jānāmi.

NPATHYE: bho bholy sainikāḥ! eṣa khalu kumāra|Candra-

khetur ājñāpayati: «na kena cid āśram|ābhyaṅraṃbhūmir

ākramitavya" āti.

ARUNDHATI|JANAKAṆ: aye, medhy'|āsva|rakṣa|prasāṅgād

upāgato vatsā Candraketur adya draṣṭavya, ity aho su|dīvāś.

KAUSALYA: "vaccha|Lakṣhanassa puttako «ānvedi» tti ami-
dā|bindu|sundaraṃ akkharāṁ suṇianti,?

LAVAṆ: ārya, ka eṣa Candraketur nāma?

JANAKAṆ: jānāśi Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau Dāśarathi?

LAVAṆ: etāv eva Rāmāyaṇāḥ kathā|purusau.

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KAUSÁLYA: Child, is your mother alive? Do you have any memory of your father?

LAVA: No, I don’t.

KAUSÁLYA: Who takes care of you?

LAVA: The blessed Valmíki.

KAUSÁLYA: Come now, my child, you have a story here that needs telling.

LAVA: That is all I know.

OFFSTAGE: You there, soldiers! This is Prince Chandra-ketu ordering that no one is to trespass upon the grounds of the ashram.

ARÚNDHATI AND JÁNAKA: Why, the young Chandra-ketu has arrived in connection with guarding the sacrificial horse, and we shall see him soon. What a lucky day.

KAUSÁLYA: The little son of dear Lákshmana is “ordering”—syllables as pleasing as drops of nectar to my ears.

LAVA: Sir, who is this person named Chandra-ketu?

JÁNAKA: You have heard of Rama and Lákshmana, sons of Dasha-ratha?

LAVA: They are the two heroes of the ‘Ramáyana.’

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uttararamacaritaR 267 (268, 0)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

JANAKAḥ: atha kim?

LAVAḥ: tat kathaḥ na jānāmi?

JANAKAḥ: tasya Lakṣmaṇasya ayam ātmajaḥ Candraketuḥ.

LAVAḥ: Úrmilā | putras tarhi, Maithilasya rājā | rṣer dauhi-trah.

4.120 ARUNDHATI: (vihāṣya) āviṣkṛtaṁ kathāprāvīṇyaṁ vatsena.

JANAKAḥ: yadi tvam īḍrāḥ kathayāṁ abhijñaś, tad brūhi tāvat, pṛcchāmah: teśaṁ Daśarath’ātmajānāṁ kiṁ|nā-madheyāṁ apatyaṁ keṣu dāreṣu prasūtāni?

LAVAḥ: n’ āyaṁ kathā|pravibhaṅgo ‘smābhir, anyena vā, śrutālpūrvaḥ.

JANAKAḥ: kiṁ na prāṇītaḥ kavinā?

LAVAḥ: prāṇīto, na tu prakāṣitaḥ, tasy’ āiva ko ’py ekā|desaḥ sandarbh’āntareṇa rasavān abhiney’ārthah kṛtaḥ, tāṁ ca svā|hastaḷlikhitam munir bhagavān vyāṣṣajad Bharata-sya munes taurya|triṣa|sūtra|kārasya.

4.125 JANAKAḥ: kimjāṭham?

LAVAḥ: sa kila bhagavān Bharatas tam āpsaroḥḥ praya- yiṣyat’ iti.

JANAKAḥ: sarvam idam asmākam ākūtaḥkaram.

1 Divine courtesans.

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ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLÝA AND JÁNAKA

JÁNAKA: To be sure.

LAVA: Then how should I not have heard of them?

JÁNAKA: This Chandra-ketu is the son of Lákshmana.

LAVA: So he must be the son of Úrmila and grandson of the king of Míthila.

ARÚNDHATI: (laughing) It’s clear the child’s well versed in the story.

JÁNAKA: If you are so knowledgeable about the story then answer a few of my questions: What are the names of the children of Dasha-ratha’s other sons, and to which of the wives were they born?

LAVA: We haven’t heard this portion of the story nor has anyone else.

JÁNAKA: Hasn’t the poet composed it?

LAVA: Yes, but it isn’t published yet. A portion of it, its rasa heightened by its new form, is meant for performance. The sage wrote out the manuscript in his own hand and sent it to Bharata, author of the ‘Sutras on the Triad of Music’.

JÁNAKA: What for?

LAVA: So Bharata could have the ápsaras stage it, or so it’s said.

JÁNAKA: All this piques our curiosity.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

LAVAṆ: mahatī punas tasmin bhagavato Vālmikeśu āsthā, yato yeṣām ante | vāsināṁ hastena tat pustakaṁ Bharat’ | āśramam preṣitaṁ teṣām ānuyātikaś cāpa | pāṇīḥ praṃādā | āpanodan’ārtham asmad | bhrātā prēṣitaḥ.

KAUSAṆYĀ: "bhādā vi de aṭṭhī?"

4.130 LAVAṆ: asty ārṣya Kuśo nāma.

KAUSAṆYĀ: "jeṭṭho tti bhāniḍam bhodī,"

LAVAṆ: evam etat. prasava[kramena sa kila jyāyān.

JANAKAṆ: kim yamaḷīāv ayuṣmantaḥ?

LAVAṆ: atha kīm?

4.135 JANAKAṆ: kathaya: kathā prabandhasya kidṛśaḥ paryantaḥ?

LAVAṆ: alikalura[pravād’]jōdvignena rājīna nirvāṣitaṁ devalyajiṣa|sambhavam Sitā|devim āsanna|prasava|vedanaṁ ekākinim aranye paritajja Lakṣmaṇaḥ pratiniyṛta iti.

KAUSAṆYĀ: "hā vacche muddha[canda]muhi, ko dāniṁ de sarīrakusumassa jhati devvalduvvlāṣa aparināmo ekkāliṇa nivaḍido?"

JANAKAṆ: hā vatse,

nuṇaṁ tvayā parībhavaṁ ca vaṇaṁ ca ghoraṁ tāṁ ca vyathāṁ prasavākāla[lktām avāpya kravyāḍgaiṣeṇśu parītaḥ parīvārayatsu santrastayā śaraṇam ity aṣaṅkṣ traṣto ‘ṣmi. [23]

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Lava: Valmiki is very concerned about it, since he sent my brother armed with his bow to accompany the students hand-delivering the manuscript to Bharata’s ashram, to make sure there were no missteps.

Kausalya: You have a brother, too?

Lava: I have a noble brother named Kusha.

Kausalya: You mean he is older.

Lava: Quite so. By birth order he is my elder.

Janaka: What, are the two of you twins?

Lava: To be sure.

Janaka: Tell me, how does the main story end?

Lava: The king, upset over the townsmen’s malicious rumors, exiled Sita, the queen who was born at a sacred rite. Lakshmana returned after leaving her in the wilderness all alone, with the birth pangs coming on.

Kausalya: Oh my innocent moonfaced daughter, what perverse reversal of fortune has now befallen your flower of a body, all of a sudden, and all alone?

Janaka: Oh child.

Surely when you had to confront all at once disgrace, the dreadful forest, and labor pains, and the packs of flesh-eating beasts encircled you your thoughts were fixed on me, your last refuge, in your terror.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

4.140 LAVAḤ: (ARUNDHATĪM pratti) ārye, kāv etau?
ARUNDHATĪ: yaṁ Kausalyā, ayaṁ Janakaḥ.
LAVAḤ sa[labhumāna]kheda[kautukaṁ paśyati.
JANAKAḤ: aho durṣmaryādatā paurāṇām, aho Rāmasya rājñāḥ kaśipralkāritā.  
etad vaiśaṣāghorajvajrapatanaṁ  
śaśvan mamē ṥṭapaśyataḥ  
krodhasya jvalituṁ dhagity avasaraś  
cāpena śāpena vā. [24]

4.145 KAUŚALYĀ: (sailbhayam)bhavaṇi, paritāḥhi, paritāḥhi! pra- 
sādehi kuvidaṁ rāj'esinpa
LAVAḤ:
etadd hi pariḥūtānām  
prāyaścitataṁ manasvinām. [25]
ARUNDHATĪ:  
rājann, apatiyaṁ Rāmas te,  
pāḷyāś ca kṛpanāḥ prajāḥ. [26]
JANAKAḤ:  
śāntaṁ vā Raghunandane tad ubhayaṁ,  
tat putralbhandaṁ hi me,  
bhūyīṣṭha[dvija[baḷa[vyddha]vikaḷa]  
straiṁ ca pauro janaḥ. [27]

1Janaka’s bow or his anger.
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uttararamacaritaR 272 (272, 0)
ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLYA AND JÁNAKA

LAVA: (to ARÚNDHATI) Who are these two noble persons?  4.140

ARÚNDHATI: She is Kausálya, and he is Jánaka.

LAVA looks with respect, concern, and curiosity.

JÁNAKA: Oh, how perverse of the townsmen, how impulsive of King Rama.

As I brood on the terrible crash of this thunderbolt calamity, the time has come for my bow or my curse to ignite my rage.

KAUSÁLYA: (afraid) Help, Arúndhati, help! Please try to calm the angry king.

LAVA: *

This is the only form of redress for a self-respecting man disgraced.

ARÚNDHATI:

But, Your Majesty, Rama is your son, and the unfortunate townsmen deserve protection.

JÁNAKA:

Then let neither threaten Raghu-nándana—he is a treasure of a son to me, after all, and many of the townsmen are aged and infirm, Brahmans, children, and womenfolk.

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RAMA'S LAST ACT

BAṬAVAH: (sambhrāntāḥ, praviṣṭā) kumāra, kumāra! aśvo, śva iti ko 'pi bhūtā/viśeṣo janaµ|padeṣu śrūyate. so 'yam adhun' āsmbhiḥ pratyākṣikṛtaḥ.

4.150 LAVAH: aśvā iti tatra paśu|samāmnaye sāṅgrāmike ca paṭh-yate. tad brūta, kīḍrṣah?

BAṬAVAH: are, śṛyatām.

paścāt pucchaṃ vahati vipulaṃ,
tac ca dhūnoty ajasram.
dirghalgrivah sa bhavati, khurās
tasya catvāra eva.
śaspāny atti, prakirati śakṛṭ|
piṇḍakāṃ āmrā|mātrān.
kiṃ vyākhyaśair? vrajeti sa punar
dūram. ehy ehi, yāmah! [28]

uparṭy'ājine hastayaś c' ākarsanti.

LAVAH: (sa|kaµtuk|ōparodha|vinayam) āryah paśyata, ebhir nito 'smi.

4.155 tvaritaṃ parikrāmati.

ARUNDHATĪ|JANAKAU: pūrayatu kautukaṃ vatsah

KAUSALYĀ: ṝḥta, jāṇāmi, edaṃ anlavekkhanti vañcidā via. tā ido anṇaddo bhavia pekkhamha dāva gaccham-ṇam ṝḥ|āum,

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uttararamacaritaR 274 (274, 0)
ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLIYA AND JÁNAKA

Enter schoolboys in a commotion Young sir! We’ve heard tell across the countryside of the appearance of an amazing creature called a horse, and now we’ve actually seen one for ourselves.

LAVA: “Horse” is mentioned both in texts that treat of sacrificial victims and in texts that treat of war. Tell me, which is it?

BOYS: Why, just listen:

It has a large tail behind that it constantly flicks, and a long neck, and it has four hooves, not more, not less, and it eats grass and drops dung the size of mangoes… But enough commentary. He’s getting away, hurry up, let’s go!*

They approach LAVA and pull him by the hands and his ascetic’s hide.

LAVA: (with curiosity, reluctance, and courtesy) My elders can see that I’m being dragged away.

He walks around hurriedly.

ARÚNDHATI AND JÁNAKA: Go ahead, child, and satisfy your curiosity.

KAUSÁLIYA: Blessed one, I feel cheated* if I don’t get to see him (long may he live). Let’s find another spot to watch him as he makes his way.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

ARUNDHATI: atijavena dūram atikrāntaḥ sa capalaḥ kathaṁ drṣṭyaḥ?

KAṢCUKĪ: (praviṣya) bhagavān Vālmikir āha: jñātavyam etad avasare bhavadbhīḥ.

JANAKAḥ: atigambhiram etat kim api bhaviṣyati. bhagavaty Arundhati, sakhi Kausalye, ārya Grṣte, svayam eva gatvā bhagavantaḥ Prācetasām paśyāmaḥ.

nīkrānto vrddha/varghaḥ.

praviṣya

BAṬAVAḥ: paśyatu kumāras tad āścaryam.

LAVAḥ: drṣṭam avagatam ca. nūnam āśvamedhiko ’yam āśvaḥ.

BAṬAVAḥ: kathaṁ jñāyate?

LAVAḥ: nanu mūrkhaḥ, paṭhitam eva yuṣmābbhis tat kāṇḍam. kim na paśyatha? pratyekāḥ sāta|saṅkhyaḥ kavacīno daṇḍino niṣāṅgināś ca rakṣitāraḥ. tat|prāyam eva balam idaṁ drṣṭaye. yadi ha na pratayasa, tat prccata.

BAṬAVAḥ: bho bhoḥ, kim|prayojano ’yam āśvaḥ parivṛttaḥ paryatati?

LAVAḥ: (sa|sprham, ātma|gatam) āśva|medha iti viśva|vi-jayinām ksatriyānām urjasvalaḥ sarva|ksatriya|paribhāvī mahān utkarsa|nikaṣaḥ.

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ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLYA AND JÁNAKA

ARÚNĐHATI: The little rascal has gone so far so fast that he is almost out of sight.

ENTER THE CHAMBERLAIN: Valmíki has replied saying that you will come to know the answer to your question in due course.

JÁNAKA: It must be something very important. Arúndhati, Kausálya, my friend, Grishti, let us go and see Prachétas’s son ourselves.

EXIT GROUP OF ELDERS.

ENTER SCHOOLBOYS

BOYS: Look at this miraculous thing, young sir.

LAVA: I’ve understood at first sight: this is a horse meant for the Horse Sacrifice.

BOYS: How can you tell?

LAVA: You dolts, you’ve already studied that section of the Veda and you still can’t see? There have to be guards, with armor, clubs, or arrows, each contingent numbering a hundred. Such is almost exactly the army you see here. If you don’t believe me go ask them.

BOYS: You there, what’s the reason this horse is wandering about under guard?

LAVA: (enviously, aside) The Horse Sacrifice is the ultimate test of a world-conquering Kshatriya’s preeminence, for it’s meant to bring all other Kshatriyas into disgrace.
NEPATHYE:

yo ’yam ásvaḥ, paták” éyam,
atha và víralghoṣanā
saptalok’áikā|vīrasya
Daśakaṇṭha|kula|dvīṣaḥ. [29]

4.170 LAVAḤ: (sa|vyatham iva) aho, sandipanāṇy aksaraṇī!
BAṬAṆAḤ: kim ucyate? prājñāḥ khalu kumāraḥ.
LAVAḤ: bho bhoḥ, kim āksatriyā prthivi yad evam udghisyate?
NEPATHYE: are, mahā|rājan prati kutaḥ kṣatriyāḥ?
LAVAḤ: dhik, jālmāḥ!

yadi te santi, santv eva.
 k” éyam adya vibhiṣikā?
 kim uktaiḥ? sannipatī’ āśa
 tāṁ patākāṁ harāmi vah. [30]

bho baṭavāḥ, parivṛtya loṣṭair apaghnantāḥ parāvartayat’ āi- nam ásvam. eṣa rohitāṇāṁ madhye varākaś caratu.

PURUṢĀḤ: (praviśya, sa|krodha|darpaḥ) dhik, capala, kim uktavān asi? tiksna|nirasaḥ hy āyudhiya|śrenayaḥ śīśor api dhṛtaṁ vācāṁ na saṁhante. rāja|putraḥ Candraketur arī| vimardanaḥ so py apūrvā|ārāṇya|darśana|kutāḥalā|ākṣi-pta|hṛdayo na yāvad āyāti tāvat tvaritam anena tarulga- hareṇi’ āpārsarpata.

1Rāvanaḥ.

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ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLIYA AND JÁNAKA

OFFSTAGE:

This is not so much a horse
as a banner or war cry announcing
the one true hero in the seven worlds,
the enemy of Ten-Neck's tribe.

LAVA: (as if perturbed) Ah, fighting words!

BOYS: What can we say? Young sir is well informed indeed.

LAVA: You there, you think no Kshatriyas are left on earth
that you can shoot off your mouth like this?

OFFSTAGE: Come now, what are other Kshatriyas to the emperor?

LAVA: Damn, you scoundrels!

If there be Kshatriyas then Kshatriyas
indeed they are. Who are you trying to scare?
But the time for talk is past: I am going
to attack and carry that banner away.

You there, boys: Surround them and bombard them with
clumps of dirt and lead the horse back here. Let the poor
thing wander free among the ashram's deer.

Enter an angry and arrogant officer: Damn, you rascal,
what did you say? The king's regiments are ruthless and
hard-hearted, and they won't stand for arrogant talk
even from a child. Before Prince Chandra-ketu, crusher
of enemies, reaches this celebrated wilderness to tour it
as he is heartily eager to do, you all had better hurry and
leave by way of this thicket of trees.
BAṬAVAḤ: kumāra, kṛtam aneṇāśvena. tarjayanti visphuritaḥ sāstrāḥ kumāram āyudhīyaḥśreṇayah; dure ēṣāramad padam itaḥ. tad ehi. harinālputaiḥ palāyāmahe.

LAVAḤ: (vihasya) kim nāma visphuranti śastrāṇiḥ (dbhur āropayan)

4.180 jyājijhvayā valayitōtkatākotīdāmśtram
udgārighoraighanalghargharāghoṣam etat
gṛāsarprasaktaḥasadAntakaṇātra|vāktra|yana
jṛmbhāviḍambivikatōdaram astu cāpam. [31]
yathā:jocitam parikramya nīkrāntaḥ sarve.

iti mahākaviśriḥBhavabhūtiṃprāṇita
UttaraRāmacaritamātāke
KausalyāJanaka-yogā nāma
caturbo 'nikah.

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ACT IV: THE MEETING OF KAUSÁLYA AND JÁNAKA

BOYS: Young sir, forget about the horse. The regiments are coming, brandishing their weapons and threatening you, and the ashram is far away. So come on, let’s high-tail it out of here!

LAVA: (laughing) What do I care about their brandishing weapons? (stringing his bow)

My dreadful bow is ready to yawn—no weapon but the laughing maw of Death greedily feeding, rumbling with a wild, dull, thundercloud-like roar, its tips sharp fangs licked by its bowstring tongue.

Walking about as befitting them, exeunt all.

End of Act IV
ACT V
THE YOUNG MAN'S VALOR
НЕПАТЫЕ: бхо бхо, саиника! ята ни ятам аваламбанам асмакам.

нанв еса тварита|сумантра|нудьямани
въауалгат|праявана|въаина ратхена
утхата|прачалита|ковидаржету|шрутив нах прадханам упайти Цандракету.

тата прависати сумантра|саритха|бхима дханус|паних|ай|
адбхутабха|самбхра|сандракету.

CANDRAKETUH: ария Сумантра, паши пашия:

5.5
kirati kalita|киначт|копа|раиан|мукха|сир
ан|варата|нигу́нат|котинá|кармукецна
самара|сираса|ка|пачка|куда|саминаам
упари|сара|тура|ай|пю аям|виримпата.

а́сьяя.

мунилана|сишур|ека|самъртта|сайна|саингаи
нава ива Рагху|вамшаси|ай|прасиддха|праороа
dalita|капола|гранхи|та|кало|гхора
jvalita|сара|саисра|хатукана|мей кароти.

SUMANTRAH: а́́шман,

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OFFSTAGE: You there, soldiers! Finally reinforcements for us.

That must be—on a chariot with speeding horses galloping, urged on by a rushing Sumántra, a kovidāra* banner fluttering where it’s been hoisted—Chandra-ketu coming at the news of our fight.

Enter, on a chariot driven by sumántra, CHANDRA-KETU bow in hand and filled with wonder, joy, and alarm.

CHANDRA-KETU: Look, Sumántra, look.

There is some child hero at the forefront of battle, unleashing a blizzard of arrows upon the army, his five topknots* waving, his bow ever twanging, his beautiful face reddened with anger.

It’s a miracle.

That a single child, reared by sages, surrounded by so many troops, a new and unfamiliar sprout of Raghu’s family, it seems, should shoot a thousand flaming arrows from a dreadfully twanging bow, splitting the war elephants’ temples, fires my curiosity.*

SUMÁNTRA: Young sir (long may you live),
RAMA’S LAST ACT

atîsayitâō̄śurasur’āśuralprabhâvam Śīśum avalokya tath” āīva tulyaṛūpam Kuśikāsutaṇmakaḥdvīśaṁ pramāthe dhṛtaṇaḥauṣaṁ Raghunandanaṁ smarāmi. [4]

5.10 CANDRAKETUH: imam ekam uddīśya bhūyasām ārambha iti hṛdayam apatrāpate.


SUMANTRAH: vatsa, ebhiḥ samastair api kim asya? kiṁ pu- nar vyastaiḥ?

CANDRAKETUH: ārya, tvaryatāṁ tvaryatām! anena hi mahan āśritajanaḥpraṇātho śmakām ārabdhaḥ. tathā hi:


1 Literally, “Kuśika’s son.” See 1.76 [17].

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ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

As I watch this child—his power exceeds at once the gods’ and antigods’, and his form is the same* as well—
I am reminded of Rama wielding his bow to crush the foes of Vishva-mitra’s rite.¹

CHANDRA-KETU: My heart recoils to see so many attacking one all alone.

He is a child and all on his own, while vast forces—with a latticework of weapons tangled in hands that are huge as palm trees, bristling with battle gear,* advancing on chariots that make a jangle with ringing golden bells, on cloud-like war elephants that stir up a storm with torrents of musk—are surrounding him.

SUMÁNTRA: My child, they’re no match for him all together let alone singly.

CHANDRA-KETU: Hurry, sir, hurry! He’s started a wholesale slaughter of our retainers. For

While raising a twanging sound from his bow that’s amplified by the deep roar of war drums—a cacophony vaster than elephant herds trumpeting in mountain caves—the hero bedecks the earth with mounds of grisly twitching headless bodies as if with scraps of food that have dropped from the gruesome mouth of a sated Death.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

5.15 sumantraḥ: \(svalgatam\) katham idṛṣṭena saha vatsasya Ca
ndraketor dvandva|samprahāram anujāniyām? (vicint-
ya) atha vā, Iksyāku|kula|ṛddhāḥ khalu vayam. pratyu-
pasthite ca kā gatiḥ?

 candraketuj: (sā|vismaya|laṣṭa|saṁbhramaḥ) dhik, apa-
citāni sarvataḥ saṁyāni mama!

 sumantraḥ: (ratha|vegam abhiniya) āyusman, eṣa vāg|vi-
ṣayībhūtaḥ sa te virāḥ.

 candraketuj: (vismṛtim abhiniya) ārya, kiṁ nāma|dhe-
ym ākhyātam āḥvāyakaṁ?

 sumantraḥ: «Lava» iti.

 candraketuj:

5.20 bho bho Lava mahābāho,
kīm ebhis tava saṁnikāḥ?
eṣo 'ham. ehi mām eva.
tejas tejasī śāmyatu. [7]

 sumantraḥ: kumāra, paśya paśya.

 vyapavartata eṣa bāla|vīraḥ
prtaṇā|niṁrathanāt tvay” ṕopahūtaḥ
stanayitnu|ṛavāḍ ībh’āvālinām
avamardād īva ṛptaṁśiṁtha|śāvaḥ. [8]

tataḥ praviṣati tvaṁ|ṛddhata|parikramo LAVĀḥ.

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uttaramacaritaR  288 (288, 0)
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

SUMÁNTRA: (aside) How could I possibly permit a duel to take place between the young Chandra-ketu and such a being as this? (reflecting) But then, we are elders of the Ikshváku clan, after all.* And what other recourse is there in the present circumstances?

CHANDRA-KETU: (with astonishment, shame, and alarm) Why, my troops are losing ground everywhere!

SUMÁNTRA: (miming a speeding chariot) My child (long may you live), the hero is now within shouting range.

CHANDRA-KETU: (miming forgetfulness) Sir, what was the name the messengers mentioned?

SUMÁNTRA: Lava.

CHANDRA-KETU:

You there, Lava, what are such soldiers to someone as strong as you?

Here I am, come get me one on one:

One should fight fire with fire.

SUMÁNTRA: Look, young sir, look:

At your challenge the boy hero leaves off annihilating the army,
as a bold lion cub at a stormcloud’s roar leaves off slaughtering an elephant herd.

Enter LAVA walking swiftly and boldly.
**RAMA’S LAST ACT**

**LAVAHA:** sadhu raja|putra, sadhu! satyam Aikṣavakaḥ khalv asi. tad ayaṁ parāgata ev’ āsmi.

5.25 nepathyē mahān kalakalāḥ.

**LAVAHA:** (s'āvegam parāvṛtya) āh katham idānīṁ bhagnā api pratinivṛtya pṛthi|ānusārineṇ paryavastabhantī māṁ camūpatayah? dhig jālmān!

ayaṁ sāil|āghata| kṣubbhita|vadāvā[vaktraḥ|utabhuḥ| pracaṇḍaj|krodh|jārcir| nicāya|kalavatvam vṛajatu me samantād utsarpan ghana|tumula|helā|kalakalaḥ payojrāṣer oghah | pralaya|pavan|āśphālita iva. [9]

s'āvegam parikrāmati.

**CANDRAKETUH:** bho bhoḥ kumāra!

5.30 atyadbhutād asi guṇ|ātiśayat priyo me. tasmāt sakha tvam asi. yan mama tat tav' āiva. tat kim nije pariṣaṇe kadanaṁ karosi?

navv eṣa darpaṇikaśas tava Candraketuḥ. [10]

**LAVAIAH:** (sa|hārsa|sambhramam parāvṛtya) aho, mah”|ānu- bhāvasya prasannā|karkśā vira|vacana|prayuktir vikar- tanā|kulā|kumārasya. tat kim ebhil? enam eva tāvat sa- mbhāvayāmi.
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

LAVA: Bravo, prince, bravo! You really are in truth an Aik-shváka. So here I am, returned to you.

Offstage a great tumult.

5.25

LAVA: (turning around abruptly) What, are the battalion commanders, though once defeated, returning to encircle me and attack me from the rear?* The scoundrels!

Let their flood—like the ocean’s flood when battered by the doomsday winds, with a terrifying earsplitting noise and swelling to its highest tide—become a morsel to feed the blazing bonfire of my anger, as hot as the fire in the mouth of Vádava* whipped up by blows from the mountains.

He walks about excitedly.

CHANDRA-KETU: You there, young sir!

Your truly wondrous virtues have endeared you to me. You’re now my friend, what’s mine is yours. Why then slaughter your own people? Surely Chandra-ketu here is the touchstone for your pride.

LAVA: (turning back in excitement and alarm) Ah, a clever show of words, brave words, smooth and rough at once, on the part of the majestic scion of the Solar dynasty. Why should I bother with these fellows then? Let me first pay my respects to him.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

punar nepathye kalakalah.

LAVAHI: (salamkrodha|nirvedam) āḥ, kadarthito 'ham ebhir vira| saṃvāḍa|vighnajāribhiḥ pāpaiḥ.

tad|abhimukham parikrāmati.

5.35 CANDRAKETUIH: ārya, drśyatāṃ draṣṭavyam.

darpeṇa kautukavatā mayi baddha|lakṣyāḥ
paścād balir anusṛto 'yam udirṇajādhavanā
dvedhā samuddhata|marut|taralasya dhatte
meghasya Māghavata|cāpa|dharasya lakṣmim.[11]

SUMANTRAHI: kumāra ev' āinaṃ draṣṭum api jānāti. keva-|laṃ tu paravanto vayaṃ vismayena.

CANDRAKETUIH: bho bho rājānāḥ,

samkhyā|āśitaḥ dvirada|turaga| syandana|śthaiḥ padātv
atrā ākasmin kavaca|nicitair
medhyā|carm|ottariye
kāla|yeṣthair a|carama|vayaḥ| kāmya|kaye bhavadbhir
yo 'yam baddho yudhi samabharas,
tena vo dhig dhig asmān.[12]
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

Still offstage a great tumult.

LAVA: (with anger and disgust) Ah, what disrespectful treatment I'm shown by these curs: They’ve interrupted a conversation between heroes.

He walks about in the direction of CHANDRA-KETU.

CHANDRA-KETU: Look, sir, look, here’s something worth seeing:

At once confident and curious, brandishing his bow he has fixed his aim on me while hounded by forces at the rear, looking for all the world like a rainbow-bearing stormcloud driven in opposite directions by the gusting wind.

SUMÁNTRA: Even to look at him—well, young sir alone is capable of doing so. We ourselves are simply overcome with astonishment.

CHANDRA-KETU: You there, nobles,

Your forces are past counting, while he is all alone. You come on chariots, elephants, and horses—and he’s on foot. You are protected by armor, he wears an ascetic’s hide. You are adults while his body glows with youth’s first bloom. Readying arms like this for battle will only bring shame on you and me.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

5.40 LAVAḥ: (ṣṭ̐ōmāṭham) katham, anukampate nāma? (viciṃ-
    ya) bhavatu. kālaḥ-harṣaḥ-pratiṣedhāya ṇṛmbhaṅkaṅkhāṣṭa
    tāvat sainyāni saṃstambhayāmi. (dhyānaṃ nātayati)

SUMANTRAḤ: tat kim aikasmād asaṃt-sainyālghosāḥ praśā-
    myati?

LAVAḥ: paśyāmy enam adhunā salpragalbhām.

SUMANTRAḤ: (ṣal/sambramam) vatsa, manye kumārakeṇ'
    ānena ṇṛmbhaṅkāṅkhāṣṭaṃ āmaṃtritaṃ.

CANDRAKEṬUḤ: atra kaḥ sanvedah?

vyatikara iva bhimas tāmaso vaidyutaḥ ca
prāṇiḥitaṃ api caṅṣur grastaṃ muktam hinaṃ. aha līkhitaṃ ivā
tīvat sainyāṃ aśpandam āste. niyātaṃ ājītāviṃyaṃ jṛmbhaṅkāṅkāṣṭaṃ.

[13]

āścaryam, āścaryam!

pāṭal'ōdaraḥkuṇājaḥpuṇjitaḥtamaḥ)
śyāmaṅkair nabba jṛmbhakaṅkair
uttaptaḥ-ṣphuraḍāraṅkūṭaḥkapila
jyotir-ṣphuraḍāraṅkūṭaḥkapila
kalp'ākṣepaḥkathoraḥbhairavaḥmarud
vyastair avastṁyate
milan|meghaḥtaḍīkṣaḥpiṃkharār
Vindhyā'ādri'kūṭaṅkharār

[14]

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uttararamacaritaR 294 (294, 0)
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

LAVA: (with consternation) What the devil, is he moved to compassion? (reflecting) Well, I’ll waste no more time but simply paralyze the troops with my magic Jrímbhaka weapons. (miming concentration)

SUMÁNTRA: Now, why has the ruckus among our troops suddenly died down?

LAVA: So I behold the impudent fellow at last.

SUMÁNTRA: (with alarm) My child, I believe the youngster has invoked the Jrímbhaka weapons.

CHANDRA-KETU: There can be no doubt:

An awesome combination, like that of darkness and lightning, first blinding then dazzling assails even the steady eye. Our troops are stock-still, as if painted in a picture. the invincible Jrímbhaka weapons must have been deployed.

It’s a miracle, a sheer miracle!

Black as the darkness massed in the womb of hell, agleam with the red radiance of heated glowing brass the Jrímbhakas blanket the sky like Vindhya’s peaks torn off by the awesome howling winds that announce the end of a cosmic age, their caverns tawny within from lightning that shoots from the gathering bank of clouds.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

SUMANTRAH: kutaḥ punar asya Jṛmbhakāṇḍam āgaṇaḥ syāt?
CANDRAKETUH: bhagavataḥ Prācetasād iti manyāmahe.

5.50 SUMANTRAH: vatsa, n’ āṅtad evam astreṣu, viśeṣato Jṛmbha-
keṣu. yataḥ,

Kṛṣṇaṣvatanayā hy ete,
Kṛṣṇāvat Kausikāṃ gataḥ,
atha tatāṃ sampradāyena
Rāmabhadrāṁ sthitā iti. [1 5]

CANDRAKETUH: apare ’pi pracīyamānaḥ | sattvapra-kāśāḥ svayam hi mantra|dṛśaḥ paśyanti.

SUMANTRAH: vatsa, s’ | āvadhāno bhava. parāgataḥ prati-
virah.

KUMĀRAH: (anyonyam uddīya) aho priya | daraśanaḥ ku-
māraḥ. (sajneh|ānurāgaḥ nirvannya)

5.55 yadṛcchāṣaṃvādaḥ
kim u? kim u guṇānām aṭisayah?
purāno vā jaṁmi|ā-
ntaraṇibīḍaḥ|bandhaḥ paricayaḥ?
nījo vā sambandhaḥ
kim u vidhi|vaṣat ko ’py aṭiyidito?
mam’ aṭasmin dṛṣṭe
hrdayam avadhānaṃ racayati. [16]

1 Viśvāmitra.

296

uttararamacaritaram 296 (296, 0)
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN'S VALOR

SUMÁNTRA: But how could he have acquired the Jrímbhakas?

CHANDRA-KETU: From the son of Prachétas, I suppose.

SUMÁNTRA: My child, that is not how it works with such weapons, especially the Jrímbhakas. For

These are the offspring of Krisháshva, and passed from him to Káushika, who transmitted them to dear Rama, where ever since they’ve come to reside.

CHANDRA-KETU: But others have beheld them, men who have gained illumination by their purity and had visions of mantras on their own.

SUMÁNTRA: Child, pay heed: Your adversary has returned.

THE TWO YOUNG MEN: (each in reference to the other) The young man is so kind looking. (gazing with affection and love)

Is it some chance meeting of minds?

His many virtues? An ancient friendship fast formed in some previous birth?

A relative of mine kept hidden by fate, that my heart should be rapt in attention at the very sight of him?
RAMA’S LAST ACT

SUMANTRAH: bhūyasā jividdharma eṣa yat sva|rasamayi ka-
sya cit kva cit prīth, yatra laukikānām upacāras «tārā|
maitrakām», «cakṣū|rāga» iti, tam a|pratisaṃkhya|yam
ajnibandhanām pramāṇam āmanantī.

aḥetuh pakṣapāto yas
tasya n’astī pratikriyā,
sa hi snehātmasīs tantur
antarībhūtāni sivyati. [17]

KUMĀRAU: (anyonyam uddiṣyā)
etasmin maṣṇita|rāja|paṭṭa|jānte
moktavyah katham iha sayakāh śārīre
yat|prāptau mama parirambhaṇ|ābhilāsād
unmilat|pulaka|kadambam āṅgam āste? [18]

5.60 kin tv ākrānta kaṭhara|ṭejasi gatiḥ
kā nāma āśraṃ vinā?
śastreṇ’ api hi tena kim na viṣayo
jāyeta yasī ‘ēdṛśah?
kīm vaksyaty ayam eva yuddha|vimukha|m
mām udyate ’py āyudhe?
virāṇaṃ samayo hi dāruṇa|rasah
snehādkramaṃ bādhate. [19]

SUMANTRAH: (lavāṃ nirvāṇya, s/āram, ātma|gatam) hṛ-
daya, kīm anyathā pariplavase?

298

uttararamacaritāR 298 (298, 0)
It is a common characteristic of the soul that a given person should feel a natural affection for another given person. Worldly men have a figurative expression for this, "Being starry-eyed" or "Love at first sight." And therefore it's written that this is something real, however unfounded and inexplicable it may appear to be.

There is no way to counteract a predilection that has no cause. There is some thread of affection that knits living things together deep within.

How could I shoot my arrows into this body adorned by the soft fillet of royalty when no sooner having met than my limbs began to tremble, longing to hold him close?

But then, what recourse can there be but arms when faced with such an overwhelming force? And yet what use are arms when he is such as far exceeds the scope of their power? What would he say of me were I to turn away from battle after swords were drawn? The rasa of the hero's way is cruel and blocks the normal course of affection.

(sumántra: (gazing at lara; tearfully, aside) My heart, why are you running riot?)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

manorathasya yad bijam
	tad daiven ādito hṛtam.
latāyām pūrvalunāyām
	prasavyā āgamaḥ kutah? [20]

CANDRAKETUH: avatarāmy, ārya Sumantra, syandanāt.

SUMANTRAH: tat kasya hetoh?

5.65 CANDRAKETUH: yatas tāvad ayam vīra[purusah pujito bhavati. api ca khalv, ārya, kṣātra[harmaḥ samanugato bhavati. na rathināḥ pāda[śaram abhiyodhayant’ iti śāstra| vidaḥ paribhāṣante.

SUMANTRAH: (sva[gnāna) kaṣṭam br’, ānuprasanno ‘smi.
	saḥams nyāyam anuṣṭhānaḥ
	māḍrśaḥ pratīṣedhatu?
kathaṃ v” ābhyanuṣjāntu
	śāhas[āikaṣa[rasaḥkiyām? [21]

CANDRAKETUH: yadā tātāmiśra api pītaḥ priyaḥ sakhāyaṃ
dharma[ārtha[saṃśayaḥ śāyam eva pṛchchānta, tat kim ar-
	yo vīmśati?

SUMANTRAH: āyuśmann, evaṃ yathādharmaṃ abhiman-
yase.

5.70 esa sāṅgrāmiko nyāya,
esa dharmah sanātanah,
iyam hi Raghu[śimhānām

vīra[caritra[paddhati, [22]

CANDRAKETUH: a[pratirūpaṃ vacanam ārasya.

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ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

The one seed of our hope was stolen away by fate.
Once the vine is cut how is any shoot to grow?

CHANDRA-KETU: Sumántra, I want to get off the chariot.

SUMÁNTRA: Why so?

CHANDRA-KETU: For one thing, this is the way to show respect to a hero. For another, it’s following Kshatriya custom, as you are aware, sir. According to the interpretation of those who know the Shastra, one riding a chariot should never give battle to another who is on foot.

SUMÁNTRA: (aside) I am facing a terrible dilemma here.

How can such a one as I forbid the proper act or give assent to a deed whose rasa* is sheer recklessness?

CHANDRA-KETU: My honored father addresses every question of dharma or statecraft to you, his own father’s dear friend. Why then your vacillation?

SUMÁNTRA: My child (long may you live), your thinking is in accordance with dharma.

This is the proper conduct in war, the age-old way of dharma, the course of action for heroes that the Raghu lions have followed.

CHANDRA-KETU: Your words are without peer.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

itihāsāṁ purāṇaṁ ca,
dharmajpravacanāni ca
bhavanta eva jānanti,
Raghunāṁ ca kulaśeṣhīm. [23]

SUMANTRAH: (saṁsneḥ/aśraṁ pariśvajya)
jātasya te pitur ap' īndrajito vijetur
vatsasya, vatsa, kati nāma dināṁy amūni?
tasy' āpy apatyaṁ anugacchati vīraścṛttam.
dīṣṭyā gataṁ Daśarathasya kulaṁ pratiśhām.

5.75 CANDRAKEΤUH: (saṁkṣaṭam)
«alpratiśṭhe Raghuljyeṣṭhe
kā pratiśṭhā kulasya naḥ?»
iti duḥkhena tapyante
trayo naḥ pitaro 'pare. [25]

SUMANTRAH: ahaha, hṛdaya|marmā|dāraṇāṁy etāṁ Cand-

RAKEΤUH vacanāṁ.

LĀVAH: hanta, miśrīkṛto rasa|kramo vartate.

yath” ēndāv ānandaṁ
vrajati samupōḍhe kumudini
thāḥ āiv' āsmin drṣṭīr.
mama kalaha|kāmāṁ punar ayam
jhaṁat[kāraṇkṛūrā]
kvāṇita|guna|guñjad|guru|dhanur
dhṛta|prema bāhur
vikaca|vikarāla|vraṇa|mukhah. [26]

Son of Rāvaṇa. 
That is, has found a son to continue the line.
Lākṣmaṇa, Bharata, Śatrughna. 
i.e., blossom.

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uttararamacaritaR 302 (302, 0)
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN'S VALOR

The histories and legends, the discourses of dharmā, the family customs of the Raghus—all are known to you alone.

SUMĀNTRA: (embracing him with tears of affection)

My dear child, how many days can possibly have passed since your dear father, conqueror of Índrajit, was born?
And here is his own son following the hero's path. What good fortune Dasha-ratha's clan has found fulfillment.

CHANDRA-KETU: (despondently)

So long as the eldest Raghu is unfulfilled how could our clan find fulfillment? This is the single thought that makes our fathers, our three other fathers, burn with sorrow.

SUMĀNTRA: Ah, Chandra-ketu's words tear at my heart's soft core.

LAVA: Well really, the development of the nasa here is all muddled.

Night-blooming lotuses rejoice when the moon begins to rise and so do my eyes when I see him. And yet my arm—its ghastly wounds agape, throbbing with love for the heavy bow and its string twanging so cruelly and loud—is hankering for battle.
Rama's Last Act

5.80 CANDRAKETUIH: (avataraṇaṁ rāpayaṁ) ārya, Sāvitraś Candraketur abhivādayate.

SUMANTRAHI:

aljitaṁ puṇyam ūrjasvi
Kakutsthasy ēva te mahaḥ
śreyase śāśvato devo
Varāhah parikalpatām. [27]

api ca
devas tvāṁ Savitā dhinotu samare
gotrasya yas te pitā.
tvāṁ Maitrāvarunō bhinandatu gurur
yas te gurūnāṁ api.
Aindrā|Vaiśṇavam Āgni|Mārutam atho
Savparṇam ojo 'stu te.
deyād eva ca Rāma|Lakṣman|dhanur|
jyāṅghoṣa|mantrō jayam. [28]

LAVAIH: kumāra, ati hi nāma sōbhase rathastha eva. kṛtaṁ
kṛtam atyādaṇeṇa.

5.85 CANDRAKETUIH: tarhi mahāḥbhāgo 'py anyaṁ ratham alaṁ
karotu.

LAVAIH: ārya, pratyāropaya rath'āparī rājalputram.

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1 An ancestor of the Raghu dynasty.  
2 In the Boar incarnation Viṣṇu rescued the world from the depths of the ocean.  
3 Vasiṣṭha, descendant of the gods Mitra and Varuṇa.  
4 Garuḍa, the divine bird that is Viṣṇu's vehicle.
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

CHANDRA-KETU: (imitating climbing down from the chariot)  §.80
Sir, Chandra-ketu of the Solar dynasty greets you.

SUMÁNTRA:

Grandeur indomitable, pristine, imposing as
Kakústha’s
may the Boar, the everlasting god, grant you
eternal welfare.

Moreover:

May the Sun, the father of your clan, impel you in
battle.
May Maitra-váruna, your
guru and your own, rejoice in you.
May you have the strength of Indra, Vishnu, Fire,
the Storm gods, Supárvı.
May the loud mantra of Rama and Lákshmana’s
bowstring bestow success.

LAVA: Young sir, you look quite grand aboard the chariot.
No need whatever for such a show of deference.

CHANDRA-KETU: Then let the well-favored young man §.85
adorn a chariot of his own.

LAVA: Sir, have the prince board the chariot once again.

305
SUMANTRAH: tvam api anurudhyasva vatsyasya Candrake-
tor vacanam.

LAVAHA: ko vicāraḥ sveṣ' āpakaraṇesu? kin tv aranyajśado va-
yam anjābhyaṣṭarathacaryāḥ.

SUMANTRAH: jānāsi, vatsa, darpājauṃjanyayor yath”ōcitam.
yadi punar īḍrṣaṃ tvām Aikṣvāko rājā Rāmaḥ pāṣyet,
tad” āṣya snehena hṛdayam abhīṣyandeta.

5.90 LAVAHA: manye sujjanaḥ sa rājārṣih śrūyate. (satājaṃ iva)

vayam api na khalv evam|prāyāḥ
kratusv api matsarāḥ.
ka iva ca guṇais taṃ rājanaṃ
na vā bahu manyate?
tad api khalu me sa vyāhāras
turaṅgama|raksināṃ
vikṛtim akhilal|kṣatr’ākṣepa|pracanḍatay” ākarot. [29]

CANDRAKETUḤ: (sa|mītam) kim nu bhavatas tāta|pratāp’|
ōtkarṣe ’py ā|mārṣaḥ?

LAVAHA: astv a|mārṣo, mā bhūd vā. etat tu pṛcchāmi: dān-
taṃ hi Rāghavaṃ rājānaṃ anuśūṣrūma. sa kila n’ ātma-
nā dṛpyati, n’ āṣya prajāyāṃ dṛptatvaṃ jāyate. tat kim
manuṣyās tasya rākṣasīṃ vācaṃ udīrayanti?

| 1See Act 5.10 [10]. | ii Act 4.169 [29]. | iii An elder paternal uncle was also called tātā, father. |

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ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN'S VALOR

SUMÁNTRA: Then please comply, for your part, with young Chandra-ketu’s request.

LAVA: One wouldn’t hesitate to use equipment of one’s own. But we who live in the wilderness are unpracticed in chariot riding.

SUMÁNTRA: You are mindful, my child, of the claims of pride and magnanimity both. Were the Aikshváka king Rama to witness this behavior of yours, his heart would gush with affection.

LAVA: That royal seer himself, I think, is the one who is truly magnanimous—or so one hears. (half ashamed)

As for me, you know, I don’t as a rule begrudge such rituals, and who in the world could fail to respect the king for his many virtues? Still, you know, it was because of the challenge from the guardians of the horse—a provocation to all Kshatriyas—this change came over me.

CHANDRA-KETU: (smiling) Are you also resentful of the grandeur of my father’s power?

LAVA: Whether I am or not doesn’t matter; let me just ask this: We have heard that Rághava is a reserved man; they say he’s not arrogant himself nor is there any arrogance among his subjects. So why do his men give voice to words fit for a rákshasa?
RAMA’S LAST ACT

ṛṣayo «rākṣasim» āhur
vācam unmattal|drptayoh.
«sā yonih sarva|vairāṇam.
sā hi lokasya nirṛṭih,» [30]

5.95 iti ha sma tām nindanti. ath’ ētārām abhiśtuvanti.
kāmān dugdhe viprakaṣṭaty allakṣmīm
kirtiṃ sute duṣkṛtaṃ yā hinaṭi
tām c’ āpy etām mātaraṃ maṅgalāṇām
dhenuṃ dhirāḥ sūṃrāṃ vācam āhuh. [31]

SUMANTRAH: paripūta|sva|bhāvo ’yaṃ kumāraḥ Prācetas’|
ānte|vāsi vādaty abhisampannam ārṣeṇa saṃskāreṇa.

LAVAH: yat punaś, Candrakeṭo, vadasi, «kiṃ nu bhavatas
tāta|pratāp|’ōtkarṣe ’py aḷmaraḥ?» iti, tat pṛcchāmi: kiṃ
vyavasthitā|viṣayāḥ kṣātra|dharmāḥ?

SUMANTRAH: n’ āiva khalu jānāsī devam Aṅkṣvākam. tad
virama, viram’ ātiprasaṅgāt.

5.100 sainikānāṃ pramāthena
satyaṃ ojāyitaṃ tvayā.
Jāmadagnyasya damane
na hi nirbandham arhaśi. [32]

↑ The son of Jamadagni, Paraśūrāma, a powerful Brahman warrior defeated by Rāma.

308

uttararamacaritaR 308 (308, 0)
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

A “rākṣasa word,” the seers say, is one fit only for the mad or arrogant.
“It is the source of all enmity, the very bane of the world,”
is how people have condemned it. By contrast, they extol its opposite:

A goodly word, the wise declare, is a veritable magic cow:
It milks out anything one desires, dispels privation, gives birth to fame, and expunges all bad karma.
It is the very mother of the richest of blessings.

SUMĀNTRA: How good-natured is this young student of Valmīki; what he says is infused with the very disposition of a seer.

LAVA: As for what you just said, Chandra·ketu—“Are you also resentful of the grandeur of my father’s power?”—let me just ask: Are the dharmas of Kshatriyas limited in their application?*

SUMĀNTRA: You really have no idea of the Aikshváka lord.
Please, no more of this obstinacy.

True enough, you’ve shown your strength in decimating the soldiers but it’s better not to vie* with the conqueror of Jamadágya.\(^1\)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

LAVAṆ: (sah bidsam) ārya, Jāmadagnyasya damanaḥ sa rāj” ēti.
ko ’yam uccair|vādah?

siddhāṁ hy etad vāci vīryaṁ dvijānāṁ.
bāhvor vīryaṁ yat tu tat kṣatriyāṇāṁ.
śastralgrāhī brāhmaṇo Jāmadagnyas.
tasmin dānte kā stutis tasya rājñāḥ? [33]

CANDRAKETUṆ: (s/jōnmāthaṁ iva) ārya, ārya, kṛtaṁ uttar’| őttareṇa.

ko ’py eṣa samprati navaḥ puruṣ’āvatāro
vīro na yasya bhagavān Bhṛguṇandano ’pi
paryāpta|saptalbhuvan’ābhayā|dakṣiṇāni
puṇyāni tāta|caritāni ca yo na veda. [34]

5.105 LAVAṆ: ko hi Raghulpateś caritaṁ mahimānaṁ ca na jānā-
ti? yadi nāma kiṃ cid vaktavyam asti… atha vā sāntam.

1 An ancestor of Paraśurāma.

310

uttararamacaritaR 310 (310, 0)
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

LAVA: (with a laugh) Sir, why broadcast the fact that the king conquered Jamadagnya?

It’s an established fact that the power of Brahmans lies in their speech
while the power that Kshatriyas possess lies in their arms.
Jamadagnya was a Brahman who took up the sword—
what glory is conferred on a king for conquering a man like that?

CHANDRA-KETU: (with some consternation) Sir, enough of this repartee.

This fellow must be some new avatar of the Primal Being* if even the son of Bhrigu is no rival in his eyes, if he won’t acknowledge how father Rama’s holy acts could guarantee security for all the seven worlds.

LAVA: Who doesn’t acknowledge Rama’s acts and greatness? On the other hand there is room for criticism… But enough.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

Sundalphri|damane ’py al|khaṇḍalyaṇa|sasa
loke mahānto hi te.
yāni trīṇy a|kuto|mukhānī api padāṇy
āsan Khar’āyodhane,
yad vā kausālam Indraṣṭunujnidhane
tatr’ āpy abhiṣīṇo janāḥ. [35]

CANDRAKETUH: āh, tāt’āpavādaḥ|bhinnā|maryāda, ati hi nā-
ma pragalbhase.

LAVAḤ: aye, mayy eva bhrujkuṭi|dharah saṃvṛttah?

SUMANTRAḤ: sphuritam anayoḥ kṛodhena. tathā hi:

5.110
cūḍā|maṇḍala|bandhanaṁ taralayaty
ākūtra|jo vepathuḥ.
kiṃ cit kokaṇada|cchadasya sadṛṣe
netre svayaṁ rajyataḥ.
dhatte kāntim alkāṇḍa|tāṇḍavita|yor
bhaṅga|na vaktra|m bhrūvo
ca. [36]

KUMĀRAU: tad ito vimarda|kṣamāṃ bhūmim avata|rāvah!

niṣkrāntaḥ sarve.

iti mahā|kaviṣṭṛi|Bhavabhūti|pranita
Uttara|Rāma|carita|nāṭake
Kumāra|vikrama na|ma
pāṇcamo ’iKAHAḥ.

312

uttararamacaritaR 312 (312, 0)
ACT V: THE YOUNG MAN’S VALOR

He’s old, there’s no need to second-guess his acts—let them be, why bother rehashing* them now? His reputation wasn’t stained even by conquering Sunda’s wife—he’s still great in the eyes of the world. And as for those three backward steps he took* in the battle he had with Khara, or the finesse that he displayed in slaying the son of Indra…why, people are fully aware of all these things.*

CHANDRA-KETU: No, now you’re out of bounds in disparaging father Rama, your audacity has gone too far.

LAVA: What, are you making a face at me?

SUMÁNTRA: I can see their anger is flaring up, for

As they catch each other’s drift they begin to shake so much their topknots come undone, and their eyes, by nature like the petals of a pink lotus, naturally turn crimson, and their brows that furrow while beginning their sudden* wild dance lend their faces the look of the dark mark on the full moon, or wild black bees on a white lotus in bloom.

THE TWO YOUNG MEN: Let’s go and find somewhere more suitable for battle!

Exeunt all.

End of Act V
PRELUDE TO ACT VI
tatah praviṣṭati vimānen’ ājjvalaṁ vidyā|dharā|mithunam.

vidyā|dharāḥ: aho nu khalv anayor Vikartana|kula|ku-
mārayor a|kānda|kalaha|pracāṇḍayor uddyotita|kṣātra| laksāmikāny adbhut’|odbhraṇṭa|dev’|āsurāṇi vikrāṇṭa| caritāṇi. tathā hi, priye, paśya paśya:

jhaṇajjhāṇita|kaṇikaṇa|
   kvaṇita|kiṅkinikam dhanur
dhavanad|guru|gaṇṭi|āṭani
   kṛṭa|karāla|kolāhālam
vitatya kiratoḥ śarān
   alvirata|spurac|cudayor
vicitram abhivardhate
bhuvaṇa|bhīmaṁ āyodhanam. [1]

vijṛmbhitam ca divyasya
maṅgalāya dvayor api
stanayitnor iv’ āmaṇḍram
dundubher dundumāyitam. [2]

6.5 tat pravartyatāṁ anayoḥ pravīrator an|avaratam a|virāla|
lulita|vikaca|kanaka|kamala|kamanīya|saṃhati amara|
taru|tarunā|maṇi|mukula|nikara|makarandā|sundarāḥ
puspa|nipitāḥ.

vidyā|dharī: ’tā kim ti una a|aṇḍa|tanda|uddanda|
taralī|taṇḍic|chāṭākāḍāraṁ via ambaraṁ jhatti saṃvut-
tam?2

1 A class of demigods.

316
The scene opens on a vidya-dhara couple in a flying chariot.

vidya-dhara: My, what acts of valor on the part of these two young men of the Solar dynasty, heatedly engaged in their unexpected combat. The beauty of Kshatriya power has been lent new luster, and the gods and anti-gods themselves are struck dumb* with wonder. Just take a look, my beloved:

They bend the bows that sound with ringing golden bells and raise an awful ruckus from their heavy strings twanging at their tips, all the while showering down arrows as their topknots swing constantly and the battle rages with dramatic intensity, bringing terror to all the world.

And for the welfare of both the war drums of heaven boom as deeply* as stormclouds.

So let an endless stream of flowers rain down on these two proven heroes, laden with blooming golden lotuses and densely packed together, flowing with sap from the tender jewel-like* buds from the trees that belong to the deathless gods.

vidya-dhara woman: But why out of the blue has the sky turned so tawny with terrible flashes of lightning suddenly starting their tāndava dance?
RAMA'S LAST ACT

VIDYA[DHARAH: tat kim nu khalv adya

Tvāṣṭranyatra[bhrami[bhrantrya|
Mārtanda[yotir ujjvalaḥ
puṭabhedo lalāṭa[sṛṭa]
nilalohita[çakṣuṣaḥḥ. [3]

(vicintya) āṃ, jñātam. vatsena Candraketunā prayuktam astraṃ Āgneyaṃ yasya' āyam agni[çchatā]sampātah. samprati hi

6.10 avadagdha[karburitaketucāmarair
apayātam eva hi vimāna[manḍalaiḥ.
dadhati dhvajā[mśukapata'[āncalesv imāḥ
ksaṇalkunikumacchuranāl[vikramāṃṣikāḥ. [4]

pracāṇḍāś c' āṣya sarvataḥ santāpah, tat priyām aṅgen' ācchādyā dūram apasarāmi. (tathā karoti)

VIDYA[DHARAH: dīthiā edena vimala[muttā[phalasidala[si-nīḍḍha|māśina|mamāṣā[ndhadehalpphaṃsena aṇa-nda[manda[muulida[ghumman[loḍānāe antarido jieva me sandāvā'

VIDYA[DHARAH: ayy, kim atra mayā kṛtam? atha vā

ākimcid api kurvāṇah
saukhyair duḥkhāny apohati.
tat tasya kim api dravyam
yo hi yasya priyo janaḥ. [5]

1Rudra/Siva 2The celestial craftsman, who reduced the brilliance of the sun to please his daughter, the wife of the Sun god.
PRELUDE TO ACT VI

VIDYA-DHARA: What indeed is happening now?
Has the third eye of the black-red god\(^1\) opened wide, to blaze like the light of the sun when twirling on Tvashtri's\(^{ii}\) lathe?

*(reflecting)* Ah, I see. Young Chandra-ketu has launched the Fire weapon, its flames spreading far and wide. For now The other celestial chariots have all fled, their yak tail banners scorched and iridescent, while the flames upon our standard's pennants make them look for a moment as if dyed with saffron.

A miracle! The god of fire has appeared, emitting sparks that explode with the crash of lightning flashes—how awesomely its flames leap up, licking wildly. The heat it sends out everywhere is ferocious. I had better shield my beloved with my body and move to a safe distance. *(does so)*

VIDYA-DHARA WOMAN: How fortunate the heat has been blocked by the touch of my husband's body—so cool and smooth, like the purest pearls, so soft and full that my eyes roll back and close in bliss.*

VIDYA-DHARA: Come now, what have I done here? But then, The person need do nothing at all, the mere joy of being together dispels sorrow. What a gift it is, to have someone who loves you.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

6.15 Vidyā|dhari:  kaham a[virala|vilola|gholanta|vijjul|ladā|vilasa|manḍidehiṃ matta|mora|kaṇṭha|sāmalehiṃ ot-thariadi nahoṅgaṇaṃ jalāharehiṃ?

Vidyā|dhariḥ:  ayi kumāra|Lava|prayukta|Vāruṇ’|āstra|prabhāvah khalaṭ eṣaḥ. katham? a[virala|pravrta|vāra|dhāraJanahasaṛasampātaḥ prasāntam eva Pāvakaṭāstraṃ.

Vidyā|dhariḥ:  piṃ me, piṃ me,

Vidyā|dhariḥ:  hanta bhoḥ sarvam atimātraṃ dosaya, yat pralayajvāṭ’[iṣṭobha|gambhiragulagulayamāna|megha|medurit’|andhakāra|nirandhra|nibaddham eka[vāra|vīśva|grasana|vikaca|vimarśa|kandara|vi- vartamānam iva yug’|ānta|yoga|nidrā|miruddha|sarva|dvāra|Marāṇa|odara|vīṣṭam iva bhūtajātaṃ pravepa- te. sādhu, vatsa Candrapeto, sādhvā sthāne Vāyavyaṭāstraṃ āraṃtāḥ.

vidyājkalpena maruta meghānāṃ bhūyasām api brahmaṇ’ iva vivartaṇāṃ kv’ api vipralayaḥ kṛtaḥ.[6]

6.20 Vidyā|dhariḥ:  nādha, ko dāṇṇaṃ eso sa[asambham|ukkhittra|karaḥbhāmidā[pot’a[ca[du[va eva madhura|vaṇa|paḍisiddhajuddha|vavāro edanaṃ kumāraṇaṃ antare vimāṇa|varaṃ odaraṃ vedi[i]

1Literally, Varuṇa weapon, named for the god of the ocean, from which clouds are said to arise.  
ii Vīṣṇu.
Vidya-dhara woman: Why has the sky suddenly darkened over with clouds, floating rolling masses adorned with darting lightning, and dark as the throat of a wild peacock?

Vidya-dhara: This must be an effect of the Water weapon launched by the young Lava. What’s this? The Fire weapon has been quenched by the thousands of massing clouds.

Vidya-dhara woman: How I love it!

Vidya-dhara: But alas, all excess leads to trouble: now the world is shivering with cold, enveloped in a deep darkness thickened by clouds roaring with the sound of doomsday winds; as if it were floundering in the cave-like maw of Time, hideous and gaping wide to swallow the universe at a single gulp; as if entered into the belly of Naráyana, all his orifices closed in the yoga sleep that he sleeps at the end of a cosmic age. Bravo, young Chandra-ketu, bravo! Now is the right time to unleash the Wind weapon, as he must have done, since

The wind has dispelled the billowing clouds as knowledge dispels illusions into brahma.

Vidya-dhara woman: My husband, who is that landing his heavenly chariot in alarm between the two young men and waving the hem of his garment in upraised hands, trying desperately to stop the fighting by addressing them gently from afar?
Rama’s Last Act

vidyādharaḥ: (dṛṣṭvā) eṣa Śambūka vadhāt pratinivṛttō
Raghupatiḥ.

śabdāṃ mahāpuṣṭiṣvihitaṃ niśāmy
tadvauravat samūpasaṃḥṛṭaṃ samprahāraḥ
śānto Lavaḥ, pranata eva ca Candrakeṭuḥ.
kalyāṇam astu sutalāṅgamanena rājñah. [7]
tad itas tāvat.

niskṛntau.

6.25

viśkambhakaḥ

1 Though a nephew Candraketu is regarded by Rāma as his son.

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uttararamacarita

322 (322, 0)
Prelude to Act VI

Vidya-Dhara: (looking) This is the lord of the Raghus returning from slaying Shambúka. Hearing the words the great man has spoken they stop their fighting out of respect for him. Lava falls silent, and Chandra-ketu bows low. May good come from the king’s meeting with his sons.

Away then for now.

Exeunt both.

End of the Prelude
ACT VI
THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN
tataḥ praiviṣati Rāmo, lavaḥ, praṇataḥ Candraκetuḥ ca.

Rāmaḥ: (Puspakād avataraṁ)

dinakaraṇa kulāṇdra Candraketo
saṣṭhabhasaṁ ehi, ṛṣṭham pariṣvaṁvasva.
tuhinaṣṭakalasitaṁ tavaṁ añgaṁ
śaṁmaṁ upayātum ame apī cittaṁdāhaṁ. [8]

(uttarāpya, saṁseṣhaṁ paraṁ pariṣvajja) api nāma kuśalam tava
divyঃ İlstrādharādhehasya?

6.30 Candraκetuḥ: kuśalam atyadvahuta | kriyasya priya | das-
saṁsya Lavasya labḥjābhyudayena. tad viṣṇuṁpayami:
mām iva viśeṣena va matṛaḥ śivena caṅkṣaṁ paśyaktv
amum mahāviralprakāṇḍaṁ tataḥ.

Rāmaḥ: (lavaṁ niṁpya) diyam atigambhiraṁkalyāṇaṁ jātrir
ayam vayasyo vatsasya.

trātum lokāṁ iva pariṇataḥ
kāyaṁ astraṁvedaṁ,
kuśtraḥ dharmaṁ śrīta iva tanum
Brahmaṁkōṣaya guṭiptai,
saṁarthyaṁnam iva samudayaṁ
saṁcayo va guṇānāṁ,
āvīrbhūya sthita iva jagat|
pūnyaṁ nirmāṇaṁrāśiḥ. [9]

1 The name means literally “He whose flag bears the moon.”

326
The scene opens on **Rama, Lava, and the bowing Chandra-ketu**.

**Rama:** *(climbing down from Púshpaka)*

Moon of the Solar dynasty, Chandra-ketu, come to me straightway and hug me tight. Your limbs are cool as chips of ice and able to soothe the burning even in a heart like mine.*

*(having him rise, and embracing him with tears of affection)*

All is well with you, I trust, and the divine weapons your body bears?

**Chandra-ketu:** All is well because of the good fortune of meeting Lava, this handsome youngster of wondrous deeds. I would ask Father to look with a kindly eye upon this preeminent great hero, just as he would look upon me, or even more so.

**Rama:** *(looking at Lava)* How fortunate my child has acquired a new friend. He has an air about him at once inscrutable and benign.

As if the science of weapons were transmuted into bodily form to save the worlds, as if Kshatriya dharma were embodied to guard the treasure house of Brahma,* as if capabilities were in full flower, all virtues conglomerated, all the world’s good karma aggregated and present, fully manifest.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

LAVAH: (sva/sgatam) aho, punyānubhāvadarśano 'yaṁ mahāpuruṣaḥ.

āśvāsā/sneḥā/bhaktinām
ekam ālambanaṁ mahat,
prakṛṣṭasyāva dharmasya
prasādo mūrti/saṅcarah. [10]

6.35 āścavyam:

virodho viśrāntah,
prasaratā raso nirvṛṭīghanas,
tad audhathyaṁ kv' api
vrajaṁ, vinayaṁ prahavyati māṁ,
jaṭity asmin drṣṭe.
kim iti paravān asmi? yadīlvā
mahā/jārghas tirthānām
iva hi mahatāṁ ko 'py atiśayaḥ. [11]

RĀMAH: tat kim ayam ekapada eva duḥkha/viśrāmaṁ dātāy, upasneḥayah ca kuto 'pi nimittaṁ antar/ātmānam?
atha vā snehaṁ ca nimittaṁ/sa/yapeḳṣaṁ 'c ēti vipratiṣidham etat.

vyatiṣajati pad/aṁrthaṁ antaraḥ ko 'pi hetur.
na khalaḥ/bahir/upadhīṁ pritayāṁ saṁśrayante.
vikasati hi pataṁgasyā 'odye puṇḍarikāṁ,
dravati ca hima/rasmāv udgata candra/kāntaḥ. [12]

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ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

LAVA: (aside) Ah, what a great man, pure majesty in appearance.*

The one great resting place of trust, affection, and devotion,
the graciousness of ultimate dharma in physical form.

It’s miraculous:

Enmity has ceased, and rasa rich with joy flows forth;
my brashness is somehow gone, deference overwhelms me;
at the mere sight of him I’m under his power—why so? But then,
like holy places the great have some greatly precious potency.

RAMA:* How is it he all of a sudden affords me respite from sorrow, and for some reason excites affection in my innermost soul? Then again, to say that affection needs a reason is a contradiction in terms.

There is some inner cause that accounts for mutual attraction;
feelings of love do not in the least depend on external factors.
Why should the white lotus open when the sun comes up
or the moonstone start to ooze with the rising of the moon?*

uttararamacaritaR 329 (330, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

LAVAḤ: Candraketo, ka ete?

6.40 CANDRAKETUḤ: priyavasya, nanu tāta|pādāḥ.

LAVAḤ: mam’ āpi tarhi dharmanas tath” āiva, yataḥ “priya|vayasy” ēty ētha. kin tu catvāraḥ kilā bhavatām evaṇ|vyapadeśa|bhāginas tatra|bhavanto Rāmāyaṇa|kathā|puruṣāḥ. tad viśeṣaṃ brūhi.

CANDRAKETUḤ: nanu jyeṣṭha|tāta|pādā ity avehī.

LAVAḤ: (sjollasam) katham, Raghunātha evaḥ diṣṭyā su|pra-bhātam adya yad ayam devo drśtah. (sa|vinayā|katutakaṇaṃ nirvāṇya) tāta, Prācetas’ānte|vāsī Lavo ’bhivādāyate.

RĀMAḤ: āyuṣmann, ehy ehi. (sa|sneham āślīya) ayī vatsa, kṛtām, kṛtām ativinayena. an|eka|vāram a|pariślatham māṃ pariśvajasva.

6.45 pariṇata|kaṭhoral|puṣkara|
garbhacchadalpina|maṣṇa|sukumāraḥ
nandayati candra|candana|
niyandajādhas tava sparśaḥ. [13]

LAVAḤ: (svatlīgam) idrśo māṃ praty amiṣām akāraṇa|sne-haḥ. mayā punar ebhya ev’ ābhidugdham ajñīna yad āyudhalparigrhaṃ yāvad adhyārūḍho durlīyogaḥ. (prakāśam) mṛṣyantarv idāniṃ Lavasya bāliṣṭatāṃ tāta|pādāḥ.

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ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

LAVA: Chandra-ketu, who is this?

CHANDRA-KETU: Why, my dear friend, it’s my honored father.

LAVA: Then by rights he's mine too since you’ve called me your dear friend. But there are four men in the 'Ramáyana' that you refer to by this designation. Tell me which is he.

CHANDRA-KETU: Why, this is my eldest father.

LAVA: (joyfully) You mean this is the lord of the Raghush? What good fortune the day dawned to bring me the sight of the lord. (gazing with courtesy and curiosity) Father, Lava, a student of the son of Prachétas, greets you.

RAMA: My child (long may you live), do come to me. (embracing him affectionately) Ah, enough, enough of this formality. Come hug me tightly again and again.

Your touch is soft and smooth yet firm
like the inner leaves of a hard ripe lotus,
and has a coolness that refreshes
like extract of sandalwood or moonbeams.*

LAVA: (aside) That such should be his unprompted affection for me and that I should have ignorantly done him such wrong, him of all people, to the point of taking up weapons and mounting an attack.*(aloud) May my respected father please forgive Lava’s childishness today.

331
RAMA'S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: kim aparaśīddhaṁ vatsena?

CANDRAKETUH: aśv' ānuśāātryabhyas tātā | pratiḥ | āvishkaranaṁ upaśrutiya vīryitam anena.

RĀMAH: nanv ayam alaṅkāraḥ kṣatraśya.

6.50 na tejas tejasvī prasṛtam apareṣāṁ hi sahate.
   sa tasya svābhāvāḥ prakṛtiṃniyatvād ajkṛtakaḥ.
   mayūkhair aśrāntaṁ tapati yadi devo dinakaraḥ,
   kim ṛgneyo grāvā nikṛta iva tejāṁsi vamati? [14]

CANDRAKETUH: aṁarṣo 'py asy' āiva sōbrate vīrasya. paśyatu hi tātaḥ priya|vayasya|vinirmukta|ṛmbhaṅk|āstra|niśkampā|stambhitāni sarvāśaṁyāni.

RĀMAH: (vilokya) vatsa Lava, saṁhriyatāṁ astraṁ. tvam api, Candraketo, nirvyaṅpāra|vilakṣitāni sāntvaya balāni.

LAVĀ: praṇidhānaṁ nātayati.

CANDRAKETUH: yath’ adiṣṭam. (niśkrāntaḥ)

6.55 LAVĀ: praśāntaṁ astraṁ.

RĀMAH: vatsa, saṁrāhasya|prayaogasamharaṇāṇy astraṇy āṁnāyavanti.
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

RAMA: What has my child done wrong?

CHANDRA-KETU: He wanted to play the hero when he overheard talk of father’s display of power from those accompanying the horse.

RAMA: But surely that ornaments a Kshatriya.

A mighty man cannot bear it when others show their might—
that is his true temper, fixed by nature and not contrived.
If the god that makes the day heats the sunstone tirelessly
with its beams, will it not spit out fire as if insulted?

CHANDRA-KETU: Even his indignation is remarkable. Father should see how this hero, my dear friend, unleashed the Jrimbhaka weapons and completely paralyzed the soldiers.

RAMA: (looking) Lava, my child, withdraw the weapon. And you, too, Chandra-ketu, go and calm the soldiers who have been incapacitated and humbled.

LAVA mimes meditating.

CHANDRA-KETU: As ordered. (exit)

LAVA: The weapon has been stilled.

RAMA: My child, the discharge and withdrawal of these weapons along with their secret invocations are imparted by tradition:
RAMA'S LAST ACT

Brahm'ādayo brahmaḥhitāya taptvā
parah|sahasrāḥ śāradas tapāmśi
etāny apāśyan guravah purāṇaḥ
svāny eva tejāṃsi tapomayāni. [15]

ath' āitan|mantra|pārāyaṇ'ī|opaniśadaṁ bhagavān Kṛśāsvaḥ
parah|sahasra|parivatsar'jāntevasine Kauśikāya Viśvāmi-
trāya provāca, sa tu bhagavān mahyam. ity eṣa pūrv'|
ānukramaḥ. kumārasya tu kutaḥ sampradāyaḥ iti pṛc-
chāmi.

LAVAJ: svataḥ|prakāśāya āvayor astraṇī.

6.60 RĀMAH: (vicintya) kim na sambhāvyate? prakṛṣṭa|puṇya|
paripāk'lopadānah ko'pi mahimā syāt. dvi|vacanaṁ tu
katham?

LAVAJ: Bhṛatarāv āvāṃ yamajau.

RĀMAH: sa tarhi dvitiyāḥ kva?

NEPATHYE: Bhāṇḍāyana, Bhāṇḍāyana!

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uttararamacaritaR 334 (334, 0)
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

Brahma and the other gods, for the good of the Vedic way of life, undertook ascetic acts for a thousand years and more, and what those ancient gurus then were able to behold were these very weapons, their own ascetic energies.

Thereupon Krisháshva imparted the esoteric doctrine of their mantras in its totality to a student who had lived with him for a thousand years and more, Vishva-mitra, descendent of Kusha. And that blessed one imparted it to me. Such was the earlier succession. How, may I ask, did the tradition reach the young sir?

LAVA: The weapons revealed themselves of their own accord to the two of us.

RAMA: (reflecting) Why shouldn’t it be possible? There might be some such capacity resulting from the ripening of exceptionally good karma in the past. But why do you use the dual?

LAVA: We are two brothers, twins.

RAMA: Where then is the other one?

OFFSTAGE: Bhandáyana, Bhandáyana!

335
रामा के अंतिम अंग

यूष्माताहिं किला लवस्या नारे एन्ड्रासाऀन्यावर्त्तता
योधनानांनानु किं अथा, सक्तेन्त्रोशोधीः
अद्यां अतसंतु भुवानेश्वर अधिरात्शाबदोः
क्षत्रश्या शात्राशिक्षिनाः सामायद्यांतु। [16]

रामाः:

6.65 अथा को 'यम इन्द्रआमनिमेचकाच्हविः
धवैनिं आवा दत्तापुलाकारं कारोति मामां
नवामनीरादहराधिरागर्जिताः
क्षणाबधड्हाकुधमालाकदांम्बारांः [17]

लवाहः: अयम असातु मामा ज्यानां अर्याः कुशो नामा भरतः
आसमात प्रतिनिवित्ताः।

रामाः: (सकौतुकम्) वतसा, इता अहव्याः अिनाम यूष्मांतमाः।

लवाहः: अयमाः।

परिक्रमाति।

6.70 तताह प्रविषः कुशाः।

कुशाः: (सक्रोधः) ज्ञानाभासारामधार्याम धनुर अस्थालयान)

1. The author of the 'Sutras on the Triad of Music,' to whom Kuśa had delivered Vālmiki's play.

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उत्तरारम्याचरितराः 336 (336, 0)
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

My dear friend, are you telling me
that soldiers of the king have launched
so vicious an attack as that*
against Lava (long may he live)?
Why, then the sun-like title
“king” will set across the worlds
and the fire of Kshatriya weapons
is soon to be extinguished.

RAMA:

Now who is this, his complexion dark as sapphire, his voice making goosebumps rise on my skin the way a kadámba buds the very moment a new black stormcloud starts its low rumble?

LAVA: That is my elder brother Kusha returning from Bharata’s ashram.

RAMA: (with curiosity) My child, call your brother (long may he live).

LAVA: I will.

He walks about.

Enter KUSHA.

KUSHA: (twangling his bow with anger, curiosity, eagerness, and firmness)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

datt’|Èndr’|abhaya|dakṣiṇa|bhagavato
Vaivasvatād ā Manor
dṛptānāṃ dahanāya dipita|nija|
kṣatra|pratāp’|āgnibhiḥ
Ādityair yadi vigraho nṛpatibhir,
dhanyam mam’ ātat tato
dipt’|āstra|ṣphurad|ugra|didhitī|śikhā|
nirājitā|yaṃ dhanuḥ. [18]

vikataṃ parikrāmati.

RĀMAḥ: ko’ py asmin ksatriyalpotake pauruṣ’ātirekah.

6.75  

dṛṣṭis trṇil|kṛtaljagat|trayalṣattvalśārā.
dhir’ōddhatā namayat’ iva gatir dharitrim.
kaumārake’ pi girivad gurutāṃ dadhāno
viro rasāḥ kim ayam aity uta darpa eva? [19]

LAVAḥ: (upastya) jayatv āryaḥ.

KUṢĀH: nanv āyuṣman, kim iyaṃ vārtā, «yuddhaṃ, yuddhaṃ» iti?

LAVAḥ: yat kiṃ cid etat. āryo śmin dṛpta|bhāvam utsṛjya
vinayena vartatām.

KUṢĀH: kim|artham?

1The sun.

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uttararamacaritaR 338 (338, 0)
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

From the days of Manu son of Vivásvan¹ they have granted the gift of security to Indra himself, and stoked the blazing fires of their Kshatriya power to burn the proud. Should I now be given the chance to fight with a king of this Solar dynasty, then how blessed my bow, its string lustrated in the dread flames of my gleaming magic weapons.

He walks about with long strides.

RAMA: What remarkable manliness in this Kshatriya boy.

His glance shows he doesn't care a straw for any creature in the universe; he moves with impetuosity and causes earth itself to bow. Although still in his youth he bears a weightiness like a mountain's. Is this the heroic rasa approaching or is it Pride incarnate?

LAVA: (approaching) Victory to my elder brother.

KUSHA: What is this report, my brother (long may you live), about a battle?

LAVA: It was nothing. Brother, swallow your pride before this man, and act politely.

KUSHA: What for?

¹uttarakaritaR 339 (340, 0)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

6.80 LAVAḤ: atra devo Raghupatiṣṭhati. sa ca snihyatī āvayaḥ. utkaṃṭhate ca yuṣmatīsannikārorsya.

KUṢĀḤ: (satārkaṁ) sa Rāmāyaṇa|kathā|nāyako Brahmakosāya gopāyitā?

LAVAḤ: atha kim?

KUṢĀḤ: āsaṃsaniya|puṇya|darśanaḥ sa mahā|ātmā. kin tu katham asmābhīr upagantavya, iti na sampradārayāmi.

LAVAḤ: yathā āiva gurus tathā ēopasanadena.

6.85 KUṢĀḤ: aye, katham nām’ āitat?

LAVAḤ: atyudattā Āsurīmāya|prīya|vayasy’ ēti sakhyena mām upatiṣṭhate. tena tat|sambandhena dharmajāta ev’ āyaṃ rāja[r]ṣiḥ.

KUṢĀḤ: sampratī āvacaniyo rājanye ’pi praśrayāḥ.

ubhau parikramataḥ.

LAVAḤ: paśyataṃ enam ākār’|ānubhāva|gāmbhirya|sambhāvyamāna|vividha|lok’|ōttara|carit’|ātiśayāṃ āryo mahā|puruṣam.

6.90 KUṢĀḤ: (nirvārīya)

1 technician, a Kshatriya. For one Kshatriya to bow before another was to acknowledge his superiority.
lava: The man standing there is Lord Raghu-pati. He has affection for the two of us, and is keen to have you in his presence.

kusha: (reasoning) Isn’t he the hero of the ‘Ramáyana’ story and guardian of the treasure house of Brahma?

lava: Yes of course.

kusha: He is a great man, and the sight of him is pure and devoutly to be wished for. But I can’t imagine how I am supposed to approach him.

lava: The way one draws near to a parent.

kusha: And why in the world should that be the case?

lava: Chandra-ketu, son of Úrmila and a very high-minded fellow, treats me as a friend, calling me his dear companion. Because of this kinship with him the royal seer here has become a father by dharma to us.

kusha: Then no blame will attach to our bowing before him, royalty though he be.

Both walk about.

lava: Behold the great man, brother. His supernatural deeds in all their grandeur can be read from the majesty and profundity of his bearing.

kusha: (gazing)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

aho prāśādikamu rūpam
anubhavaś ca pāvānaḥ.
sthāne Rāmāyaṇaḥkavir
devim vācaṃ vyavivṛtat. [20]

(upasṛtya) tāta, Prācetas’jānteḥvāsi Kuśo ‘bhivādayate.

RĀMAḥ: ehy ehy, āyuṣman.

amṛt'[ādhmātaljīmūta|

snigdhaṃsanāhananasya te

parīśvaṅgāya vātsalyād

ayam utkaṇṭhate janaḥ. [21]

6.95 (pariśvatija, svaṅgatam) tat kim ity ayaṃ dārakaḥ

aṅgād aṅgāt sruta iva nijāḥ snehaḥ dehaḥsārah

prāduḥbhūya sthita iva bahiḥ cetanāḥdhātur ekaḥ

sandr’ānandalkṣubhitaḥhrdayaḥprasmṛṇ’ évā sikto
gātr’āślesa yad amṛtaḥrasaḥsrotasā śīncat’ ivaḥ [22]

LAVAH: tāta, lalātaṃ|tapo gharma|didhitīḥ. tad atra sāla|

pracchāye muhūrtaṃ āsanalparigrahaṃ karotu tātaḥ.

RĀMAḥ: yad abhirucitaṃ vatsāya.

parikramya yath’”jocitaṃ upavisanti.

342

uttararamacaritaR 342 (342, 0)
Ah, his physical form breathes serenity,
his majesty is purifying.
How fitting the ‘Ramáyana’ poet
should have transfigured the goddess Language.

(approaching) Father, Kusha, a student of the son of Prachétas, greets you.

RAMA: Come to me, do come—long may you live.

Your body is soft as a cloud swollen with ambrosial water,
and this person longs to hug you with fatherly affection.

(embracing; aside) But why should it be that this boy—

As if my body’s very essence, poured out limb for limb because of my affection;
as if my consciousness, prime element,
were standing there, manifest outside me—
should be drenched by the flow from my own heart
shaken by these deep feelings of bliss, and then
drench me in return when I embrace his limbs
with a true flood of nectar-like rasa?

LAVA: Father, the sunshine is burning my forehead. Can father pause to sit for a moment in the shade of the sal tree here?

RAMA: Whatever my child wishes.

Walking around all sit in the proper order.
6.100 RĀMAH: (svalgatam)

aho praśrayalvoke 'pi
gatiṣṭhityāśanādayaḥ
sāmrājyaśaṁsino bhāvāḥ
Kuśasya ca Lavasya ca. [23]
vapurā♭vyaśa♭vijilāsāḥ
pratikalakamanīyāṁ kāṁtim udbhayanti,
aṛmaḷinām iva candraṁraśmayāḥ sve yathā vā,
vikṣitaṁ aravindaṁ bindavo mākaraṇāḥ. [24]

Bhūyīṣṭhāṁ ca Raghulkaḷkaumārakaṁ anayoḥ pāśyāmi.
kaṭhoralpāravataśaṁthāraśca mēcakāṁ
vapur vṛṣaśaṁkhandhaśaśsubandhur'āṁsayaḥ,
prasannāśaṁhāṣṭimitaṁ ca viṁśitaṁ,
dhvanīś ca māṅgalyaṁmṛdaṅgaṁmāṁsalaḥ. [25]

6.105 (sūkṛṇam nirāpya) aye, na kevalam asmadvāṁśaśaṁvādi-
ny akṛtiḥ,
api Janakājaśtuśāya tac ca tac c' ānūrūpaṁ
śphuṭaṁ iha śūśyaugme naipuṁ'ñonneyam asti.
nanu punar iva tan me gocariḥbhūtaṁ aksnor
abhinaśaśataṁpatraśrīmadajīśaṁ priyāyaḥ. [26]
śukl'ācchaśdantāchaviśundar" ēyaṁ,
s" āivʾ ostrhaṁmudrā, sa ca khaṇḍapāsāḥ.
netre punar yady api raktaṁnile,
tath" āpi saubhāgyaṁgūṇaḥ sa eva. [27]

[^1]: The corners are red, the pupils black (said to be a sign of virility).

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Ah, the way they walk and stand
and sit, though deferential,
hints that Kusha and Lava both
are emperors to be.

A royal grace inherent in their bodies
enhances a beauty charming in every part,
just as its rays enhance the spotless moon
or its drops of sap the full blown lotus.*

And there are yet further signs I see that these two are young
men of Raghu’s family.

Bodies blue-black as the neck of a full-grown* dove,
shoulders tapered like the shoulders of a bull,*
glances steady like a lion’s at ease,
voices deep and rich as festival drums.

(looking closely) Why, it’s not only my family they take after in their looks,

But in each and every feature the two boys clearly resemble
Jánaka’s daughter—one can infer it on close inspection.

It is really as if once more the face of my beloved
has come back into view, beautiful as the freshest lotus.

The very same mouth* made lovely by the gleam
of flawless white teeth; the same charming* ears;
and although their eyes are red and black†
they have the same trait of comeliness.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

(vicintya) tad etat Pracetas’|‘adhvyus{im aranyam yatra kila devi parityakt{. iyam ‘c’|‘anayor ak{tir vayo ‘nubhava{ ca. yad api svat{h|prakas{any astran’||‘iti tatra vimr{ami. api khalu tac citra|‘darsana|prasangikam astr’|‘abhyanujjanam udbhutan{ syat{ na hy a{‘samanprad{yikany astran{ pурves{am apy anu{sruta. aya{n ca samplavam{anam атманан{ sukha|du{$kh’|‘atiyaya h{dayasya me visram-bhaye. bhuyistham ca maya|‘vridh{ pratipanno devya garbhini{‘bhava asit. (j{‘asram)

pur{ r{‘dhe snehe
paricaya|vikas{d upacite
raho visrbdhaya
api sahajajjaljajada|dhr{ah
may” ‘iv’ ‘dau j{natah
kara|talaparamar‘sajkalaya
dvidh{ garbhalgranthi
tad anu divasa{h kair api tay{. [28]

6.110 (rudiv’|) tat kim etau prchami ken’ ‘apy upayena?

LAVAH: ‘ata, kim etat?

baspasvarcena nita{m vo
jaganma{ngalam ‘anam
avasyay{‘vasiktasya
pun{drrikasya carutam. [29]

346

uttaramacaritaR 346 (346, 0)
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

(reflecting) This is the very wilderness, inhabited by the son of Prachétas, where I'm told the queen was abandoned. Then there's their looks, their age, their majesty. I am also struck by the fact that the magic weapons revealed themselves of their own accord: Is it possible the charge laid on the weapons on the occasion of viewing the paintings has taken effect? For we have heard that even the ancients had no access to the weapons without the traditional transmission. Then there is this boundless joy and sorrow, both at once, in my heart that convinces my wavering soul. And most of all I understood the queen was pregnant with twins. (tearfully)

When long ago our affection began to grow and strengthen as familiarity blossomed and she became more confident in private, though her look was constrained by natural bashfulness,

I was the one who first came to discover, by the technique of feeling with my palm, that the knot of the embryo was double—and she herself only some days later.

(weeping) Shall I find some way to ask them?

LAVA: Father, what is it?

This rain of tears has made your face—the source of blessings to the world—take on the look of a waterlily sprinkled by the morning dew.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

KUṢĀḤ: ayi vatsa,

vinā Sītādevyā
kīm iva hi na duḥkhamaḥ Raghuṃpateḥ?
priyāṇāśe kṛṣṇaṃ
kila jagad aranyāṃ hi bhavati.
sa ca snehas tāvān
ayam api viyogo niravadhiḥ…
kim ity evaṃ prcchasy
ānādhiṃgataḥ Rāmāyaṇa iva? [30]

6.115 RĀMAḤ: (svalgatam) aye, taṭaṣṭhita śālpāḥ. kṛṣṇaṃ praśnena.
dagdhahṛdaya, ko 'yaṃ ākasmikas te pārīplavo vikāraḥ?
evaṃ nirbhinnahṛdayaḥ 'avegaḥ śiśuljanen’ āpy anukampito 'smi. bhavatu, tāvad antarayāmi. (prakāśam) vatsau, Rāmāyaṇaṃ iti śriyate bhagavato Vālmikeḥ Sarasvatī|nisyandaḥ, praśastir Ādityajvaṃśasya. tatra kautūhalaṇa yat kiṃ cīc chrotum ichāmi.

KUṢĀḤ: sa kṛṣṇa eva sandarbho 'smābhir āvṛttah. smṛtya|
upasthitau tāvad imau Bāla|caritasy āntye 'dhyāye ślo-kaup.

RĀMAḤ: udīrayatu vatsaḥ.

KUṢĀḤ:

prakṛtyāyā priyā Sītā
Rāmasyā āśin mahātmanah.
priyābhāvaḥ sa tu tayā
svalguṇaḥ abhivardhitaḥ. [31]

348

uttararamacaritā R 348 (348, 0)
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

KUSHA: Why, you child,
Without Queen Sita what is not
a source of sorrow to the Raghus’ lord?
When one’s beloved is gone they say
the whole world becomes a wilderness.
Such was their affection,
and this separation of theirs endless…
how can you ask such a question
as if ignorant of the ‘Ramayana’?

RAMA: (aside) Alas, this way of talking shows they’re just by-
standers. I won’t ask them then. Foolish heart, why this
sudden, mad transformation of yours? That I should let
the shock to my heart show in such a way that even chil-
dren must feel compassion to me. Well, I had better just
change the subject. (aloud) Children, one has heard tell
of a ‘Ramayana,’ a pure effusion* of Sarasvati, Goddess
of language, by way of the blessed Valmiki, and a eulogy
to the Solar dynasty. I am very curious to hear some of
it.

KUSHA: We have gone over the composition in its entirety.
Offhand there are two verses from the last chapter* of
the “Boyhood” section that immediately come to mind.

RAMA: Recite them, my child.

KUSHA:
Sita was naturally beloved of the great Rama
but she made that love increase by all her virtues.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

tath” āiva Rāmaḥ Sītāyāḥ
prānebhyo ’pi priyo ’bhavat.
hṛdayaṁ tv eva jānāti
pritiyo gaṁ parasparam. [32]

6.120 RĀMAH: kaṣṭam! atidūrṇo hṛdayaṁ marm’ōdghātaḥ. hā de-
vi, evaṁ kila tad āsit. aho niranvayaḥ viparyāsaḥ virasaḥ vip-
ttayo vipralambhaḥ paryavasāyinas tāpayantī saṁsāraḥ vṛ-
tāntāḥ.

kva távān ānando
niratiśayaḥ visraṁbhaḥ bahulaḥ?
kva te ’nyonyaṁ yatnāḥ?
kva ca nu gahanāḥ kautukaḥ rasāḥ?
sukhe vā duḥkhe vā
kva nu khalu tad aikyaṁ hṛdayayos?
tath” āpy eṣa prāṇaḥ
sphurati na tu pāpo viramati. [33]

bhoḥ kaṣṭam!

priyāṅgaṁ sahasrāṇāṁ
ek’ōṁmilanaḥ pesālaḥ
ya eva duḥṣmaraḥ kālas,
tem eva smāritā vayam. [34]

1 Sīta’s youth (indicated by verses 31–32 on their marriage).

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In the same way Rama was more beloved of Sita than life itself. Their hearts knew full well the extent of their mutual affection.

**rama**: How awful! Another savage blow to my heart’s soft core. Oh my queen, this is how it really was. Alas for the affairs of life, their incoherent, upside-down events, that lack all *rasa*, that end in frustrated love, that bring only burning pain.*

Where again will I ever find such bliss and the perfect trust that enhanced it, such concern on each other’s behalf, such deep-flowing *rasas* of wonder, such unanimity of two hearts in sorrow no less than joy? And yet this evil life breath of mine lingers and won’t depart.

Ah, how truly awful!

They have reminded me of the single most painful time to remember, the one where, all at once, my beloved’s countless virtues were on display:^i

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RAMA’S LAST ACT

yadā kim cīt kim cīt
kṛtāpadam ahobhiḥ katipayais
tad iṣad vistāri
stana|mukulam āśīṁ mṛgajdrśaḥ;
vayaḥ|sneḥ|ākūtā
vyatikara|ghano yatra madanaḥ
pragābhaj|yāpārāḥ
sphurati hṛdi mugḍaḥ ca vapiṣ. [35]

6.125 LAVĀH: ayaṁ tu Citrakūṭa|Mandākīni|vana|vihāre Sītā|dvim uddīṣya Raghujpateḥ ślokaḥ.

tvad|artham iva vinyaṣaḥ
śilā|paṭṭo ‘yam agrataḥ,
yasyā|āyam abhitaḥ puspaiḥ
pravṛṣṭa iva kesarāḥ. [36]

RĀMAH: (sa|la|jjā|smita|sneha|karaṇam) ati nāma mugḍaḥ
śīṣu|janāḥ, viśeṣatas tv aranya|caraḥ. ha devi, smarasi vā
tasya tat|samaya|viṣrambhḥ|ātiprasāṅgasyaḥ bhoh kaṣṭam!

śram|āmbu|śiṣīrī|bhavat
prāṣṭra|manda|Mandākini|
maru|ṭa|arati|ālak|ā-
kula|lalāṭa|candra|dyuti
a|kuṅkumā|kalaṇkītī|ō-
jjvala|kapalam utprekṣyate
nirābharaṇa|sundara|
śravanapāśa|saumyaḥ mukham. [37]

1Typically worn on the forehead by married women.
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

When the bud-like breasts of the girl had just begun to sprout
and within a very few days had developed a little more;
when passion, deepened by youth, love, curiosity all combined,
was bold in action within her heart but shy upon her body.

LAVA: Well, here then is a verse addressed by the Raghus’ lord to Sita once when they were relaxing in the Man-dákini woods by Mount Chittra-kuta:

It’s almost as if the rock ledge ahead were set in place for you alone,
and the késara tree rained down flowers all around it.

RAMA: (with an embarrassed smile, affection, and pity) How incredibly innocent children can be, especially when growing up in the wilderness. Oh my queen, do you remember our intimate conversations on that occasion? How truly awful it is!

In my mind’s eye I see your face, the forehead lustrous as the moon with hair blowing in the Mandákini’s slow breeze, cooled by beads of sweat, unmarked by a saffron mark, with blooming cheeks, and the most charming ears all the more lovely without earrings.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

(stambhita iva sthitvā, saṅkarunam) aho nu khalu bhoḥ!

6.130  ciraṁ dhyātvā dhyātvā  
niḥita iva nirmāya purataḥ  
pravāse 'py āśvāsam  
nah kalu na karoti priyajanaḥ.  
jagaj jirṇāraṇaṃ  
bhavati hi vikalpalvuparaṇe  
kukūlanāṁ rāśau  
tad anu hṛdayaṃ pacyata iva. [38]

NEPATHYE:

Vasiṣṭho, Vālmikir,  
Daśaratha|mahiśyo, 'tha Janakaḥ,  
sah' āiv' Ārundhatyā  
ōśūjkalaham ākarnaḥ saḥbhayaḥ  
jarāḷgrastair aṅgair  
atha khalu vidūr'jāśramatayā  
cireṇ' āgacchanti  
tvarita|mānasā 'pi śrama|jadāḥ. [39]

RĀMAḥ: kathāṃ, bhagavantāv Arundhati|Vasiṣṭhāv, ambā,  
Janaka's 'ātr' āiva? kaṣṭam, kathaṃ khalv ete draṣṭav-  
yāḥ? (saṅkarunam vilokya) Ahaha, tāta|Janako 'py atr'  
āiv' ayāta iti vajreṇ' ēva tādito 'smi manda|bhāgyaḥ.

354
(standing as if paralyzed; with pity) Oh dear god!

The people we love even when parted
never fail to bring some consolation
since we think so long and hard of them
we create them right before our eyes.
But when this option* too is removed
the world is a desolate wilderness
and the heart then feels as if it’s baking
on a slow burning fire of chaff.

OFFSTAGE:

Vasíśthha, Valmíki, the queens of Dasha-ratha,
and Jánaka
along with Arúndhati, frightened to hear the
children were fighting
are coming at last. Their legs are gripped by old age,
and the ashram is far,
but if their bodies are slowed by exhaustion, their
minds are racing ahead.

RAMA: What, are Arúndhati, Vasíśthha, my mothers, and
Jánaka here? It’s too awful for me to think of setting
eyes on them. (glancing with pity) Oh no, father Jánaka
himself is headed right this way—a bolt of lightning, it
seems, to strike me, cursed as I am.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

sambandha|spr̥hanīyatā|pramuditaṁ
juṣṭe Vaśiṣṭha|ādibhir
dṛṣṭv̄ āpatya|vivāha|maṅgala|mahe
tat tātayoh saṅgatam
paśyam idṛśam idṛśe pitṛ|sakhaṁ
vṛtte maḥā|vaiśāse
dirye kiṁ na sahasradhīṁ āham? atha vā
Rāmeṇa kiṁ duṣkaram? [40]

NEPATHYE: kaṣṭam,

6.135 anubhāva|mātra|samavastita|śriyam
sahas” āiva vikṣya Raghunātham idṛśam
prathama|pramūdh|Janaka|prabodhanād
vidhurāḥ pramoham upayāṇī mātarāḥ. [41]

RĀMAḤ: hā tāta, hā mātarāḥ,
Janakānāṁ Raghunāṁ ca
yat kṛtṛṇam gotra|maṅgalam,
tasyām aṁkaruṇe pāpe
vṛtha vah karunā mayi. [42]
yāvat sambhāvayāmi. (uttīṣṭhātī)

KUṢA|LAVAU: ita itas tataḥ.

6.140 saṅkaruṇ jākulam parikramya niṣkrāntāḥ sarve.

itti mahā|kavi|śri|Bhavabhūti|pranita
Uttara|Rāma|carita|nātaka
Kumāra|pratyabhijñāṇo
nāma saṅhobhīkaḥ.

356

uttararamacaritā R 356 (356, 0)
ACT VI: THE RECOGNITION OF THE YOUNG MEN

Having once beheld my two fathers meeting
at their children’s marriage ceremony
with Vasishtha and the others in attendance
delighted at the desirability of the match,
how can I now, when such devastation
has occurred, behold such a friend of father’s
and not break apart into a thousand pieces?—
Then again, what’s too hard for Rama to do?

OFFSTAGE: Alas,

No sooner did they glimpse the Raghus’ lord—
his beauty preserved in his majesty alone—
than his mothers, already distraught from rousing
the fainting Jánaka, have fallen faint themselves.

RAMA: Oh father, oh mothers,

Waste no pity on me, an evil man who showed no
pity
to her, the good fortune entire of the Jánaka and
Raghu clans.

I had better go pay my respects. (rises)

KUSHA AND LAVA: This way, father.

Walking about overcome with pity exeunt all.

End of Act VI
ACT VII
REUNION
tataḥ praviṣati Ṭaṅkhaḥ.

 Lankaḥ: bhoh, kim na khalu bhagavat Ī>Vālmikinā sa
brahma|kṣatra|pau ra|jānapadāḥ prajāḥ saḥ’ āsmābhir
āhūya kṛṣṇa eva marty’|āmartya|dev’|āsura|nara|nārī|
tiryāṇi|nikāyāḥ sāntarāḥ|bhava|cara|sthāvaro bhūtā|grāmāḥ svā|prabhāvena sannidhāpitah ādiṣṭaḥ c’ āham
āryena: «vatsa Lankaḥ, bhagavat Ī>Vālmikinā svā|kṛ-
tim apsarobhir prayujyamānāṁ draṣṭum upanīmantri-
tāḥ smaḥ. tad Gaṅgā|tīram atodya|sthānam upagamyā
kriyatāṁ samāja|sanniveśa» iti. kṛtaḥ ca marty’|āmartya-
sya bhūta|grāmasyā samucita|sthāna|sargo mayā, ayaṁ
tu
rājyā|āśrama|nivāse ’pi
prāptakṣaṭa|muni|vrataḥ
Vālmikī|gauravād ārya
ita ev’ ābhivartate. [1]

tataḥ praviṣati Rāmaḥ.

7.5 Rāmaḥ: vatsa Lankaḥa, api sthitā raṅgā|prāśnikāḥ?

Lankaḥ: atha kim.

Rāmaḥ: imaṁ punar vatsau Kuśa|Lava|kumāra|Candrake-
tuṣadṛśiṁ sthāna|pratipattiṁ lambhayitavyau.

360

uttararamacaritaR 360 (360, 0)
Enter Lákshmana.

Lákshmana: My goodness, has Valmíki used his spiritual power to assemble the entire world of living things—the whole host of mortals and immortals, gods and antigods, men and women and animals, along with the beings of the middle space both moving and unmoving*—summoning along with us all the Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and people of the city and countryside? My elder brother has given me an order, too, saying, “Dear Lákshmana, we’ve been invited by Valmíki to watch the ápsarases perform his dramatic composition. So go down to the theater on the bank of the Ganga and see to it the audience is properly seated.” I’ve already arranged seating appropriate for everyone, mortals and immortals alike. Now there,

My elder brother is headed this way out of respect for Valmíki, for though he still remains the king he’s taken a strict ascetic’s vow.

Enter Rama.

Rama: Dear brother Lákshmana, are the drama critics in place?

Lákshmana: To be sure.

Rama: These two children, Kusha and Lava, are to be accorded a seat of honor, just like prince Chandra-ketu.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

LAKŚMAṆAṆHA: prabhu | sneha | pratyayāt tath” āiva kṛtam. idaṁ tv āstirṇaṁ rājjasanam.

upaviśati.

7.10 RĀMA: prastūyatāṁ, bhoḥ.

SŪTRA|DHĀRAṆHA: (praviṣṇa) bhagavān bhūṭ|ārthavādi Prācetasaḥ sa jāgama | sthāvaraṁ jagad aṁjñapayati. «yad idam asmābhīr ārṣena cākṣusā samudvīkṣya pāvanaṁ ca karuṇā|ādbhuta|rasaṁ ca kim cid upanibaddhaṁ, tatra kāryalguravāv adhātavyam» iti.

RĀMA: etad uktam bhavati. sākṣāt|kṛta|dharmāṇa ṛṣayah. teśām ṛtam|bharāṇi bhagavatāṁ parojrajñis prajñāṇāni na kva cid vyāhanyanta ity anābhīṣaṅkaniyāni.

NEPATHYE: āḥ ajja|utta, āḥ kumāra Lakkhaṇa, eāṇiṁ a|saraṇaṁ āraṇṇe āṣaṇṇa|ppasava|veṇaṁ haḍ|āsā sāva-dā maṁ abhilaṃtā. sā dāṇiṁ manda|bhāṁi Mandāṁtie attāṇaṁ ṣṭikkhivissaṁ,a

LAKŚMAṆAṆHA: (ātma|gatam) kaṣṭaṁ baṭ’, ānyad eva kim api.

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uttaramacaritaR 362 (362, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

LAKSHMANA: I’ve done so, aware of my lord’s affection for them. Here, the royal lodge has been arranged.

He takes his seat.*

RAMA: Let the show begin.

DIRECTOR: The son of Prachétas, who tells things as they truly are, has the following request to make of everyone here, moving and unmoving beings alike: “Through deep insight made possible by a seer’s vision we have produced a brief composition at once purifying and filled with rasa, the rasa of pity and wonder. In light of the gravity of its subject matter please give us your undivided attention.”

RAMA: What he means is that seers have direct vision of dharma. The insights of the blessed ones are “truth-bearing,” “beyond the dust* of untruth,” never found to be contradicted—and hence never to be doubted.

OFFSTAGE: Oh my husband, oh Prince Lákshmana, I am all alone in the wilderness and without refuge, the pangs of childbirth have started, and awful* wild beasts are thirsty for me. Cursed as I am I have no choice but to hurl myself into the Mandákini.

LAKSHMANA: (aside) What an awful situation, something far worse than I thought.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

SŪTRA|DHĀRAḤ:

7.15 Viśvambhar”|atmaja devi
   rājñā tyaktā mahāvane
   prāptalprasavam atmānam
   Gaṅgā|devyām vimuñcati. [2]

niskṛntah.

RĀMAḤ: (slāvegam) devi devi, laksmaṇaṃ avenaṣya!

LAK-SAṆAḤ: ārya, nāṭakam idam.

RĀMAḤ: hā devi Daṇḍak”|āraṇyalpriya|sakhi, eṣa te Rāmād
   vipākaḥ.

7.20 LAK-SAṆAḤ: ārya, drṣyātāṁ tāvat prabandha|jārthah.

RĀMAḤ: eṣa sajjo ’ṣmi vajramayaḥ.

ināḥ praviṣāya utsaṅgi]['āik]āik|dārakābhyāṁ prthivī|fāh-
   navībhyaḥ avalambita pramogdhā sītā.

RĀMAḤ: vatsa, a|saṃvijñātā|pada|nibandhanaṃ tama iva
   praviṣāmi. dhāraya māṁ!

DEVYAU:

   samāśvasihi, kalyaṇi.
   diṣṭyā, Vaidēhi, vardhase.
   antarjalaṃ prasūt” āsi
   Raghu|vanśajdharaṇu sutau. [3]

364

uttararamacaritaR 364 (364, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

DIRECTOR:

The daughter of all-sustaining Earth, 7.15
the queen left in the great forest
by the king, as her labor begins
casts herself into goddess Ganga.

Exit.

RAMA: (shocked) My queen, my queen, look, Lákshmana is
here!*

LÁKSHMANA: But brother, this is only a play.

RAMA: Oh my queen, dear companion in the Dándaka
wilderness. This turn of events* befell you because of
Rama.

LÁKSHMANA: Brother, let’s just watch the story. 7.20

RAMA: I’ve steeled myself, I’m ready.

Enter SÍTA in a daze and supported by the EARTH and GANGA,
each of them holding one of SÍTA’s sons.

RAMA: Dear brother, I am entering a realm of darkness
where neither cause nor cure* can be perceived. Hold
me up!

THE TWO GODDESSES:

Compose yourself, beautiful Vайдéhi;
by good fortune you’ve achieved success:
for in the river you have given birth
to two sons who will uphold the Raghu clan.

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7.25 sītā: (sāmāśvaya) "diṭṭhiā dārake pasūda mhi. hā ajja|utta, (mṛchati)

lakṣmaṇaḥ: (pādayor nipatya) ārya, ārya, diṣṭyā vardhāmahe. kalyāṇa|praro ho Raghu|vaṃśaḥ. (vilokya) hā ka-thāṃ, kṣubhita|bāṣp'|ōtpiḍa|nirbharaḥ pramugdha ev' āryaḥ. (vijayati)

devyau: vatse, samāśvasihi, samāśvasihi.

sītā: (āvasya) 1bhaavadi, kā tumaṃ? tumaṃ ca?

prthivi: iyaṃ te śvasura|kula|devata Bhāgīrathī.

7.30 sītā: 1bhaavadi, ṇamo de

bhāgīrathī: cāritr'ōcitāṃ kalyāṇaṃ sampadam adhigaccha.

lakṣmaṇaḥ: anugṛhitāṃ smaḥ.

bhāgīrathī: iyaṃ tu janaṇi te bhagavati Vasundhārā.

sītā: 1hā ambā, idisi ahaṃ tae diṭṭhā,

prthivi: ehi vatse, ehi putri. (sītām ālingya mṛchati)

lakṣmaṇaḥ: (sa|hasaṃ) kathaṃ, Prthvi|Bhāgīrathibhyām abhyupapann” āryā.

366
ACT VII: REUNION

sītā: *(having composed herself)* How fortunate I’ve given birth to sons… Oh my husband! *(falls faint)*

lākṣmīna: *(falling at his feet)* Brother, dear brother, what good fortune that we’ve achieved success. The Ṛgveda family tree has produced a splendid new branch. *(glancing)* Why, my brother is in a state of shock, overwhelmed by a gushing flood of tears. *(fans him)*

**The two goddesses:** Child, compose yourself, we beg you.

sītā: *(regaining her composure)* Who are you, blessed one? And you?

earth: This is Bhagi-rathi, your father-in-law’s family deity.

sītā: Blessed one, homage to you.

bhagi-rathi: May you attain the full measure of good fortune in keeping with your chastity.

lākṣmīna: We have been shown great favor.*

bhagi-rathi: And this is your mother, blessed Earth.

sītā: Ah mother, that you should see me in such a state.

earth: Come, my child, come, little daughter. *(falls faint holding sītā in her embrace)*

lākṣmīna: *(excitedly)* Why, Earth and Ganga together have come to the aid of sister-in-law.
RAMA’S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: (avulaṣya) diṣṭyā khalv etat. karuṇataraṇa tu vartate.

bhāgirathī: Viśvambhar” āpi nāma vyathata iti jītam apiṣṭa|snehena. yad va sarva|sādharāṇo hy eṣa mohā|gran-
thir antaś[caaraś cetāvātām upaplavaḥ sāṃśāra]tantuḥ. vatse Vaiidehi, devi bhūta|dhātrī, samāsvāsihi, samāsvā-
sihi.

prthivī: (āśvasya) devi, Sīm prasūya katham āśvasimi?

7.40 ekaś ciraṃ rākṣasa|madhyavāsas,
tyāgo dvitiyaś ca suḍuḥ|śravo ‘syāḥ [4ab]

bhāgirathī:
ko nāma pāk’|abhimukhasya jantur
dvāraṇi daivasya piḍhātum iṣte? [4cd]

prthivī: Bhāgirathī, yuktāṃ. sadṛṣam etad va Rāma|bha-
drasya?
na pramāṇi|kṛtaḥ pāṇir
bāye bālena piḍitaḥ,
n’ āhaṃ, na Janako, n’ āgnir,
n’ ānuvṛttir, na saṃtatiḥ. [5]

sītā: ūh ājajutta, sumariasi,

7.45 prthivī: āḥ! kas tav’ ārya|putraḥ?
sītā: (sa|lajj”|âsram) jadhā va ambā bhaṅgādi,

\[1\] Fire corroborated Sītā’s chastity after the death of Rāvaṇa.

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uttararamacaritāR 368 (308, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

RAMA: (watching) This is fortunate indeed—but a source of deep pity,* too.

BHAGI-RATHI: Even Earth who bears all can tremble—what force love for a child exerts. But then, this is something common to all, a knot of infatuation,* an internal source of turmoil for any sentient being, the very thread of worldly life.* Child Vaidéhi, goddess Earth, compose yourselves, I beg you.

EARTH: (regaining her composure) Goddess, how can I compose myself, I who gave birth to Sita?

Her long sojourn among rākṣasas was one thing,* another her being disowned, a terrible disgrace.

BHAGI-RATHI:

Yet what creature has the power to seal the doors of fate when it is on the verge of bearing fruit?

EARTH: Quite so.* But was that seemly of dear Rama?

To pay no heed to the hand he grasped in childhood, when he was a child,* or to me or Jánaka or Firei or her deference or his progeny.

SITA: Oh my husband, they have reminded me once again of you.*

EARTH: Ha! Do you have a husband?

SITA: (with tears of shame) It’s as my mother says.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

RAMAḥ: amba Prthivi, idṛśo 'smi.

BHĀGĪRATHĪ: bhagavati Vasundhare, āśīram asi saṃsāras-ya. tat kim aṣṭaṃvidān” ēva jāmātre kupyasi?

ghoraṃ loke vitatam aḷyaśo.

yā ca vahnau viśuddhir
Laṅkāḍvipe, kathāṃ iva janās
tāṃ iha śraddadhātu?
Ikvākūṇāṃ kulaḍhanam ādaṃ,
yat samarādhanīyāḥ
kṛṣṇo lokas. tad ativisame
kim sa vatsāḥ karotu? [6]

7.50 LAKṢMAṆAḤ: aḷvyaḥāttāḥprakāśāḥ hi devatā bhūtēṣu.

BHĀGĪRATHĪ: tath” āpy eṣa te ‘njaliḥ.

RAMAḥ: amba, anuvṛttas tvayā Bhagīrathalgrhe prasādaḥ.

PRTHIVI: nityaṃ prasann” āṣmi vaḥ. kin tv āpātaḥduḥṣahāḥ
snehaṃsaṃvegayā na punar na jānāmi Sītāṃ snehaṃ Rā-
maḥbhadrasya.
dahyamānena manasā
daivād vatsāṃ vihāya saḥ
lokōttare saṭtvena
prajāpunyaśā ca jivati. [7]

i To ask her forgiveness on Rāma’s behalf. ii An ancestor of Rāma, whom Gaṅgā once favored by purifying the ashes of his ancestors.

uttararamacaritaR 370 (370, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

RAMA: Mother Earth, I am the man you describe.

BHAGI-RATHI: O Earth, you are the body of all of mortal life. How can you be angry then with your son-in-law, as if you were wholly unaware?

The dreadful infamy had spread abroad and the purifying trial by fire took place on Lanka—how were people here to be expected to give it credence?

The ancestral wealth of the Ikshvákus lies in propitiating all the world. So in these straits, truly dreadful straits, what was my child supposed to do?

LÁKŠHMANA: The deity’s inner light shines unimpeded into all creatures.

BHAGI-RATHI: Nevertheless, I fold my hands in homage to you.²

RAMA: Mother, you have extended your grace to the House of Bhagi-ratha³ as well.

EARTH: I have always been graciously disposed toward you all.⁴ It was only distress due to my love, which was at first so hard to bear; it is not that I did not appreciate dear Rama’s love for Sita.

With a heart in flames he was forced by fate to abandon Sita, and only now survives by some supernatural courage and the good karma of his subjects.

371
RAMA'S LAST ACT

7.55 RAMAḥ: salkarunaḥ hi guravo garbhalūpeṣu.

sītā: (rudati, kṛṣṇāñjalih) ṇedu maṃ attano aṅgesu vilaṃ ambāā.

RAMAḥ: kim anyad bravitu?

Bhāgīrathī: śāntam. aṃvilinā saṃvatsaraḥ sahasrāṇi bhūyāḥ.

PRTHIVI: vatse, avekṣaṇīyau te putrakau.

7.60 sītā: aṅṇādha mhi. kīṃ edhīṃ?

Bhāgīrathī: kathāṃ tvam saṅnathā āpy aṅnathā?

sītā: kīdisaṃ mama abhaggāe saṅdhattanaṃ?

RAMAḥ: hṛdaya, vajram asi.

DEVYAU:

jaganmaṅgalam ātmānāṃ
kathāṃ tvam avamanyase
āvayor api yatśaṅgāt
pavitratsvaṃ prakṣyate? [8]

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ACT VII: REUNION

rama: How deep the pity elders have for everyone they consider their offspring.

sita: (weeping; with hands folded) Mother, take me to you and dissolve me in your body.

rama: What else could she ask for?

bhagi-rathi: Heaven forbid. May you live a thousand years before such a dissolution.

earth: My child, your two little boys must be looked after.

sita: I have no protector; what am I to do with them?

bhagi-rathi: How can you say you are unprotected when indeed you are not?

sita: What sort of protector have I, cursed as I am?

rama: Heart, you are cold steel.

the two goddesses:

How can you disdain yourself,* the source of good fortune to the world, since it is from our relationship with you that our own purity is increased?

*uttararamacaritaR 373 (374, 0)
RAMA’S LAST ACT

7.65 ḿāKaśMaṇaḥ: ārya, śrutam?

rāmaḥ: śṛṇotu lokah.

nepathyē kalakalāḥ.

rāmaḥ: adbhutataram kim api.

sītā: 'kiṃ ti saalam antarikkhāṃ pājjaladi?'

7.70 devyaḥ: jñātam.

Kaṭśāvah, Kauśīko, Rāma

iti yeśāṃ gurujkramaḥ

prādurbhavanti tāṇy eva

śāstrāṇi saha Jṛmbhakaiḥ. [9]

Nepathyē:

devi Site, namas te 'stu.

gatir naḥ putrakau hi te

ālekhyalārsane devo

yath’āḥa Raghujñandanaḥ. [10]

sītā: ‘dīṭṭhiā attha|deva|ādo edāo! hā ajja|utta, ajja vi de pa-

sādā pariṇphuranti,

LakṣMaṇaḥ: uktaṃ āṣid āryeṇa, “sarvathi” ēdānīṇv tvat|pra-

sūtim upasthāyaṇt’ iti.

374
ACT VII: REUNION

lákṣhmanā: Brother, did you hear?  7.65

rama: Let the world hear.

*Offstage a tumult.*

rama: Something yet more wondrous is at hand.

sitā: How is it the whole sky is engulfed in flames?

the two goddesses: We know:  7.70

Those whose succession of gurus has been
Krisháshva, Káushika, and Rama,
those magical weapons and Jrímbhakas
are now manifesting themselves.

*Offstage:*

Queen Sita, homage to you,
our destiny now lies with your sons
as the joy of the Raghus proclaimed
at the time of viewing the paintings.

sitā: What good fortune, the weapon deities! Oh my hus-
tband, your acts of kindness are even today still coming
to light.

lákṣhmanā: My brother did tell her, “From now on with-
ut without fail they will serve your offspring.”*  375

uttraramacaritaR  375 (376, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

DEVYAU:

7.75  namo vaḥ parami'āstrebhyo.  
  dhanyāḥ smo vaḥ parigrahāt.  
  anudhyātair upetavyaṃ  
  vatsayor. bhadram astu vaḥ. [11]

RĀMAH:

ksubhitāḥ kām api daśāṃ  
  kurvanti mama sāmpratam  
  vismay'ānanda[|sandarbhā|]  
  jarjarāḥ karuṇā'ūrmayaḥ. [12]

DEVYAU: modasva vatse. Rāma|bhadra|tulyau te putrakāv  
  idāniṃ saṃvṛttau.

sītā:  'bhaavadi, ko edānaṃ khatti'|ōcidaṃ kamma karissa- 
  diī;

RĀMAH:

eśā Vasiṣṭha|guptānām  
  Raghūnām vaṃśā|vardhini  
  kaṣṭam Sitā' api sutayoḥ  
  saṃskartāraham na vindati. [13]

7.80  bhācīrathī: putri, kiṃ tāv' ānayā cintayā? etau hi vatsau  
  stanya|tyāgāt pareṇa bhagavato Vālmiker arpayiṣyāmi.  
  sa etayoḥ kṣatralṛtyaṃ karisyati.  
  yathā Vasiṣṭha|Āngirasaśv  
  rṣī, Prācetasas tathā  
  Janakānāṃ Raghūnāṃ ca  
  vaṃśayor ubhayor guruḥ. [14]

1 A patronymic of Satānanda, family priest of the Janaka kings.

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uttararamacaritā R 376 (376, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

THE TWO GODDESSES:

Homage to you, supreme weapons,
how blessed we are that you have favored us.
Be pleased to attend upon these children
whenever you are summoned in thought.

RAMA:

Waves of pity have been sent surging
and break in pools of astonishment and bliss,
reducing me now to some condition
that is impossible to describe.

THE TWO GODDESSES: Rejoice, child, your two little boys
have now become the equals of dear Rama.

SITA: Blessed one, who is there to perform for them the rites
required of Kshatriyas?

RAMA:

How awful that Sita herself—the strength
of the Raghu clan, which Vasishtha priests
have always guarded—can find no one
to perform the sacraments for her sons.

BHAGI-RATHI: My daughter, no need to fret over this. After
the two boys are weaned I will commit them to the care
of Valmiki, and he will perform the Kshatriya rituals for
them.

No less than the seers Vasishtha and Angirasa
is Prachetas’ son a guru to both Raghu and Jánaka
clans.

377
RAMA’S LAST ACT

RĀMAH: su/vicintitam bhagavatyā.

LAKŚMAṆAḤ: ārya, satyaṁ vijñāpayāmi: tais tair upāyair vatsau Kuśaḷavāv utprekṣe.

etau hi janaṁ/siddhā/āstrāv
ubhau Prācetasāṁ muneḥ
virau samprāpta/saṁskārau
vayaśā dvādaś/ābdikau. [1 5]

7.85 RĀMAH: vatsa, ity ev’āhaṁ pariplavamānaḥ/ḥṛdayaḥ sampra-mugdho ’smi.

PRTHĪVI: ehi, vatsa, pavitṛkuru rasātalam.

SĪṬĀ: "śedu maṁ at↑aṇo aṅgesu vilaṁ ambā. ṇa sahissam
īdisam jia|loalparivattam aṅubhavidumā

RĀMAH: kim uttaraṁ syāt?

PRTHĪVI: vatse, stanya/tyāgaṁ yāvan manṛniyogataḥ putra-yor avekṣava. pareṇa tu yathā rociṣyate.

7.90 BHĀGĪRATHI: evaṁ nāma.

niṣkrāta Gaṅgā/PRTHĪVĪ/SĪṬĀH.

RĀMAH: kathaṁ, vilaya eva Vaiḍehyaḥ sampannahṛ ha de-vi, Daṇḍak”/ārāṇya/vaśa/priya/sakhi, hā cāritra/devate, lok/āntaraṁ paryavasit” āsi. (mārchati)

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ACT VII: REUNION

RAMA: Bhagi-rathi has thought it all through most carefully.

LĀKŚHMANA: My brother, I tell you truly, for a whole host of reasons I feel certain that those two children are Kusha and Lava:

They too commanded the weapons from birth, both young heroes received the sacraments from the sage, the son of Prachétas, and both of them are twelve years old.

RAMA: Dear brother, the very thought is throwing my heart into turmoil and driving me to distraction.

EARTH: Come with me now, my child, and purify the netherworld.*

SIȚA: Mother, take me to you and dissolve me in your body. I can no longer bear the vicissitudes* of this world.

RAMA: How will she reply?

EARTH: My child, do as I bid and wait until your two sons are weaned. Thereafter, however, it will be as you wish.

BHAGI-RATHI: So be it. 7.90

Exeunt GAN̄GA, EARTH, and SIȚA.

RAMA: What, has Vaiḍēhi’s dissolution taken place? Oh my queen, dear companion in my sojourn in Dândaka wilderness, oh goddess of virtue, have you then resolved to go to the other world? (falls faint)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

LAKŠMAṆAH: bhagavan Vālmike, paritrāyasva, paritrāyasva! eṣa kim te kāvyārthah?

NEPATHYE: apanīyatām ātodyakam. bho bhoḥ sajaṅgama| sthāvarāḥ prāṇabhṛto martyāḥ: paśyata Vālmikin’ ābhyanujñātām pavitraṁ āścaryam.

7.95 LAKŠMAṆAH: (vilokya)

manthād iva kṣubhyati Gāṅgam ambho. vyāptaṁ ca devaṛśibhir antarikṣam. āścaryam! āryā saha devatābhyaṁ
gāṅgā Mahibhyāṁ salilād ude. [16]

NEPATHYE:

Arundhati jagad|vandye,
Gāṅgā|Prthvayau juṣasva naḥ.
arpit” ēyaṁ tāv’ ābhyaśe
Sītā punyajrata vadhūḥ. [17]

LAKŠMAṆAH: diṣṭāḥ, aho āścaryam! ārya, paśya, paśya. (vilokya)... kaśtam, ady’ āpi n’ occhvasity āryaḥ.
tataḥ praviṣaty ARUNDHATI sītā ca.

ARUNDHATI:

7.100 tvarasva, vate Vāidehi,
munca śālina|śilatām.
ehi, jīvaya me vatsam
priya|sparśena pāṁinā. [18]

380

uttararamacaritam 380 (380, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

LÁKŚHMĀNA: Help, Valmíki, help! Is this the moral of your poem?*

OFFSTAGE: Away with the orchestra. You there, mortal creatures one and all, moving and unmoving: Behold the purifying miracle that Valmíki has vouchsafed.

LÁKŚHMĀNA: (glancing) The Ganga’s waters are surging as if churned, the sky is pervaded by heavenly seers. A miracle! Sita and the deities, Ganga and Earth, are emerging from the deep.

OFFSTAGE: Arúndhati, honored by the world, look kindly upon us, Ganga and Earth: We hereby entrust Sita to your care, a good wife who keeps her holy vows.

LÁKŚHMĀNA: What good fortune, what a miracle! Brother, look, look. (glancing)... Alas, brother has still not regained his composure.

Enter ARÚNDHATI and SITĀ.

ARÚNDHATI:

My child, this modesty of yours is uncalled-for, have done with it. Come quickly and revive my child Rama with the beloved touch of your hand.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

siṭā: (sa/sambhramam sprānti) samassasadu, samassasadu aja|juttoo, 

rāmaḥ: (samāśvaya i'jānandam) bhoh kim etat? (drṣṭvā sa| harī'ādabhutam) aye, devi! (sa/lajjam) katham, amb" Ārundhatī, sarve ca praḥṛṣyad|Rṣyaśṛṅga|Sāntā|sametā guravāḥ.

arundhatī: vatsa, eṣā bhagavati Bhagirathagṛha|devatā su| prasannā Gaṅgā.

nepathye: jagat|pate Rāma|bhadra, smaryatām ālekhya| darśane mām praty ātmano vacanam. «sā tvam, amba, snuṣāyām Arundhatī 'iva Sītāyām śiv'|anudhyānā bhav'» ēti. tatr' ānṛtṛ" āsmi.

7.105 arundhatī: iyaṃ te śvaśrūr bhagavati Vasundharā.

nepathye: uktan ca pūrvam āyuṣmatā vatsā|parityāge: «bhagavati Vasundhare, śālasyām duhitaram avekṣasva Jānakīm» iti. tad adhunā kṛṣa|vacan" āsmi, prabho, vatsāyām.

rāmaḥ: katham, kṛṣa|mah"|āparādho 'pi bhagavatībhāyām anukampito Rāmaḥ. (pranamati)

arundhatī: bho bhoḥ paurajānapadāḥ! iyaṃ adhunā Jāh- navi|Vasundharābhāyām evam prāśasya mam' Ārundha- tyāḥ samarpitā. pūrvam ca bhagavatā Vaiśvānareṇa nir- ṇītā|punyā|cāritrā, salbrahmakaśiḥ ca devaḥ saṃstutā Sā- vitra|kula|vadhūr deva|yajana|sambhavā Sītā devi pari- gṛhyatām, iti kathāṃ bhavanto manyante?

1 Act.1.101  2i Gaṅgā.  iii A wife celebrated in the epics for giving up her life for the sake of her husband's.

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ACT VII: REUNION

SITA: (touching him in alarm) Compose yourself, my husband, I beg you.

RAMA: (regaining his composure; with delight) Oh, what can this be? (looking; with joy and wonder) Why, my queen! (ashamed) And mother Arúndhati, and all my elders, along with a joyous Rishya-shringa and Shanta.

ARÚNDHATI: My child, there is the gracious Ganga, deity of the House of Bhagi-ratha.

OFFSTAGE: Lord of the world, dear Rama, remember what you asked of me at the time of viewing the paintings: “Be as kindly disposed to your daughter-in-law Sita as Arúndhati is.” I am now free of that debt.

ARÚNDHATI: And there is Earth, your mother-in-law.

OFFSTAGE: Years ago, at the time of disowning Sita you asked (and long may you live), “O Earth, watch over Jáhnaki, your esteemed daughter.” Today, Your Majesty, I have fulfilled that request with regard to my child.

RAMA: How can this be? Though Rama is guilty of terrible wrongdoing both these blessed ones have shown him mercy. (bows)

ARÚNDHATI: You there, people of the city and countryside! This woman has been entrusted to Arúndhati, and been showered with praises from Jáhnavi and Earth. Earlier her virtuous conduct was certified by Vaishvánara, the god of fire. She has been extolled by gods and Brahmans as a woman of the clan of Savítri. Accept Sita back, the queen who was born at a sacred rite. What say you sirs?
RAMA’S LAST ACT

LAKŚMAṆĀḤ: evam āryay” Ārundhatyā nirbhartsitāḥ prajāḥ kṛṣṇaś ca bhūta|grāma āryaṁ namaskaroti, loka|pālāś ca sapta|ṛṣayaś ca puspavṛśṭibhir upatiṣṭhante.

7.110 ARUNDHATĪ: jagat|pate Rāma|bhadra,

niyojaya yathā|dharmanāñ
priyāṁ tvam dharma|cārīnīṁ
hiraṇmaya|yāḥ pratiκṛtēḥ
puṇya|prakṛtim adhvare. [19]

SĪTĀ: (svalgatam) ْāvi jānādi ajjā|utto Sītā|dūkkaḥ pa|māj- jidumēʻ,

RĀMAH: yathā bhagavaty ādiśati.

LAKŚMAṆĀḤ: keṭ|ārthro ’smi.

7.115 SĪTĀ: ْjīvīda mhi,ān

LAKŚMAṆĀḤ: ārye, eṣa nirłajjo Lakṣmaṇāḥ prāṇamati.

SĪTĀ: ْvaccha, īdiso ciraṁ jīva,ān

ARUNDHATĪ: bhagavan Vālmike, upaniyētāṁ imau Sītā|gar- bha|sambhavaḥ Rāma|bhadraṣya Kuṣa|lavāu. (niskrāṇ- tā)

RĀMA[LAKŚMAṆAU]: diṣṭyā tath” āiva tat.

7.120 SĪTĀ: (sa|bāsp|ākulaṁ) ْkahiṁ me puttaţ,ān

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uttararamacaritaR 384 (384, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

LÁKSHMANA: How Arúndhati has dressed down the subjects, while the whole world of living beings pays homage to sister-in-law, while the world-guardians and the seven seers attend her with a rain of flowers.

ARÚNDHATI: Lord of the world, dear Rama:

    In accordance with dharma assign your beloved companion in dharma—
    the holy original of the golden copy—her sacrificial tasks.

SITA: (Aside) Does my husband know how to assuage Sita’s sorrow?

RAMA: As the blessed one commands.

LÁKSHMANA: My ends have been achieved.

SITA: I have been brought back to life.

LÁKSHMANA: Sister-in-law, here he prostrates himself before you—that Lákshmana who knows no shame.

SITA: My child, may you live long, just as you are.

ARÚNDHATI: Valmíki, please bring forward Kusha and Lava, the two sons born to Rama of Sita’s womb. (Exit)

RAMA (and) LÁKSHMANA: What good fortune, it’s all true.

SITA: (Overcome with tears) Where are my two little boys?

uttararamacaritaR 385 (386, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

tataḥ praviṣati vālmīkiḥ kuśa|lavau ca.

vālmīkiḥ: vatsau Kuśa|lavau, eṣa Raghul|patiḥ pitā yuvayoh, Lakṣmaṇah kaniṣṭhā|tātah, Sitāldevi janani, eṣa rājava|ṛṣir Janako mātāmahah.

sītā: (sa|hasa|karun|ādbhutam viloka) kadham, tado?

kuśa|lavau: hā tāta, hā amba, hā mātāmahah!

7.125 rāmaḥ: (sa|hasam ālingya) nanu vatsau puṇyaḥ prāptau sthaḥ.

sītā: ēhi, jāda Kusa, ehi, jāda Lava. cirasa pariṣṣajadhā puṇo jamm|antaragadam jananin,?

kuśa|lavau: (tathā kṛtvā) dhanyau svaḥ.

sītā: bhaavam, paṇamami,?

vālmīkiḥ: vate, iḍrīy eva ciraṁ bhūyāḥ.*

7.130 nepathyē kalakalāḥ.

vālmīkiḥ: (utthāy āvalokaḥ ca) utkhāta|lavano Mathur”| ēśvaraḥ prāptah.

lakṣmaṇah: s|ānuṣaṅgāṇi kalyāṇāni.

i Śatrughna.

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uttaramacaritaR 386 (386, 0)
ACT VII: REUNION

Enter Valmiki along with Kusha and Lava.

Valmiki: Kusha and Lava, dear children: This is the lord of the Raghus, your father, and Lákshmana, your uncle, and Queen Sita, your mother. And this is the royal seer Jánaka, your maternal grandfather.

Sita: (glancing with joy, pity, and wonder) What, is my father present too?

Kusha (and) Lava: Oh father, mother, grandfather!

Rama: (embracing them joyfully) Surely it was only through good karma that I have recovered you, my two children.

Sita: Come Kusha, my child, and you too, Lava. Hold your mother in a long embrace—it is as if she has been reborn.

Kusha and Lava: (doing so) How fortunate we are.

Sita: I bow before you, blessed one.

Valmiki: My child, may you live long just as you are.

Offstage a tumult.

Valmiki: (rising and looking about) It’s the lord of Máthura arriving, after uprooting Lávana.

Lákshmana: When good things come they come in spate.
RAMA'S LAST ACT

Rāmāḥ: sarvam idam anubhavann api na prayemī. yad vā prakṛṭir iyam abhyudayānām.

Vālmīkīḥ: Rāmāḥbhadra, ucyatāmy kiṃ te bhūyaḥ priyam upākaromī?

Rāmāḥ: ataḥ param api priyam asti? tath’ āp’ idam astu:

pāpmabhyaś ca punāti vardhayati ca
śreyāṃsi y’ ēyaṃ kathā,
māṅgalyā ca manoharā ca, jagato
māt” ēva, Gang” ēva ca,
tām etāṃ paribhāvayantv abhinayair
vinyastajrūpāṃ budhāḥ
śabdaḥbrahmaḥvidaḥ kaveḥ pariṇataḥ
prajñasya vānim imām. [20]

niskṛntāḥ sarve.

iti mahaḥkaviṣṭīḥBhavabhūtiṣjpranita
UttarāḥRāmaḥcaritāḥnāṭake
sammelanaṃ nāma saptam ‘nikah.
samāptam ādāṃ nāṭakam.

1The Rāmāyaṇa.
ACT VII: REUNION

RAMA: Though all this is really happening to me I still cannot believe it. Then again, such is the nature of good fortune.

VALMIKI: Dear Rama, is there some further good turn I can do for you?

RAMA: What can be better than all this? Still, perhaps the following:

This is a story that purifies from evil and lavishes all benefits as well—it is at once auspicious and enchanting like the Mother of the world and the Ganga.*
May the learned come to relish it embodied in dramatic performance, the verbal art of a seasoned poet, a master of the sacred mystery of language.*

Exeunt all.

End of Act VII.
The end of Bhatta-bhatti's play.
"Rama's Last Act"
CHAYA
The following is a Sanskrit paraphrase (chāyā) of the Prakrit passages (marked with "corner brackets, in the play). References are to chapter and paragraph.

1.25 jānāmy, ārya|putra, jānāmi. kin tu sāntāpa|kārīno bandhu|ja|vīprayogā bhuvanti.

1.30 ārya, tataḥ kim vilambyate?

1.35 nāmas te. api kuśalaṃ me samagrasya guru|janasya, āryāyāś ca Śantāyāḥ?

1.37 asmān vā smarati?

1.51 ata eva Rāghaval|dhurandhara ārya|putraḥ.

1.61 bhavavṛt, ārya|putra, bhavatvā. ehi prēśāmahe tāvat te caritam.

1.64 ka idānim etā upari nirantara|sthitā upastuvant’ īv’ ārya|putram?

1.68 nama etebhyaḥ.

1.70 anugṛhit” āsmi.

1.72 amhahe. dalan | nava | nil’ | ōtpala | śyāmala | snigdhā | maśra | māṇusalena deha|saubhāgyena vismaya|stimita|tāta|dṛṣyāmāna|saumya|sundara|irā|anlādara|khaṇḍita|Śāṅkara|śar’|āsanaḥ śikhaṇḍa|mugdha|maṇḍana ārya|putra ālikhitāḥ.

1.77 ete khalu tat|māla|krta|go|dāna|maṅgalas ca tvāro ‘pi bhrātaro vivāha|dikṣitā yūyam. ammo, jānāmi tasmān eva pradeśe tasmān eva kāle varte.

1.80 vata iyam apy aparā kā?

1.82 kampit” āsmi.

1.86 suśṭhu śobhasa, ārya|putr’, āśitena vinaya|māḥātyena.

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CHĀYĀ

1.96 ammō, eṣa jaṭā|saṃyamana|vṛttāntaḥ.

1.98 eṣā prasanna|punya|salīlā bhagavati Bhāgirathī.

1.103 smaraty etam pradeśam ārya|putraḥ?

1.107 ālaṃ idānīṃ tāvad etena. paśyāmi tāvad ārya|putra|sau|hasta|dhiṛṭa|tālā|patr' |ātaḥ|vāraṇaṃ ātmano 'kṣibhyāṃ daksin' āraṇya|praveṣām.

1.114 āh ārya|putra. etavat te āraṇaṃ.

1.116 yathā tathā bhavatu. dūr|jano| 'sukham utpādayati.

1.119 aya deva Ragu|kul| 'ananda. evam mama kāraṇat klāntā āśiḥ.

1.124 āh dhik, āh dhik! āham apy aṭibhūmiṃ gatena raṇaraṇaṃ ārya|putra|śūnyam iv ātmānaṃ prekeṣe.

1.126 āh ta ta nirvyūdhas te 'patya|nehaṃ.

1.129 atra kil' ārya|putreṇa vīcaḥrdi| 'āmaṛa|dhiṛatvam pramukta|kaṅṭhaṃ ruditaṃ āśiḥ.

1.133 eṣa sa cira|nirviṣṇa|jīva|loka|samuddharaṇa|gurukṛ|ōpakaṃ mahābhāgo mārutiḥ.

1.135 vatsa, eṣa kusumita|kadamba|tāṇḍavita|barhinah kin|nāma|dheyo girir yatra ānuḥbāvaha|saubhāgya|mātra|pariśesa|dhāsara|śir mūrchaṃ svyā praruditeṇ āvalambitas taraṇțala ārya|putra|ālikhiṭaḥ?

1.139 ārya|putra, etena citra|darśanena pratītya|panna|dohadāya āsti me vijñāpyam.

1.141 jāna punar api prasanna|gambhirāsu vana|sājīṣu viharīṣyāmi, pavitra|saumya|śīr |āvagāḥṃ ca bhagavatīṃ Bhāgirathīm avagāhiṣye.

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RAMA'S LAST ACT

1.145 aṛyaputra yuṣmābhir api tatra gantavyam.
1.147 tena hi priyam me.
1.150 evaṁ bhavatu. apahriye khalu pariśramaljanitayā nidrayā.
1.155 sthiraprasādā yūyam. ita idāniṁ kim aparam?
1.157 priyāṁvada, ehi saṁśīśāvah.
1.160 asty etad, aṛyaputra, asty etat...
1.163 deva, upaśhitah.
1.165 āsannaparicārako Durmukho devasya.
1.168 hā katham idāniṁ Sitā|devim antarem' edrśam a[cintaniyam jan'] āpavādām devasya kathayisyāmi? atha vā niyogāh khalu ma ithṣo manda|bhāgasya.
1.169 hā aṛyaputra saumya, kv' āsi?
1.172 jayatu devaḥ.
1.174 upastuvanti devaṁ paurajānapadā vismāритā vayaṁ mahā[rā|Daśaratasya Rāma|deven' ēti.
1.176 śrṇotu devaḥ.
1.178 aśvāsitu devaḥ.
1.188 katham idāniṁ agni|pariśuddhāyā garbha|sthitapavitra|Ra|ghu|kula|santānyā devyā durjana|vacanād evaṁ vyavasitaṁ devena?
1.192 hā devi.
1.210 hā saumy' aṛyaputra…
1.210 hā dhik, hā dhik! duḥ śvapnakena vipralabdhiḥ āham aṛyaputraṁ ākrandāmi.

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CHĀYĀ

1.210 ā dhik, ā dhik! ekākiniṁ maṁ prasuptāṁ ujjhitvā gata ār-ya|putrah, kim idānim etat bhavatu. tasmāi kopiṣyāmi—yadi taṁ prekṣāṁiṁ “ātmanāḥ prabhaviṣyāmi. ko ‘tra pariṣjanaḥ?

1.211 devi, kumārā|Lakṣmaṇo vijñāpasyati: «sajjo rathaḥ. ārohatu de-ve.»

1.212 iyām ārohāmi.

1.212 parisphuraṁ iva me garbhaḥbhāraḥ. śanair gacchāmaḥ.

1.213 ita ito devi.

1.214 namo Rāghu|kula|devatābhyaḥ.

3.24 ammahe, jānāmi priya|sakhi me Vāsantī vyāharati?

3.26 kiṁ tasya?

3.28 āryal|putra, pariṣṭrāhi, pariṣṭrāhi mama taṁ putrakam!

3.28 ādhik, ā dhik! tāny eva cira|paricitāṁ aśarāṇi Pāṇcavaṭṭi|daṁśānena maṁ maṁ|manda|bhāginīṁ anubadhantaṁ. āḥ ārya|pu-тра!

3.31 ammahe, jala|bhrī|megha|manthara|stānītal|gambhirā|māma- salah kuto nv esa bhāraṁ|nirghosō bharan karan|vivaramaṁ maṁ api maṁ|bhāginiṁ jhaṭṭiy uddhūṣaṁayati?

3.34 bhagavati, kiṁ bhāṣasi, «a parisphuṭam» iti? maṁ puṇaḥ svara|ṣanyojena pratyabhijñātāṁ ārya|putra eva vyāharati.

3.36 diṣṭāḥ alparihiṇa|rāja|dharmah khalu sa rājā.

3.38 āḥ kathāṁ, prabhiṭa|candra|maṇḍal|āpāndura|parikṣāma|durbalēn’ ākāraṁ ‘yaṁ niṇja|saumya|gambhīr|ānubhāva|mā- tral|pratyabhijñaye ārya|putra eva. taṁ maṁ dhāraya.

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3.44 āh, katham etat?
3.48 yad bhavatu tad bhavatu. yathā bhagavaty ājitāpayati.
3.50 jāne punar api pratyāgatam iya jīvitaṁ trailokyasya.
3.54 etāvad evāv ēdāṇiṁ me bahutaram.
3.56 hā dhik, hā dhik! kimity āray[putro māṃ māṃ bhaṇiṣyati?
3.58 bhagavati Tamase, aparasravah, yadi tāvan māṃ prakṣiyate ta- to 'n[ahyanujītāta] sannidhāneṇ ādhiṃṣama rājā kopīṣyati.
3.60 ām. aṣṭi etat.
3.62 ārayaputra, āṣadṛṣṭam khalv etad asya vṛttāntasya.
3.64 bhagavati Tamase, tathā niśkāraṇa[parītyāgino 'py etasyāvāṃ] vidhena darśanena kidṛṣya iva me hṛdayaḥ avastāhiti na jānāmi.
3.75 ka idānīṁ abhiyokṣyate?
3.78 katham, priyāsaṃkhi me Vāsanī.
CHĀYĀ

3.82 ātā Jātiyo. śūnyaṁ tvaẏā vinā Janasthānam.

3.83 bhagavati, satyaṁ eva vañjdevatā api māṁ na prekṣante.

3.87 tato 'nusarāvah.

3.92 ammahe, ēdṛṣṭaḥ sa saṁvṛttalḥ.

3.95 a|viyukta idāṇīṁ dīrgh|āyur asyāḥ saumya|dīrghāya bhava-

3.98 bhagavati Tamase, ayaṁ tāvad idṛṣṭo jātaḥ, tau punar na jāna-

3.100 ēdṛṣṭaḥ aham manda|bhāgini yasyā na kevalam nirantara ārya|

3.102 kim vā mayā praśūtaṁ yena tādṛṣṭaḥ api mama putrākaro iṣṭad|
kalita|vīrāla|kumāra|dhvāla|daśāṇ|ōjīvala|kāpoḷam anubad-
dha|mugdha|kākal|vihasitaṁ nibaddha|kāka|sikhaṇḍakam
amala|mukha|puṇḍarika|yugalakam na paricumbitam ārya|

3.104 bhagavati Tamase, eten' āpatya|saṁsmaneyen' ecyvasita|pra-

3.109 eṣa saḥ!

3.111 evaṁ bhavatu.

3.115 suṣṭha pratyaḥpiṇātaṁ ārya|putreṇa.

3.120 sakhī Vāsanti, kim tvaẏā kṛtam ārya|putrasya mama c' āitad
dīrghāntyaṁ; hā dhik, hā dhik. sa ev ārya|putraḥ, tad eva Paṅ-
cavaṭi|vanam. s' āiva priyā|sakhī Vāsanti, ta eva vividha|visra-
mbara|sākṣino Gedāvari|kānaṁ|ōdāśāḥ, ta eva jāta|nirvīśaṁ

uttararamacaritaR 397 (398, 0)
RAMA'S LAST ACT

mṛgā[paksi|pāda]pāḥ. mama punar manda|bhāgīṇyā dṛḍyamā
nam api sarvam etan n' ‘astī. idśīo jīva|lokasa ya prarvataḥ.

3.133 prekṣe, sakhi, prekṣe.

3.125 ātī daiva, eṣa mayā vin”, āham apy etena vin” ēti kena sam
bhāvitam āsīt? tan muhūrtakam api jānm[āntrād īva labdha] 
darśanaṁ bāṣp[ā|salīl[ī|āntarēṣu prekṣe tāvad vatsalam ārya|pu
tram.

3.136 sakhi Vāsanti, kiṃ tvaṁ asy evan[ā|vādiniḥ] priy[ā]’ārhaḥ khalu 
sarvasyā ārya|putro, viśeṣato mama priya|sakhyāḥ.

3.142 sakhi Vāsanti, virama, virama.

3.148 tvaṁ eva, sakhi Vāsanti, dāruṇā kāṭhōra ca yā evaṁ pradiptaṁ 
pradīpayasi.

3.152 ārya|putra, dharāmy eṣā dharāmi.

3.154 ātī dhik, ātī dhik. ārya|putro ’pi prauκtaka|kaṇṭhaṁ prarudi
taḥ.

3.161 evam etat.

3.166 mohit” āsmy etair ārya|putra|vacanaiḥ.

3.173 evam asmi manda|bhāgīṇī punaḥ punar apy āyāṣa|kārīṇy ār
ya|putrasya.

3.176 eten’ ārya|putrasya dur|vāra|dāruṇa|ārambhena duḥkhha|sāṅk
saṅkṣobhena pramuṣīta|nīja|duḥkhham īva vepe te hṛdayam.

3.180 sandipanāṁ eva duḥkhasya priya|sakhi vinodaṁ’ōpāya īti ma
nyate.

3.183 dāruṇ” āśi, Vāsanti, dāruṇ” āśi, yā etair hṛdayamarma|gūḍha| 
saṅkṣobha|ghaṭṭanaiḥ punaḥ punar māṁ manda|bhāgīnīm ārya| 
putram śmārayasi.

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CHĀYĀ

3.187  हा धिक, हा धिक! पुनर अपि प्रामुद्धा अर्यालपुत्राः।

3.189  हा अर्यालपुत्र, मामं मंदल|भागिनिम उद्दिश्या सकाल|जिवः|लो-
कः|मांगलः|अधिहस्या ते जनमः|लभस्या वाराण वाराण सांसा-
यिताः|जिवः|दारुः|दालपरिवाम, इति हा हाः|अस्मी।

3.201  अपसांरुम इच्छामि. एषा पुनः सिरः|सदः|भावः|सांतलः|अर्याल-
पुत्रः|सपर्शः|दिगः|दारुः|अपि सांतः|पाणित्य उल-
लापयतः वाजः|लेपः|सोपानन्द्धा इवा स्वियन|निल्हसः|शिवपरस्तो 
वेपतेः|'वसा इवा मे हस्ताः।

3.204  अर्यालपुत्र, सा एवा. इदानिम ज्यानः।

3.207  हा धिक, हा धिक. अर्यालपुत्रः|सपर्शः|मोहितायः प्रामादाः 
क्षाः|सांवत्तः।

3.213  हा धिक, हा धिक. अद्यः अः|पाणिधिः|सिमिथः|मुद्धः|ग्हुर-
नमाः|वेदनाः|न्यां|पाणिः|सांवत्ताः|अत्माः।

3.216  अम्माहे, अः|वातः|आत्मः|लाज्जः|अस्मी|भागवतः|ता-
मासाः|किं इति|किं आस मांस्याते: 'एषा ते परिक्याः, एसो 'भी-
सङ्गा' इति?

3.218  सत्यम अः|करुः इति|यः|अवाः|विद्हाः|त्वाः|प्रेक्षामाः 
धराम्य एवा जिवितम।

3.220  एयाः अर्यालपुत्र, विपरितम एवा।

3.223  मयः अवाः|दरुप्रायः|विपरलब्धः|अर्यालपुत्रः।

3.226  अर्यालपुत्र, ततो व्यापायते. अहम अपि आपह्रीवे. पारित्राहि।

3.229  अम्मो, उन्मत्तः|अस्मी|सांवत्तः।

3.232  'निरवधिरः' इति हा हाः|अस्मी।

3.235  बहुव्यानायतः अस्मी|पुर्वविरहम।

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3.237  bhagavati Tamase, gacchaty ārya|putraḥ!
3.239  bhagavati, prasīḍa. kṣanam api tavad dur|labham janaṁ prek- se.
3.241  ārya|putra, kā?
3.243  ārya|putra idānīṁ asi tvam. ammahe, utkhātam idānīṁ me parītya|ga|lajjā|sāyam ārya|putrena.
3.245  dhanyā sā y” ārya|putreṇa bahu|manyate, y” ārya|putraṁ vi- nodayanṭy ātāṁ nibhandhanāṁ jātā jīvāṇokasya.
3.247  parihasit” āsmi bhagavatyā.
3.249  pratikūl” ēdāniṁ me Vāsantī saṁvṛttā.
3.251  evaṁ kurvāḥ.
3.253  nāma ʔ[pūrva]puṇya|janita|dārsanābhīyāṁ ārya|putra|caraṇa|kamalābhīyāṁ.
3.255  kīya|ciraṇaḥ và megha|lāntaraṇa pūrṇa|candrasya dārānam?
3.257  svāgaratam an|adhyāya|kāraṇānāṁ viśēṣato jīrraṅkūrcānām.
3.259  bho Bhāṇḍāyana, kiṁ|nāmadheya eṣa idāniṁ mahatāḥ uṭha- virālsārthasyā |āgra|haurya|dharo ‘tithir āgataḥ?
3.261  hum, Vasiṣṭhāḥ?
3.263  mayā punar jītātam vyāghro vṛkṣo v” āśa iti.
3.265  yena parāpatiten’ āiva sā varākikā kalyāṇikā maḍamaḍāyitā.
3.267  bho! nighito ‘si.

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ʜʏ
.

kim|nimittam?
.

.

tatah. kim|ity āgatah?
.

.

apy adya sambandhinībhih. samam
asya darśanam
. samv
. rttam
.
.
na v” êti?

.

yath” âite sarve sthavirāh. parasparam
. militās, tath” āvām api
batukai
h. samam
.
. militv” ân|adhyāya|mah”|ôtsavam
. khelantau
sambhāvayāvah.
.

.

īdrśe
iti samam eva sarva|duh. kāle Mithil”|âdhipo dras. tavya
.
.
khāni samudbhavanti. na śaknomy udvartamāna|mūla|bandhanam
m
. hrdaya
.
. vyavasthāpayitum.

.

katham
. ca vatsāyā vadhvā evam
. gate tasya rāja’|rser
. mukham
.
darśayāmah?
.

.

esa
vatsāyā vadhvāh. pitā rāja’|
. sa mahā|rājasya hrday’|ānando
.
rsi
h.
hā
dhik,
hā
dhik.
smārit”
âsmy
anus. thita|mah’|ôtsavān
. .
.
divasān. hā deva, sarvam eva tan n’ âsti.

.

ammo, unmīlanti vedanāh.
.

.

hā vatse Jānaki, kv’ âsi? smarāmi te vivāha|laksmī|parigrah’|âi.
ka|maṅgalam utphulla|śuddha|hasitam
. mugdha|mukha|pun. darīkam.
āsphurac|candra|candrikā|sundarair aṅgaih. punar
.
api me jāte uddyotay’ ôtsaṅgam. sarvadā mahā|rājo bhanati,
.
«esā
. Raghu|kula|mahattarānā
. m
. vadhūh.
. asmākam
. tu Janaka|
sambandhena duhitrk”
. âiva.»

.

jāte Jānaki, kim
. karomi? dr. dha|vajra|lepa|pratibandha|niśca.
lam
hata|jīvita
m
.
. mām
. manda|bhāginīm
. na parityajati.

.

kuto ’tikrānte mano|rathe?



uttararamacaritaR

401 (402, 0)


su|labha|saukhyam idānīṃ bāłatvaṃ bhavati.

ammahe, eteṣāṃ madhye ka esa Rāma|bhadra|lakṣmi|pari-
śobhitaiḥ ś'|āvaṣṭambha|mugdha|lalitair aṅgair asmākaṃ api
locanaṃ śītalayati?

kim manyadhve, evaṃ bhaṇita āgamisyat' iti?

kathaṃ sa|vinayaṃ niśāmita|Gṛṣṭi|vacano vistāyā ṛṣi|dārakān
ito|mukhaṃ prasṛta eva sa vatsaḥ?

jāta, cīraṃ jīva.

jāta, ito 'pi tāvad chi.

ammahe, na kevalaṃ daral|vispaṣṭa|kuvalaya|śyāmal[ōjjvalena
deha|bandhena, kavalit'|āravinda|kesara|kasāya|kαṇṭha|ka-
lalḥamsa|ghoṣa|gharghara|nināda|dirghena ca svareṇa Rāma|
bhadrasy' ānuharati. nanu kathora|kamala|garbhah|pakṣmalah
śāra|sparśo 'pi tāḍās ēva. jāta, prekṣe tāvat te mukham.

rājā'[re, kim na paśyasi? nipūṇaṃ nirūpyamāṇo vatsāyā va-
dhvā mukha|candre ēva sa .mvadaty eva.

ammo, unmatt|bhūtām iva me ṣṛdayaṃ kim api cintayantyā
bahu vipralapati.

jāta, asti te mātā? smarasi vā tātām?

tataḥ kasya tvam?

ayi jāta, kathitaṃṃaṃ kathaya.

vatsa|lakṣmaṇasya putraka «ājñāpayat' ity amṛta|bindu|sun-
darāṇy akāraṇā śṛtyante.

bhrātā 'pi te 'stī?

uttararamacaritaR 402 (402, 0)
CHĀYĀ

4.131 jyeṣṭha iti bhaṣitaṁ bhavati.

4.137 hya ṭvate mugdha|candra|mukhi, ka idānīm te śārīra|kusumasya jhaṭiti daiva|durvilāsa|pariṇāma ekākīnā ynipititaḥ?

4.145 bhagavati, paritrāhi, paritrāhi prasādaya kupaṁ rāja|ṛṣīm.

4.157 bhagavati, jānāmy, etam an|avekṣamānā vaścit" eva. tad ito 'nyato bhūrva prekṣāmahe tāvad gachchantam dirghā|ayuṣam.

6.6 tat kim|iti punar a|kāṇḍa|tānḍavīr|ōḍḍaṇa|taralita|taḍic| chaṭā|kaḍāram iv' āmbaraṇ jhaṭiti saṃ✈ṛttam?

6.12 diṣṭya|ātena vimala|mukta|phala|śītalal|śiṁga|māṃsalena nāthā|deha|sparśēr|ānanda|manda|mukulita|ghūṛṇa|māṇa|locaṇāyā antarita eva me santāpaḥ.

6.15 katham a|vīra|lalav|ghūṛṇamāṇa|vidyula|vīlasa|maṇḍi-tair matra|maṇḍa|mayūra|kāṇṭha|śyāmalai avastīryate nabho|'ṅgaṇa|m jala|dharaiḥ?

6.17 priyaṃ me, priyaṃ me!

6.20 nātha, ka idānīm eṣa sa|sambhram|āṭkṣipta|kara|bhramita| pāt'īra|ānicalo dūrat eva madhura|vacana|pratiṣṭhāh|yuddha|vyāpāra eva eva kumārayor antare vimāṇā|varam avatārayati?

7.13 hā āryal|putra, hā kumāra Laksmaṇa, ekākīnīm aḷḷaṇām ara-ṇya āsanna|prasava|vedanāḥ haṭ'īāḥ śvapādā māṃ abhila-ṣaṇti. s' ēdānīn manda|bhāgiṇi Mandākīnīyām ātmānaṇaḥ ni-κṣepyāmi.

7.25 diṣṭya|āraṇau praśūt" āsmi. hā āryal|putra!

7.28 bhagavati, kā tvam? tvam ca?

7.30 bhagavati, namas te.

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7.34 ḫa ambā, īdṛṣṭa ahaṃ tvayā dhīrā.

7.44 ḫa āryaṃ putra, smāryase.

7.46 ye ṣṛ vā ḫambā bhaṅṭatī.

7.56 nayatu mām ētmano ’ṅgeṣu vilayāṃ ambā.

7.60 ānāth’ āṣmi. kim etāḥbhāyāṃ?

7.62 ḫidṛṣṭam mam’ āḥbhāgyāḥ saṅnāthavām?

7.69 kim iti sakalam antariṣṭam praṅvalatī?

7.73 diṣṭāṃ āṅgāravāṃ [devatā etāḥ! ḫā āryaṃ putra, ādyā ’ṣpi te prasādaḥ pariṣṭhurantī.

7.78 bhagavatī, ko āṣṭaḥ kṣatriyāḥ [citaḥ karma kariṣyatī?

7.87 nayatu mām ētmano ’ṅgeṣu vilayāṃ ambā. na saṁśīya īdṛṣṭam ījīvāṅkālāparivartam anubhāvītum.

7.101 saṁśvasītā, saṁśvasītv āryaṃ putraḥ.

7.112 api jāṁtaḥ āryaṃ putraḥ Stāḷdūḥkhaṃ pramaṅṣṭam?

7.115 ījīvā ūṣmisī.

7.117 vatsa, īdṛṣaḥ ciraḥ jīva.

7.120 kutra me putrakau?

7.123 kathaṃ, tātāḥ?

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CHAYA

7.126 ehi, jata Kuśa, ehi, jata Lava. cirasya pariṣvajethāḥ punar ja-
niṁ āntaraṅgatam jananīm.

7.128 bhagavan, praṇamāmi.
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An asterisk (*) in the body of the text marks the word or passage being annotated.

RAMA’S LAST ACT

1.1 Being less familiar and slightly harder (as masc.) to construe with idam, namovakam is more probable (both words are hapax in Bh).

1.3 H: “He was known as Śṛiṅkaṇṭha by the name carried by his father, and familiarly as Bhavabhūti” (p. 12). N takes the expression much more concretely, and perhaps more credibly given the usual meaning of labhchana: “Out of deep devotion he wore on a part of his body a golden cloth upon which the foot of Śṛiṅkaṇṭha was marked.” It could even mean: “branded with the foot of Śṛiṅkaṇṭha” (though it is unclear to me how common the practice was among Shaivas; it is even today obligatory among orthodox Mādhyas).

1.4 The husband of Language and creator god.

1.5 In the choice between kṛṣṇatās and kṛṣṇatās the echo of the previous verse (besides the agreement of Ne and N) seems decisive.

1.5 Āyodhyaka need not imply “native of Ayodhya,” as shown conclusively by Śabara’s comment on Pṛṣṇiṁtāmasāṭasṛtu 1.3.20 (in reference to the word māthuna). B’s failure to see this led him to accept what I find to be a corrupt (if old) version of the text at Act 1.8ff. (see Notes to the Edition p. 435).

1.6 Demonic creatures, against whom Rāma fought to recover his wife. A few went over to Rāma’s side.

1.6 I follow Ne and N, whose reading is slightly more difficult than B’s, insofar as rājaṛṣi would account for Janaka (as V points out).

1.6 B’s reading is corroborated by N and V; G’s -ṛgatṛḥ appears to be a simplification (pace K).

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Ne, B alone read *samajati hi*, linking the conclusion of the festivities in Ayodhya with the departure of the elders to *Rṣyāśāgā* ritual. All C, reading *anyac ca*, understand their departure as a second unrelated condition.

See N: *paddhatir margaḥ sandarbhaparipatiḥ arthaḥ.*

"It is our duty to act," *vyavahartavyam.* C understand more narrowly, "speak," i.e., perform the royal eulogy. But the word can also mean simply act in the world, which would provide another premonition of Rāma’s dilemma. K rightly hears a rebuke by Bh to his critics, of the sort that occasioned the great verse in MM (1.16; see Introduction).

When Rāma recovered her Sītā was forced to undergo a fire ordeal in Lankā to prove her chastity.

N is right to note that the first half of the verse is a reference to the particular events at hand (the departure of the elders), and the second a more general corroboration. "Hazards," *pratyavāyuḥ:* Dangers that arise from the failure to perform obligatory religious acts.

"Feel such revulsion," *bhāttsamāḥḥ. A technical term of Sanskrit aesthetic theory, the first of many such allusions throughout the play (see Introduction). The verse no doubt offers a foreshadowing, if ironically, of the events to follow.

Mirashi and others are troubled by the timeline here: If Rāma returned to Ayodhya right after the battle in Lankā and the recovery of Sītā, and the coronation ceremony took place immediately, then her advanced pregnancy would indeed be suspicious (1974: 266). But there is no reason whatever to assume Bh shared so crude a conception of realism.

"Life itself," *svasmāt* (literally, "oneself" or "one’s self"). The northern reading *tasmāt*, which is contradicted by all C (including V and G, *pace* their editors’ constituted texts), certainly seems like a simplification. N persuasively glosses, *svasmāt sarvebhyo īti prayastam admaniḥ. vibhakta paścami.*
"To propitiate," ātādhanāya. The word is often used of placating a god. See also v. 1.182 [42].

Aśṭāvakrā’s departure seems awkward enough to imply some kind of dramaturgical rule, that only three actors were permitted on stage simultaneously (cf. Sophocles’ innovation in ancient Greek drama, according to Aristotle). But other scenes in the play belie this (for example, in Act 4 there are already four people on stage [Kausalyā, Arundhati, Janaka, and Lava] when a group of boys enters).

It is curious that the theme of the painting exhibition, though absent from the Uttarakāṇḍa, is alluded to in Rāghuvamśa (14.25).

There is a crucial textual problem here. I translate te … pravādah, the reading of Ne, N, and B, though it is weak. V and G read more powerfully te … pravādah ("slur on you"). But it is impossible to believe Rāma would say such a thing to Śitā. What the context demands—though attested by none of the mss. available to me—is me … pravādah, “This is a slur on me that I will have to bear for the rest of my life.”

V interprets the verse as pertaining only to the present circumstances: It is wrong to trouble people who are already sad by reminding them of past troubles. This explanation is of course impossible to construe with kuladhanaiḥ. K reports the v.l. kastam, which despite his objection strikes me as an improvement.

B’s dual seems improbable. It was Rāma who was seated at the opening of the scene and begins to walk about (Ne reads pari-kramanti).

A quasi etymology of the name Viśvāmitra, with the figure "apparent contradiction" (virodhābhāsa): though he appears to be Viśva-amitra ("foe to all") he is really Viśva-mitra ("friend to all"). (The name is presumably originally based on a devatātvanda, viśvā-mitra)

G (pace K’s edition) reads anāyāsa, “without effort.”

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1.74 The "others," including Daśaratha, are more strictly Janaka's new relatives. Presumably for hierarchy's sake Vasiṣṭha is mentioned first.

1.76 Viśvāmitra, who arranged the marriage between Rāma and Si-tā, and can therefore metaphorically be termed the giver and receiver of the bride.

1.78 The southern reading (i.e., the bracelet is "tied on") is contextually superior to the northern ("outstretched").

1.79 Lakṣmaṇa uses this kinship term for the wife of his younger brother, in contrast to the term used for the wives of his older brothers Bharata and Rāma.

1.81 Bhavabhūti uses apavrātya, svagatam, and atmagatam without distinction in the sense of "aside."

1.85 Or: diverting [him], K.

1.91 Absent a fuller census of manuscripts one is inclined to regard the reading ambānām (the curiosity "of my mothers") for angānām as the work of Victorians avant la lettre. Bh uses kutahala only once elsewhere and it is in an erotic context (MM 9.44). See also 6.1.24 [15] below. For Bh as for much of the later tradition (though not for Vālmiki, see Pollock 1986: 358–59), Sītā was prepubescent when married, though the marriage would not have been consummated until her first menstruation. N understands the verse aright, noting that "the skill in handling a completely innocent young girl is the highest secret of connoisseurship; this is well understood among the multitude [samavāya; or read, samaya, from the characteristic practices] of sophisticated men."

1.95 Recall that in Vālmiki's text, Lakṣmaṇa had wanted to kill Kaikeyī and seize control of the kingdom (Rāmāyaṇa 2. 20).

1.100 One might be inclined to read purā in place of G, V, and B's pitru ca (which seems like an awkward attempt to get the kin relationship correct). The v.l. purā however is found only in
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1.105 Though supported by Ne, B's bīlita- for C's lalita- is dubious. N attractively explains the latter by saying that her limbs became especially alluring when exhausted.

1.105 Were B's simple-minded samjāta- original it is hard to see how it would have generated the variant sampāta- (all C), which I therefore accept (see also Act 1.144).

1.107 The original reading of Sītā's speech here may be irrecoverable. I follow N (corroborated to an important degree by Ne, and by G, pace K) over against B (to some degree supported by BN).

1.110 Bh typically uses sarasa- in the sense of "sap-full" or "fresh" (e.g., in reference to flowers, see Index s.v.), has no application to "fords."

1.112 I read asakti- with N and V (so too ŚP p. 859) for B's āsatti-, but construe it with what follows rather than what precedes (so N, K). I have accepted avicalita- (attested also in MM) because of the agreement of Ne (avicalattā I assume to be metathesis) and N, in preference to the (hapax) avirala- though avirala- is a favorite Bh word and the reading is widely attested (including Bhoja ŚP p. 859). With regard to what is probably the most celebrated anusvāra in all of Sanskrit literature, mss. are split; C unanimously corroborate eva, as does Bhoja.

1.116 The exact nuance here escapes me (the memory of a bad person is disquieting? even though not present a bad person can cause troubles?), but the echo of verses 5–6 is clear enough.

1.118 An oft-quoted verse, the citations like the mss. and C being divided in their reading of ē, viśadalakaranaīr (which I accept, so all C, pace K) and the almost unintelligible viśadalakarunāir (B; Ne's karaṇaśiśkalair may be a lectio facilior of this, though see textual note to 3.122 [2.3]). Bhoja, who cites the verse four times in ŚP, once reads viśadalakarunāir (p. 688) in the context of a discussion of rasa. The verse beautifully foreshadows the action of Act 3.
NOTES

1.128 Rāmāyaṇa 3.65.15ff. indicates that kabandha is here to be taken as a proper name.

1.128 Comparing MVC 5.27 it appears that Bh understood Śrāvasti to be a proper name, in contrast to R 3.69.19ff., which gives her name as Śabarī.

1.128 Beginning with this speech Lākṣmaṇa is describing things Sītā never witnessed.

1.129 I cannot see how N’s reading of the compound as a dvandva makes sense. The lection is disputed.

1.131 My reading is corroborated by ŚP p. 1021; in addition, bhuvoḥ would require an asyndeton uncharacteristic of Bh.

1.135 Peacocks are said to dance at the start of the rainy season, and it is then that the kadamba trees blossom.

1.136 The meter of the verse, mandakrānta, would have recalled to every reader the Meghadūta, Kālidāsa’s classic poem of a demigod who is separated from his beloved and asks a cloud to carry her a message.

1.154 With V I want to hear a set of binaries throughout the verse and so follow him in my understanding of the contrastive verbs in d, which I reverse in the trans.; the v.l. samunmlayati (for ca sammlayati) would make things much easier but has no C support (V does not read this, pace K). I also agree that a refers to mental as opposed to physical states, the latter being described in b. Note that ŚP p. 855 reads pranādo in b.

1.160 There is something slightly confusing about stage directions in Sanskrit plays. This one of course refers to the actress’s action. The character Sītā is actually falling asleep, not pretending to fall asleep. She is not privy to the awful events that now unfold, and in any case the next stage direction is “she sleeps”—though technically this too should refer to the actress and so should be “mimes sleeping.”
Rāma understands the doorkeeper to be referring to the torture of separation just mentioned.

The language of the verse suggests an analogy between love and transcendence, since “unity,” advaita, and “veils,” āvarana, are terms of Vedānta metaphysics. I accept B’s hi tat, which is read by all C; SP reads hitam on p. 675, but—unless it is an oversight of the editor—hi tat on p. 859). K’s principal explanation of the verse is not acceptable. For the general construction of the v. I follow BN, though not in his supplying, like N, the verb bhāyātā in d. (N’s anugatam for anugamam is read by Bhoja, SP pp. 675 and 1250, but not on p. 859.)

I follow Ne in taking evam eva as part of the stage direction (here and in the two other occurrences in the play; see the explicit discussion in Nāṭyadarpana (Vivarana) 1.18; the same usage is found elsewhere, e.g. Bālanāyakaravatya 3 (on which the commentator remarks karne evam evaḥ rāhavyathākathāpaṇa evaḥ). N, G, V read as Prakrit, evam via, making it clear that for them the words were to be spoken aloud, “It’s like this . . .” (so Mālavikāgniṅittra 1). The locution occurs only here (and in 1.193 and 2.42) in the works of Bh; MVC has several instances of karne kathayati or the like.

Daśaratha died of grief when in order to keep his word to his wife Kaikeyī he sent Rama into exile.

V and G are certainly right to hear a negative overtone (“unpracticed” and “heartless” respectively).

But for the agreement of Ne and N, I would be inclined to accept B’s adhyavasitam (“come to [such] a conclusion”) since the objection concerns the nature of the inference he is making, not just his decision.

Or: Heaven forbid (that anything I am about to do is wrong, so N).

I accept -āśrayam-, the reading of Ne, N, and B, though not N’s explanation (bharatokādiyamāvidhāyānīm); V’s -āśrayaṃ strikes
me as a latter emendation made in a mistaken interpretation of ādaya (illustrated by K).

1.198 It is not easy to see how life-breaths can wound one’s vitals, marmopaghātībhīh (C), and one might at first glance be inclined to understand the second half of the verse altogether differently by taking the phrase more passively (though the word upaghātin is attested only in an active sense)—however “fatal the blows” his life receives—and understanding the impersonal passive vajrakīlāyītam as “seems bolted … by iron bolts” (literally, “seem as if acting like iron bolts,” i.e., is as hard to remove). But unlike most characters in Sanskrit literature Rāma may not be asking why he cannot die in the face of terrible suffering (N’s understanding, which is grammatically impossible, though Rāma complains in this way later, see for example Act 3.160 [32], 3.167 [34]: 6.121 [33]); he seems rather to be saying that life itself has been a source of unbearable suffering for him (so essentially G).

1.207 “Destitute,” śūnyām: So read by N in place of B’s śālghyām, “commendable,” though of course Rāma could be emphasizing the injustice of what he is about to do (since his wife is “praiseworthy” and innocent) rather than its consequences. This is suggested by V, who proposes unpersuasively that the adjective be taken as proleptic (“so as to be free from harm”).

2.12 udgitīsa: The term technically refers to Śāmaveda chant, but often connotes the syllable om.

2.22 N: philosophy, economy, and polity; G: writing, soldiery, weapons-and-chariots; V: medicine, weaponry, music.

2.28 Bh seems to draw a parallel here—the idea of “fulfilment” for him means perpetuation of the family line through the birth of a son—with the fate of Rāma, see Act 5.74 [24], 5.76 [25].

2.29 We must read the nominative here. It is not the verse forms as such that are new but their non-Vedic embodiment.

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RAMA’S LAST ACT

2.49 A Vedic rite on behalf of political sovereignty: A king claimed control of all the territory in which the sacrificial horse was permitted to wander freely.

2.52 Vedic rites require the presence of the sacrificer’s duly wedded wife.

2.64 BN suggests taking *apas-kiramāna* as an *alukamāna* ("sprinkling water"), modifying *drumādā.

2.69 I take this as a pure (archaic) optative (comparable to optative + *epi* in Greek). Differently N: “The particle *api* loses its interrogative quality here and connotes supposition” (*jjhāaśyām*).

2.73 As in the case of *-upāya* in 2.74, I take *punyābhisambhavāh* as a *bhavānīhi*.

2.82 The geography here is somewhat unclear, though it was evidently critical for Bh. The key point is that (as *Rāmāyana* 3. 10–12 makes plain), Pañcavaṭī, the peaceful forest where Rāma and Sītā spent the greater part of the exile, is to the north of the regions (Janasthāna, etc.) inhabited by the rakṣasas. Traveling beyond the “woods in the middle distance” in Act 2.8ff. that comprise Pañcavaṭī took one deeper and deeper into demon country. What remains uncertain is why Janasthāna is now said to be horrific (2.83 [16]) when in 2.82 it was just said to be a *siddhaksetra*. Also obscure is what is intended by the use of contrapuntal registres here: Śambůka’s bombastic and turbid descriptions of nature, and Rāma’s heart-rendingly simple confessions of guilt and pain. Is this perhaps a mixture of *rasas*? But the comic—if that is what Śambůka’s represents, a sort of *vidūraka* (as would be expected on the analogy with the Śākuntala, see Introduction)—is not typically combined with the pitiful (and note this is indeed *karuṇa* and not *śringāra*).

2.83 N, “Weak creatures are always in fear of more powerful ones, and so never sleep tranquilly.” B’s -ghora- is corroborated by BN (v.l. -bhoga-).

uttaramacaritaR 416 (416, 0)
The logic behind the choice of reading here is brought out clearly in N’s comment, which is reflected in the translation. The reading derives further corroboration from Act 2.87 [19d].

The one that leads to liberation from transmigration

Or, with N: “But why has this befallen Rāma now?”

B’s reading violates the parallelism with the images of the first three pādas.

“Killed,” vināśita: This could also mean, less harshly, just “drove away.”

The reading is widely attested, but S may be right in preferring kruñcabhido, given the epic precedents, though it seems very likely to be a lectio facilior.

N notes that their entrance is foreshadowed in the last verse of the previous act.


It is clear from Act 7.13 that Sitā was attempting to commit suicide.

Observe the use of vinipāto in Act 3.3 (though see Act 4.38 [6d] below).

There seems to be one too many similes here, but no good v.l. presents itself. How, in light of the Gaṅgā’s promise of invisibility, do the two rivers see Sitā? Compare below, Act 3.86: the “deities” must refer only to the forest spirits, not to the river spirits.

The reading of G and B (Skt. utsukpayati, utsukayati), “to cause to yearn,” does derive some support from utkāyastam in 3.33 [7d]; BN translates as uccẖvāsayati, “revive.”

The exact nuance here is unclear: does this imply that Sitā believes Rāma had renounced righteousness when he exiled her?
At all events, it is obvious that Sītā like everyone else (except Rāma himself) endorses the execution of Śambūka.

3.46 The short -i form is read by both G and B; the word is hapax in Bh.

3.47 N, G, V’s nīrto janaḥ, “[to which] this man [i.e., Rāma] is devoted,” seems somewhat redundant.

3.56 I hesitantly accept Ne (which, erroneously in my view, drops the maṁ); almost equally good is N’s manṣiadi (manṣya-te), “should be thinking.” BN, B’s reading (Skt. mārgiyati), “should search for,” anticipates too much.

3.62 N, K [though not G himself, who has saṁ- rather than asaṁ-] read puno asambhāvatutugaladdha- (see also below endnote to 3.125), whose authenticity is suggested by its obscurity, which however has stumped me. BN gives the chāyā: vajra-majīm … asambhāvita durlabhadarśanām (i.e, addressing me whom he had never expected to see again; asambhāvita and durlabha seem redundant). N’s reading here, -tugaladdha, is obscure to me, though its very obscurity suggests its authenticity (the phrase seems to be unattested elsewhere).

3.69 As the two emendations made here show, N’s readings can be at once less expected (sādāmaṁ for tudā maṁ) and simpler (note that BN also omits -mā.ṇasa-) than B’s.

3.94 “Good fortune,” kalyāṇa. N (citing the Mātangaśāstra) calls attention to the technical sense of the word when used of elephants, alluding to their physical grandeur and strength in battle. But more likely the poet is hereby referring to the luck of having benefited from Sītā’s maternal care.

3.97 The allusion is no doubt to the incident recounted in Act 1.107.

3.99 It is unclear whether this means: like Rāma (i.e., in appearance), or (with N) like the young elephant (i.e., in strength and daring), or whether the boys have simply grown up the way the elephant has.

418
N’s īsikalida (īsatkalita-) is preferable since īsat typically requires a verb and only with considerable awkwardness can be made to modify vināda directly.

N (first interpretation) is correct here, I believe (“feel for a moment as if I have received the gift of a happy life”), not K (“a woman with a family”).

As N explains, “after the birth of a child a transformation of consciousness is inevitably produced, which unites the hearts of a man and woman even when they were previously not much in love.” (V is adrift on the compound, which he takes as a samabhāradvandva, “love-and-closeness,” and the ablative as nimittā of the “knot of bliss”).

Though I follow N here, the phrase padatāndava strikes me as dubious.

C disagree sharply about a–b, and the lines are indeed complex. B and N agree in their reading, which I accept. BN correctly notes bhrami.su arthā tava bhrami.su. According to N the pādas are meant to prove that Sītā has the skills for teaching the peacock how to dance. The brutally literal sense is: “beautifying her eye, of which a circular movement was made within the sockets, by means of the tāndava dances…”

It is not entirely clear what Vāsanti intends. N believes the implication to be that, imagining Sītā present before her, Vāsanti is rebuking her for her indifference, though this strikes me as improbable.

Three time-periods are referred to in this verse: before Rāma and Sītā were married, during their married life together, and the present (which makes te essential, pace K). B’s navam navam is not only contradicted by all C but is very awkward, given the need for a predicate. N’s -sjāmys (for B’s so ‘yam; G, V’s -chāpl) is less certain. He explains that Rāma’s paleness is a result of brooding, and his darkness a result of sleeplessness.
I translate B (Ne, G) but one wonders whether the reading isn’t a learned emendation for that of N (V), paśya priyaṃ bhīṣyab, “Look further on your beloved,” i.e., take your time gazing. I see no point in Tamas’s offering a blessing at this juncture in the narrative.

Again note the reading of N, tulgalakādhā (above endnote to 3.62).

N hears iley in this verse, unnecessarily in my view.

Pace K I see no problem with the compound prasavodbheda (read by B, N, and G) except for the word order.

I accept N’s reading in place of B’s, given that Bh typically uses anurudhya in the sense of “comply with, acknowledge.”

The precise sense of this phrase is unclear, but it is altogether unlikely that Rāma should be taken as speaking ironically (S) let alone as leveling a criticism against the people, something he refrains from doing throughout the play (note that he is still obsequious to them in verse 3.163 [33]). It may be instead that he cannot bring himself to utter the reason. The phrase echoes part of the poet’s celebrated self-defense in MM 1.6 (jñanteti te kim api) cited in the Introduction (Somadeva Vasudeva, personal communication), where the sense is close to “they may have some point.” G believes it expresses shame.

B’s placement of the line, immediately after verse 3.147 [28] (where it would mean “The reproach comes at last”), is impossible in view of the agreement of Ne and N, who however disagree about the reading itself. N has upalambhā and rather simplistically understands this as further explanation of Rāma’s statement: “Because she recovered [Sītā] so late” (that is, because she had lived with another man). Ne (with G, V) reads upalambhā but this cannot be taken sarcastically (“A rather too late criticism”), given that, as just noted, Rāma consistently refuses to blame the people. The translation aims to capture some sense of this refusal.

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3.154 G, V alone add before this a.ņa via (aņya iev), “like any other [i.e., undisciplined] person” (see § ad loc.), but this is certainly an interpolation—as the agreement of Ne, BN, and N virtually assures—to explain the slightly unanticipated asī (api).

3.158 I agree with N—and compare the following verse—that this is another one of Rāma’s troubles, not part of the blessing (so K).

3.163 BN tries to square the use of the singular mām (also read by Ne) in c over against the plural in d. The reading of N, adya-mābhīs, has merit.

3.170 “Honey,” madhu: Possibly instead “liquor,” thus explaining mohita in Śiśa’s preceding statement.

3.172 “Heated arrowhead” follows BN; or perhaps “flaming.” “Athwart,” tirsicīnam, in accordance with N and as vague as the Sanskrit. In truth I fail to see how a dart embedded obliquely would be any more painful than one embedded straight (so K).

3.175 B’s reading is hard to construe with ujjrmbhāna.

3.185 viśvām (N) would seem to be an emendation or corruption of viśvai (G B), which I therefore accept, though the resulting intransitive use of athagayati remains awkward (Ne reads the hypometric viśvai-). There is a similar v.l. in MM 9.20, where the verse is repeated.


3.201 I retain B’s (Ne) ollavantena (ollāpayata), dubious though it is (G V’s ollāhaantaena, [ollāghavatata], is presumably a lectio facilior). N reads avunuddanteṇa (avunudatata).

3.204 “Now you know,” i.e., but did not seem to know when you disowned me (so essentially N). In addition to sense, the echo with v. 3.203 [41cd] (āsa eva) indicates that the reading of B, despite its wide support, should be rejected.
The following verse and the succeeding prose show that Sītā must here be referring to herself, and thus N's reading alone can be correct.

The reading pravilayaḥ is certified by the agreement of N and Ne (I am assuming that Ne's pravilayaḥ is ditography) and by SP pp. 1544, 1632. In c, by contrast (here pace SP), -rāṣa- must construe with vimardair, not with viyogo.

The references recapitulate the chronology of the recovery of Sītā from Lāṅkā.

N reverses the subjective and objective genitives here (erroneously, given the next sentence).

I follow N here.

I agree with V (who glosses apūrvurāpakanirimaṇam; N misses the critical metalinguistic reference, glossing "acts done in a previous birth, in short, the fickleness of fate"). The word's rare technical sense is found in the prastāvanā of the lost Rāmābh-yudaya of Yaśovarman (suddhābh prastutasaṁvidhānakaśvidhau, "purity in the construction of the relevant plot," cited SP p. 712).

Mitrashī correctly explains that this verse refers only to the present play, and that the different forms of karuna are a result of the different characters feeling the pity—Rāma, Sītā, Jana-ka, Kausalyā, Vāsanti, and so on (1974: 281).

N spells out the implications here: Earth is the mother of Sītā; Gaṅgā is the family deity of the Rāghu clan; "others like us" means other forest and river deities.

N notes that the wild rice is meant for ascetics, buttered rice for Brahman guests.

A much disputed reading. N offers (I give only the chāpyāḥ here) sāvateṣabhītaajīrṇākārvāṇam (the graybeards and as yet unreceived guests [?]); BN āgatam anuādhyaṇakārvāṇam saviṣṭeṣabhītaam adya jīrṇākārvāṇam. I see no propriety for B’s viṣṭeṣato but also see no simple way to revise it.

uttaramacarita R 422 (422, 0)
NOTES

4.10 B’s vakka in the sense of vyka seems to be unattested; K reads vio, which is also hapax in Bh

4.31 N glosses durita as pāpa, BN as dukkha.

4.31 BN glosses manya as krodha, N as dukkha (Amara supports both). See the use of the word in Act 4.54, which vindicates BN.

4.32 An allusion to Isa Upanisad 3 (so V). K takes andhatāmisrah as the proper name of a hell, which would be improbably pedantic of Bh and more troubling than the slight redundancy with “sunless.”

4.32 I follow N (cintayā) and V (vicārena) though this is not the typical meaning of the word in Bh (see, e.g., Act 1.198 [48]; 4.55: 4.139 [23]; 4.146 [25])

4.32 The syntax may be a bit awkward but earlier usage (Act 2.57) shows that this is meant as the common general exclamation (very frequent in Prakrit, e.g., Sattasa), and is not specifically addressed to Sitā (pace N [“mother in the sense of someone who ‘brings distinction on our family’”], S).

4.35 I agree with N, who understands this optatively.

4.52 An allusion to Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (5.14), appropriately given that Janaka is a central figure in that text.

4.54 Going first to the sacrifice of Ryaśṛṅga and then to Vālmiki’s ashram, Kausalyā avoided seeing Rāma from the moment he abandoned Sitā—that is, for twelve years.

4.56 That is, her name itself is guarantee of her purity; she has no need of purification by fire.

4.66 Only B reads -niṣṭhuram. N’s -viṣṭhurānam is an attractive variant.

4.69 To regard Sitā as daughter rather than daughter-in-law has a special significance in the Indian context, where the relationship of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is traditionally a fraught one.
The compound is obscure. C interpret as “vacation due to the arrival of learned persons,” which Janaka would hardly use of himself (though Vasiṣṭha and Arundhati could be meant). The conjecture sitya- suggests itself, unless that be thought redundant.

4.81 Glossed savitaḥ by N, citing the Subdaratnakara.

4.83 See Śita’s words above in reference to the young Rāma, Act 3.122 [23].

4.83 The correct anuvya is given by N: kah ayam deṣṭah ... -aṅjava-nam kurute. Ś’s construction, of kurute deṣṭah as some sort of passive verbal phrase, is improbable.

4.86 The reading apashy seems a patent and awkward emendation for apare designed to save the poet from a supposed solecism (expect aparasmīna, and note the “erroneous” use of both -e and -emi in Prakrit, Mall, 1928: xxxviii; Bh’s many small ungrammaticalities are noted passim in the commentary of S).

4.93 The reading iṣi- (ṣi-) strikes me as dubious (N, V read -aṣesa-[-aśes-]) though obviously not impossible. BN glosses rīṣiṇaṁ dānakāḥ pālakāḥ.

4.95 BN calls attention to the difficulty of construing this adjective in the simile, for if (as N and V also assume) the verse forms a single sentence, then parilaghu must formally parallel “extraordinary [degree].” I accordingly understand the second half of the verse as a separate sentence, parilaghu then paralleling the implied “boy,” who is at once small but powerful.

4.96 I do not see how -paryya can mean “according to your rank and order” (K) when Lava has just said he does not know their rank and order. I follow N.

4.99 See endnote to 1.81. Arundhati’s words are spoken in soliloquy, and are not meant to be heard by Kausalyā (as the stage direction appuvṛya strictly used would require).

4.121 Logically necessary though read by no ms.
NOTES

4.146 N preserves the correct attribution; see K’s sensible remarks, and contrast S’s convolutions. For the sentiment (now in the mouth of Rāma), see act 6.50 [14]. (Mall 1918: xxxvii comments on Bh’s predilection for dividing single verses between or among speakers.)

4.149 Kumāra cannot mean prince since the boys are unaware of Lava’s paternity.

4.152 The verse is not supposed to be sarcastic: the schoolboys had lived their whole lives in the forest and had never before seen a horse.

4.157 BN reads (in the chāya) na jīvāntvā, “I feel no longer alive.”

4.174 Ne, N, G, V all read jālmān, and see Act 5.26. But the vocative is used in the next speech (capala).

4.177 B’s translation indicates he meant to print saumyāpūrv- (so Ne), which remains, however, a rather odd epithet.

5.1 I take this as a singular (Candraketu’s heroism is not at issue), despite the title of the next act, which is presumably intended as a dual. N (alone among the C) remarks on this act—which contemporary readers are likely to find intrusive—with the observation that “[The author] is here concerned to produce an act marked by the composition of a narrative characterized by rasa, because a narrative devoid of rasa and bhāva cannot be considered fully developed.” He means, I believe, that this is the act in which are displayed all the rasa beyond those that dominate the rest of the play, (vipralambha-)śringāra and karunā (as well as hāsyā, it would seem, which is closely allied to śringāra, see above on Act 2). N remarks on the production of these other rasa frequently in his commentary on the act. See for example his note on v. 5.14 [6], “In this verse we find a mixture (sanbhāra) of all six rasa, that is, excluding śringāra and hāsyā”; on v. 5.36 [11] he comments on the “transition” between feelings (jālañā) that make up the heroic “energy” (aus-ātra) in the verse, and on v. 5.47 [14] he notes the mixture of
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the nasas of fury and amazement that function subordinately to the nasa of the heroic in the verse

5.2 A type of tree, meant here as an insignia.

5.5 A form of tonsure traditional for particular Vedic lineages; see, e.g., Pārvatimāmāśāṣṭānī 1.3.16, 17.

5.7 It is hard to believe that Bh would have written the verse as printed in B, requiring an impossible syntax (impossible at least to my eyes) of the locative in a with -śara- (along with śīpekattva, since it is embedded in a compound.) in d. N’s samvṛtah saiśvastvanphal looks like an emendation but it is at least intelligible. Equally hard is taking c as an adverb; this I emend in accordance with all C.

5.9 “Same,” i.e., as Rāma’s. The awkwardness originates in the Sanskrit, which defers the referent of tuṣa- until the next line.

5.11 The agreement of Ne and N on the rare samabhareṇa (G, V, madabhareṇa; BN, samabhareṇa), already persuasive, is corroborated by the reading of the C in the companion verse, Act 5.39 [12]d (where B’s parikaras seems a patent simplification).

5.15 And therefore, presumably, have learned of their commitment to preserving their honor in combat at all costs.

5.26 My reading and understanding are corroborated by v. 5.36 [11] b, paścād bhalair anuvrataḥ. B’s yuddhabhisārenah, though confirmed by Ne, seems patently inferior.

5.27 A fire-breathing mare believed to live in the ocean and to keep it from overflowing by burning the water. The god Indra cut off the wings of mountains, some of which fell into the ocean.

5.40 At Candraketu’s suggestion that Lava is an unworthy opponent (N).

5.45 Literally, “seizing and releasing” (note the N reads svastamuktam). I follow BN’s explanation: tamaḥsanbandhena grastam vidyutsanbandhena muktam.

uttararamacaritaR 426 (426, 0)
5.53 For pratiṣṭhāna (supported by Ne but otherwise not found in Bh’s works) N’s pratīṣṭhāna, “proven hero” (used in Act 6.5 and twice in MVC) may be preferable.

5.56 So BN: grahamaitṛyādi jyotih lāṭrapnaiiddham. Or “eye-love,” according to V.

5.57 Bhoja cites the verse in ŚP p. 662, corroborating the reading of C.

5.59 N, “softened in the process of ritual purification.” Is there a slight inconsistency in investing Lava, raised in the forest, with this accoutrement?

5.60 Literally, “by which even the most tremendous force is overcome” (preferring N to V or K).

5.61 In such a phrase this would normally be translated as “character” or “nature” were it not for the reflexive, metaliterary quality of Bh’s writing throughout the play (see Introduction).

5.67 Translated in accordance with the argument in the previous note. Otherwise sahasārikaraṇa- would mean simply “of pure recklessness.”

5.83 An allusion to the most famous of all Rigvedic mantras, the Gāyatrī.

5.89 B’s yathocitam strikes me as barely possible though it has no support among C or mss. consulted (N yaṭācāritām; Ne yaṭācāritām) and is grammatically dubious.

5.91 B’s api matsarāḥ is supported by BN; N reads avimatsarāḥ, which amounts to the same thing. The implication in either case however is not entirely clear to me.

5.98 N: Am I to fulfill my obligations in only some instances—i.e., and not in a case relating to Rāma? Less strictly and hence less likely V: rights for which only some— Rāma—are authorized. The sense of “qualities” (B) or “virtues” (K) is not pertinent here.

5.100 G, B’s nātīnirvaktum may appear to be strange enough to be authentic, but it is completely unattested in Sanskrit. Ne’s na
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tu nirvaktuṁ looks like a lectio facilior. The southern reading adopted in the text may have been disfavored because of the relatively rare use of arhati with a direct object.

5.104 N's second explanation; less likely is his first "some new breed of man, or hero."

5.106 N's bum varate (glossed "Bah! Keep them hidden" on the basis of a text unknown to me called the Arjuyativṛtāṇa) may well be the original for which B's reading is a simplification. It is also given by Kṣemendra in Aucityavīcāracaritā p. 10.

5.106 Literally, "face-front," with the implication "but moving backward," following V's explanation ("he uses the phrase 'face-front' since he is too disgusted to actually say 'turning his back'"), which also preserves the sarcasm that we are to hear in "finesse." BN v.l., G, B's kusumukhāni is unattested. BN's aku-tobhayāni, "fearless," is the easiest reading of all but can hardly be original, since it leaves unexplained how the more difficult ones could have displaced it.

5.106 Three of Rāma's most questionable deeds were slaying a woman (Sunda's wife Tāṭākā), retreating in battle (with the demon Khara, brother of Rāvaṇa), and killing an enemy (Indra's son Vālin, king of the monkeys) from within a place of concealment.

5.110 N, "groundless," since they don't know that they are cousins, but this is inappropriate for later uses of the word (e.g., Act 6.6).

6.2 Not all repetition is significant, and -udbhānta seems to be a case in point (pace S), see Act 5.110 [36].

6.4 B's aṇamadānum (G's aṇamadānum is a lectio simplicior) is supported by BN and found in MM (9.33a). N reads aṇanda-.

6.5 N takes this literally: the buds were jewels, as the lotuses were made of gold.

6.12 Women do not say such things in Sanskrit poetry, but B's aṇa-namandamaundanaḥdharmoṣṭhale is supported by BN, and
N’s alternative (at least on his explanation of it) is not much of an improvement.

6.20  *potasticalo* seems odd enough to retain (and is supported by BN, G, V); N reads *kodamdo*, with greater narrative relevance (given the reference to Śambūka in the next line).

6.28  N observes, “The idea here is that Rāma’s heart is burning at having failed to pay his debt to his ancestors by renouncing his wife (and so failing to father a son), but by embracing Candraketu, who is carrying on the family line, his pain is assuaged.”

6.32  The world (so N, V). Possible also: the treasure that is the Brahmans (BN); the treasure of the Brahmans; the treasure that is the Veda.

6.33  See 4.103 [22]. The parallel makes improbable N’s gloss, “to be beheld only through the power of good karma,” and V’s, “whose countenance and majesty are pure.”

6.37  It is improbable that Rāma is addressing Candraketu, and so it might seem that the addition of the stage direction “aside” is necessary, though it is not reported by any ms. but then the same might be thought of Lava’s preceding speech.

6.38  N: “It is impossible to say for sure whether the blossoming of the lotus and the running of the moonstone are dependent or not on the touch of the rays as their cause. As in the case of fire’s burning upward and wind’s blowing crosswise, the cause cannot be fully grasped by the mind. The same is true in the case of the affections.” See also Jagaddhara on MM 1.27, where the verse is repeated: “From the blossoming of the soft lotus petals at the rise of the sun with its harsh beams, and from the splitting of the hard stone at the rise of the soft-rayed moon we conclude that the cause of attraction must be something innate. What external cause can be found in either of these two cases?”
RAMA’S LAST ACT

6.45 The double comparison in B is awkward, and not alleviated by alliteration. N reads: ánditayati hi candana-. (V finds a hypermetrical mátra in the reading he shares with B, but I do not see where.)

6.46 Pace K, B’s duṣṭa-yogah is corroborated by N, who glosses “duṣṭa-yogah sannahanam.”

6.64 This follows the construction of N, who refers back to Act 5.39 [12].

6.95 B’s reading (translated “Is this boy my son?”) offers an inference that seems premature in view of Rāma’s reasoning in what follows.

6.102 The northern readings here, which B follows, show the general weakness of that recension. The variant kāntimat (sc., va-puḥ) seems designed to eliminate a putative error in the trope, whereby a feminine entity (kānti) is compared with a masculine (candra, emended to a neuter in BN, ratna) and a neuter (utpala), a difficulty noted and dismissed by N (lingabheda na virusatam avahati). It is impossible to believe that an emendation was made in the opposite direction. Aviyutasiddhāḥ (in place of avihita-), moreover, harmonizes with the other philosophical jargon used throughout the play. “In every part”: N glosses instead pratikṣaṇa-, “continuously” (so V); I agree with G’s implicit interpretation, which certainly construes better with the upamānas.

6.104 N, BN, G gloss taruṇa as young, that is, no longer a child (note Bh’s repeated use of kathorangarbhā, full-grown fetus).

6.104 Despite Ne, the reading -āśaḥ is attested in no C and seems hardly be translatable by “posture” (so B). Even BN agrees in reading -āsyaḥ here.

6.107 As N notes, -mudrā is basically otiose.

6.107 Literally “snare-like,” see the use of -pāśa in v. 6.128 [37] below. This is an upamitasmāsa; pāśa- cannot be a commendatory suffix to karna, as N notes.

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6.108 Act 1.69
6.115 N notes śīṣṭaparamparīṁ ca itad rāpakaṁ, but this is obscure to me (read śīṣṭa-?).
6.116 Comparable though not identical verses are found in the last sarga of Rāmāyaṇa 1.76.15–16 (which incidentally rules out N’s reading anvataṁ sarga).
6.120 “That lack all rasa,” -virasa-, more readily to be translated something like “that leave a bad taste in the mouth” were it not, again, for Bh’s metaliterary concerns here (see endnote to 6.28 [8]). This line is given quite differently in N, and it is impossible to decide on the original. N’s v.l., in literal translation: “your [Śītā’s] affairs of life that brought frustrated love with its incoherent reversals, and that ended only in a song of praise” (i.e., that in the end are simply gone and only provided matter for poetry).
6.127 N remarks, “The shame comes from his grasping that Vālmiki knew of those very private affairs; he smiles at Lava’s lack of full understanding; the deep affection Rāma feels comes from seeing the child’s complete innocence; his teary-eyed piteousness from remembering his abandonment of the woman who trusted him.”
6.127 Note the clear antiphony with Act 2.99. For atiprasaṅga- see Act 2.99 and Index s.v. B’s reading seems to be unattested elsewhere in Bh.
6.130 I take this as more of Bh’s display of mīmāṃsa learning; possibly, instead, “vision” (B, K). But Rāma just had the vision in the previous verse; why would he say it is now impossible?
7.2 Ne’s reading here, where it is not corrupt, corroborates N: mārtyāmāryaṣu devamānava yatiryaṁ anaranākaṁ aṁtarābhavasthā-vavo bhūtvamayab.
7.2 N perhaps correctly offers a v.l. that frames the sentence as a question: “Why is it that Vālmiki today… ” The point is that
no one is supposed to know Vālmiki’s plan for a performance intended to resolve the doubts about Sītā.

7.9 So far as I am aware, Lākṣaṇa is never shown to sit in Rāma’s presence. B’s reading, though old and hard to explain, seems to me therefore suspect.

7.12 The allusion is perhaps again (see endnote to 4.52) to Bhāradvājya Upaniṣad 5.14.4ff.

7.13 Bh typically uses bātāśa only of threatening creatures or things. Hence the reading of B (and Ne, BN, G) is to be preferred to bātāśaṁ (bātāśaṁ) of N, V (so also K).

7.17 I.e., Lākṣaṇa is back (literally, “look at Lākṣaṇa”). I adopt the reading of N, V, but without accepting their explanation (“have regard for Lākṣaṇa”). Ne shows a lacuna here.

7.19 The agreement with Ne and N is conclusive (N [V] interprets vipākāḥ [cf. Act 4.38 [6]] to mean the same thing as the reading of G, B). The addition of dātiṣidūs- does however serve to enhance the paradox (of a “fated” turn of events being owing to some person’s agency). And this paradox seems indeed to be part of Bh’s assessment of Rāma’s predicament. Observe that in Act 7.54 [7], Rāma is said to have been forced by fate to abandon Sītā; and note further the echo with Act 1.180[41].

7.23 I follow N here, who points to a rare use of pada (citing Amara). Possible too, though more banal, “where I cannot stand,” or, “where I cannot take a step” (V).

7.32 N: “This blessing is a ‘favor’ since there is no good fortune greater than once again accepting her who had earlier been rejected.”

7.37 N’s kalatāntaram is certainly possible (Sītā’s being rescued is “another benefit,” in addition to the birth of the sons), but is rendered improbable by the adversative tu. (Ne reads karuṣamātāntaram).

7.38 B’s reading mohagrasthbh may be an emendation for an original (and slightly awkward) mūhagrasthbh (preserved in N, V), of which Ne’s mūlagrasthbh may in turn be a mislection.
7.38 Or with Ne of rebirth (though Bh does use the word as translated here elsewhere in the play; see for example Act 7.48).

7.40 B’s eka is quite uncertain, but neither Ne’s trasto ‘ciram nor N’s sotha seems a compelling alternative.

7.42 I repunctuate B’s text, which is impossible as it stands. There are numerous variants, but without important change in meaning. Possibly correct is N’s vo (for va): “your dear Rāma,” sarcastically flagging Gaṅgā’s close ties to the Raghu clan, as their family deity (Act 7.29).

7.43 N tries to mitigate the tautology (ḥilenānena) by what seems a clear emendation.

7.44 Again there are multiple variants: N, “you are remembered”; BN, G, “I have been caused to remember you”; V, “do you remember?” None is especially compelling.

7.53 Neither the plural (pace K) nor the singular tava (N, V) seems quite right here. What is wanted is the dual.

7.64 N curiously glosses “your own body.”

7.74 Act 1.69

7.86 For Earth here to ask Sītā to depart, only to refuse in response to Sītā’s entreaty, seems completely inconsistent. It could only make sense if a distinction were being drawn between “purifying the netherworld” and dissolving into Earth’s body (thus B, in a note to his translation ad loc.; so also essentially K), and presumably it was there that Bh imagines Sītā to have dwelled during the twelve years of her repudiation (in the Uttararāmacarita she lived in Vālmiki’s hermitage). Still, this is improbable in itself, and Rāma’s following exclamation (“What, has Vaidēhi’s dissolution taken place?”) does not quite fit. It would improve things substantially if the line were deleted; yet all C support the reading of the passage, and I see no alternative to letting it stand.

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7.87  N, G, V read instead, “bear such humiliation.”

7.93  N reads differently, and understands, “He (Rāma) is the whole point of your poem.” G and V share his reading but interpret less metanarratively.

7.129  BN G (with variants) B [Ne lacuna] add: *Sītā: ammahe, tādo, kulaguru, ajjādā sabbattu a ajjā santādevī, salakkhanā sup-pasaṇā ajjaitaticalāna samam kusalavā vi disanti. tā nibbhara mhi āsāndeyya.* (‘Sīta: Why, there I see my father, guru of the clan, and my mothers-in-law, with their husbands, and my sister-in-law Shanta-devi with her husband, and my most honored and gracious husband along with Lakṣmaṇa, and Kusha and Lava too. I am filled to overflowing with bliss.’) The reference to Kusā and Lava is clearly inconsistent with what has just occurred.

7.136  I.e., respectively (*pace* K). N (implicitly) understands: like the Mother of the world the *Rāmāyana* is auspicious and removes all evils; like the Gaṅgā it is enchanting and affords the highest delight. One might have expected the two to be reversed. *madāt*: N, Mahāmāya; G, Lakṣmi; B, Earth (thinking back to the scene just concluded); V, “a mother” (construing *jagato* as objective genitive with *sreyasi*).

7.136  Bh ends as he begins, invoking the poets of old—here Vālmiki—and the powers of speech (that is, especially, his own, which replicate those of Vālmiki, see Act 2.30). For this reason, inter alia, I disagree with N and other C that *sabdabrahmavidaḥ* in *c* modifies both *budhāḥ* as well as *kaveḥ.*

Notes to the Edition

1.1  namovākam N BN G V : namovākam Ne B

1.4  anvavartata Ne N V : anvavartate G B

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NOTES TO THE EDITION

1.4 *prayokjyate* Ne N G V : *prayujyate* B

1.5 *kavi* Ne N V : *kārya-* G B

1.6 *deva* Ne N V : *rāja-* G V B

1.7 *sūtra(dhārā)*: evam etat add Ne B

1.8 *sūtradhāre* N G V *nātāh* Ne B

1.9 *nātāh* N G V *sūtradhāre* Ne B

1.11 om. B.

1.26 *-bhāga* Ne N V : *-bhāva* G B

1.48 *svaśāt* N G V : *tasmāt* Ne B

1.62 *parikrāmati* N G V : *parikrāmatah* B

1.78 *āgṛhita-* N G, V : *udgṛhita-* Ne BN B

1.80 *vi* G V (om. N) : *pi* [passim] B

1.91 *patara-* Ne N G V : *pratara-* BN B

1.91 *kudmalair* Ne N V : *kuntalair* BN G B

1.91 *kusumair* Ne N V : *mukulair* BN G B

1.91 *angānām* N V : *anbhānāṃ* Ne BN G B

1.100 *udatitarat* Ne N G V : *udadidharat* BN B

1.105 *-sampāta-* Ne N G V : *-satijāta-* B

1.107 *aṣṭaśūtrasahattadhāra-vatadvatadvante* N G : *aṣṭaśūtrasahattadhāra-vatadvatadvante* N G

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1.109  -parirabdha- N G V : -parinaddha- Ne B
1.110   -nirām N : -tirām Ne G V B
1.112  āsakti- N G V : āsati- Ne B
1.112  avicalita- Ne N : avirālita- G V B
1.112   eva N BN G V : evam Ne B
1.118 -karaṇaṇair N G V : -karaṇaṇair B
1.111    lagati N : lathati Ne G V B
1.131  mayā N V : bhūvo Ne G B
1.176  evam eva Ne : evam evam B
1.177 -samevā N V : -samevā Ne G B
1.187  evam eva Ne : evam evam B
1.188  vavasidaṃ Ne N BN V : ajjhasidaṃ G B
1.197  kāṣṭha- Ne N V : kāṣṭha- G B
1.207   īnāyāṃ N : (iu)īlagbyāṃ Ne G V B
2.27   avyatikīṁavānāṃ N : avyatikīṁāṃ Ne G B
2.29    nūtanaī N G : nūṣanaī- Ne V B
2.39 -vāstu- N : -bandha- B
2.39    prasāgīrṇāṃ Ne N : prasāgīrṇāṃ G V B
2.39  -dṛṣṭām Ne N : -dṛṣṭām G V B
2.41  evam eva Ne : evam evam B
2.47  matir N : vāco Ne G B
2.64  -ōkampena Ne N G V : -ōkampena B

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2.64 -klänta- N G V : -känta- Ne BN, B
2.77 -garta- N G V : -garbha- B
2.77 -vindhyaja- Ne N : -aranya- G V B
2.85 priyāsma Ne N BN : priyāsma G V B.
2.98 vitatānokahāyāmalaśir N : vitatāyāmalaśokahāśir Ne G B
2.100 parabhūtah N V; ghanabhūtah G B (ghanabhūtah Ne)
3.4 anirbhino N G V : anirbhīna- Ne BN B
3.5 prakarṣaṃ Ne N : prakarṣa- B
3.11 idiāṃ vinipatte N : idiāsāṃ vipāko Ne G V B
3.12 grahāpacāra- N : grahācāra- Ne G V B
3.31 uddhrāsare N : usūavedi G B
3.36 bhaṇisadi Ne: maggisadi BN B
3.62 vi puṇo N BN G V : via puṇo Ne : B via
3.64 kilisio via (kidiśi vi Ne) me hiāvattāha N Ne (G V) : kidiśi via me hiāvattāhado BN B
3.66 ghaṭānāt stambhitam N G V : ghaṭānātstambhitam Ne B
3.68 ānādayati N G V : ādṛdrayati B (ādṛdrayati Ne)
3.69 agādhbadamīdaśānehasabāhā (-sahāvā Na) Ne N : agādhbhadā-
3.69 naśadaśādākehasambhārā G V B
3.69 sītāma Na N : suda mae BN B
3.94 -mālāt Ne N G V : -pārāt B

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3.102  -kalīda- N : om. Ne BN G V B
3.108  atutipadatātādāvotavānte svayam N : atataruṇamadatātādāvotavānte ayam Ne (-ansād) B
3.112  nava nava N G V : navam navam Ne B
3.112  Ne reads -karuṇāḥ, see 1.118 [28] and endnote to 1.118.
3.112  pāṇḍuśījāmaḥ N G V : pāṇḍub so 'yam Ne B
3.125  viṣvettī N : viṣvatī B
3.128  -icīyataḥ Ne N G V : -icīyatiḥ B
3.137  anubādhyā N : anurūdhyā G V B
3.138  iti mūryati Ne N G V : mūrchati B
3.173  puṣo Ne N BN : om. G V B
3.174  atinirūsakya N (atiniruktampa- Ne) : atinīskampa- G B
3.174  -priyavastu- N : -tattatpriyavastu- G B
3.175  belo- Ne N : lolo- BN B
3.175  -karuṇ- Ne N BN G V : -karuṇ- B
3.175  iva Ne N G V : eva B
3.176  pamūsia- Ne N G V : pupphurida- BN B
3.189  -jīva- Ne (-jīva- N) : -jīvita- BM G V B
3.191  kaṣṭam Ne N : katham G V B
3.204  so eva. dāntim jāntuṣi N : so jjevva dāntiṃ si tuṃ Ne BN G V B
3.213  pājjavatthāvemī N : pājjavatthāvēdi Ne G B
3.230  avya evāyaṃ adhunā pralayo N (G V viparyayo, pace K) : anvartha evāyaṃ adhunā pralāpo Ne (with v. l.) B

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3.231 -rasāh N : -rasah Ne G V B
3.233 katu Ne N V : kathām G B
3.231 tu praviśayah Ne N V : tv a_patvita vidhah BN G B
3.234 -visaye N V : -vistayah Ne B
4.4 -kuccānam N BN G V : -kuccānam B
4.17 kalpam add BN G V B
4.49 sumārida N G V : sambhavāda BN B
4.49 anuḥtibida- N BN : anechha- B
4.83 iva N : api G V B
4.86 'pare v.l. V : 'panah N G V B
4.95 -śīrṇa N V : -śītra- BN G B
4.96 satah N V : svatatha G B
4.104 sumarasi N G V : sambharasi B
4.146 lāvah N : arundhati G V B
4.151 aye N (V aye) : om. G B
4.157 vaṭiṣṭisā N G V : vaṭeṣṭīmi Ne B
4.162 praviṣṭa N G V : om. Ne B
4.175 adya Ne N G V : anya B
4.177 so py apūrṇ- N G V : saumyapūrṇ- B

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5.2 sudhāsta- N G V : udghāta- B
5.7 samśaya- N G V : sāvataḥ sainyakāye G B
5.7 -ghora- N G V : -am Ne B
5.11 samabhāraṇa Ne N : samabhāra- B
5.14 āgārjad- N G V : āguŗja- Ne B
5.26 prīthānu- N V : yuddhāḥhi- Ne G B
5.27 -helā- Ne N BN G V : -rena- B
5.39 samabhāra Ne N G V : paritarai B
5.54 uddīya N : prati G V B
5.57 -bhūtani Ne N G V : -marmāṇi B
5.58 uddīya N G V : omit B
5.71 apatirāpaṇa N G V : pratirāpaṇa Ne B
5.100 na hi nirbandham N V (K) : natiniraktum G B
5.106 tríyakuto- N V : tríṣi kuto- Ne G B
6.11 -patuṇṭatucuṭula- N : -patuṭara- Ne B
6.71 sakrodhākti- N : sādāhāsta- B
6.95 kim iti ayaṃ Ne : kim iti ayaṃ ca N V : kim apatyam G B
6.96 nijab snehau dehasaṛab Ne N G V (nij-) : nijanehadārabha sārab Ne B
6.96 īva baḥi N G V : īta īta Ne B
6.96 ekaḥ N G V : īva Ne B
6.96 (īva) sikto N (ava-) V : (īva) meṣṭo Ne B

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NOTES TO THE EDITION

6.102  *aviyata*- N G V : *avihita*- Ne BN B

6.102  *kāntim udbhedayanti* N G V : *kāntim ketayanti* Ne BN B

6.102  *candram* N G V : *ratanam* Ne BN B

6.102  *sva yathā* va N G V : *te manojīhā* B

6.104  *subandhurāmsayoh* N V : *abandhur utājaḥ* Ne B

6.105  -vānīja- Ne N V : om. B

6.107  *śukla*- N G V : *muktā*- Ne BN B

6.107  *vākta*- N BN G V : *naśa* Ne B

6.116  antye Ne K : *ante* B

6.125  *cirakatamandakini*- N : *mandākinicirakāta*- Ne G B

6.127  -atiprasāngaya N G V : -atilayaprasāngaya Ne BN B

6.135  -saṁvasthita- N G V : -saṁapadharita- Ne BN B

7.2  bhūh kim na N V : bhū bhūh adya G B

7.2  *matyāmartyadevāśuraśavaśaśaśuryaśeśavinaśaśaśuryaḥ* sāntarábhavaca-

rasthāvaro N : *sadevāsuratiryagvagandhakanikāyo jaṅgamah*

sthāvatai ca B

7.7  *kumāra*- Ne N G V : om. B

7.9  *upaviśta*- N G V : *upaviśtaḥ* Ne B

7.17  *avekṣaya*- N G V : *keśam apekṣaya* B

7.19  *vīpākaḥ* Ne N V : *datisudavipākaḥ* G B

7.31  *cāritrocitaḥ* Ne N G V : *cāritropacitaḥ* B

uttaramacaritaramyuna 441 (442, 0)
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7.38  upapalavah Ne NGV: anvupalavah B

7.40  ca Ne N: tu V B

7.87  sabhisa NGV: sabhamhi B

7.112  avi NV: om. Ne BN B
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Sanskrit words are given in the English alphabetical order, according to the accented CSL pronunciation aid. They are followed by the conventional diacritics in brackets.

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1.  h or r disappears, and if aḥ/a rather than this lengthens to aḥ/a. e.g. tān + lōkān = tāl lōkān.

2.  The doubling occurs if the preceding vowel is short. Except: aḥ+a=aḥ 1.
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