Mighty Rama then turned to Laksmana, who came and stood before him, hands cupped in reverence, begging that he might be allowed to go, in the very lead. “Saumitri, were you to go with me now to the forest, who would support Kausalya and glorious Sumitra? The mighty lord of the land, who used to shower them with all they desired, as a rain cloud showers the earth, is now caught up in the snare of desire. And once the daughter of King Ashvapati gains control of the kingdom, she will not show any good will to her co-wives in their sorrow.”

So Rama eloquently spoke, and Laksmana in a gentle voice replied to him with equal eloquence: “Your own power, my mighty brother, will no doubt ensure that Bhirata scrupulously honors Kausalya and Sumitra. The noble Kausalya could support a thousand men like me, for she has acquired a thousand villages as her living. I will take my bow and arrows and bear the spade and basket. I will go in front of you, leading the way. I will always be there to bring you roots and fruit and such other produce of the forest as is proper fare for ascetics. You shall take your pleasure with Vaidehi on the mountain slopes while I do everything for you, when you are awake and when you sleep.”

His words pleased Rama, and he replied, “Go, Saumitri, and take leave of all your friends. And those two divine, awesome-looking bows that great Varuna himself bestowed on Janaka at the grand sacrifice; the two suits of divine, impenetrable armor; the two quivers with inexhaustible arrows and the two swords bright as the sun— all was deposited in perfect order in our preceptor’s
Sāṅkṛtya nihitaṃ sarvam etad ācāryaṣaḍamanī. 
sa tvam āyudham ādāya ksipram āvraja Lākṣmaṇaṃ.»

28.15 Sa suhijjjanam āmantrya vanajāsāya niścitiḥ 
Ikṣvāku-gurum āmantrya jagrāḥ āyudham uttamam. 
Tād divyaṃ raghusaṃdūlaḥ sāṅkṛtaṃ mālayabhūṣitaṃ 
Rāmaśa taṣaśyām āsa Saumitrīḥ sarvam āyudham. 
Tām uvac’ ātmavān Rāmaḥ prītya Lākṣmaṇam āgatam: 
«kāle tvam āgataḥ saumya kāṅkṣite mama Lākṣmaṇa. 
Ahaṃ pradātum icchāmi yad idaṃ māmakāṃ dhanam 
brāhmaṇeṇbhyas tapasvibhyas tvayā saha paraṃtapa. 
Vasantiḥa dr̥ḍhaṃ bhaktīya guruṣu dvijaśattamāḥ 
teṣām api ca me bhūyāḥ sarveṣāṃ c’opajīvinām.»

Vasiṣṭhāputrāḥ tu Suyājīnām āryaṃ 
tvam ānayā’ āśu pravaraṃ dvijānām 
abhiprayāsyāmi vanam samastān 
abhīṣṭaṃ aparān dvijātān.»

So, resolved to live in the forest, he bade farewell to his 
friends and to the guru of the Ikshvākus, and gathered up 
the all-powerful arms. Saumitri, tiger of the Raghus, dis­ 
played to Rama all the divine arms, in perfect order still 
and adorned with garlands. When Lākṣmaṇa had come 
back, Rama, joyfully and with full self-possession, said to 
him, “You have come, dear Lākṣmaṇa, at the very moment 
I desired. I want your help, slayer of enemies, in giving away 
whatever wealth I possess to the poor brahmans, to the best 
of the twice-born who live here in firm devotion to my 
gurus, and in particular to all my dependents. Fetch at once 
the foremost of the twice-born, noble Suyājīna, Vasistha’s 
son. I will leave for the forest after paying homage to him 
and all the other twice-born men of learning.”

residence. Collect the arms, Lākṣmaṇa, and come back 
at once.”
29–36
RAMA RENOUNCES
ACKNOWLEDGING HIS BROTHER’S most just and welcome order, he left and immediately entered Suyājña’s house. The priest was in the fire-sanctuary, and after greeting him Lākṣhmāna said, “My friend, come visit the dwelling of the man who is doing what no man has ever done.” After performing the twilight worship he left straightaway with Saumitra and entered Rāma’s lovely, majestic house.

On the arrival of Suyājña, the master of the Vedas who shone like a fire ablaze with the offering, Rāghava and Sīta cupped their hands in reverence and approached him. Kakūstha honored Suyājña with gifts—magnificent arm-bands fashioned of gold, sparkling earrings, gems strung on golden chains, bracelets and wristbands, and many other precious objects. And then, at Sīta’s urging, Rāma said to him: “Take this necklace and golden chain to your wife, my dear friend. Here is a jewelled belt, too, which Sīta wishes to give you. She also wishes to bestow on you this couch with exquisite coverlets, adorned with a variety of gems. I have an elephant named Shatrū-jiya, given to me by my maternal uncle and worth a thousand others. I make you a gift of him, bull among the twice-born.”

So Rama spoke, and Suyājña accepted all the gifts and conferred gracious blessings on Rama, Lākṣhmāna and Sīta. As Brahma might address Indra, lord of the thirty gods, Rama then addressed his kind, attentive brother Saumitra with these kind words: “Summon the two eminent brahmans Agāstya and Kāushika and in homage shower precious objects on them, Saumitra, as crops are showered with rain. As for the learned preceptor of the Taittiriyas, the master of the Vedas who devotedly serves Kausālī with
RAMÁYANA II – AYÓDHYA

29.15

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his blessings—present that twice-born with a palanquin and slave girls, Saumitri, and silken garments to his heart’s content. And give precious objects, garments and money enough to content Chitra-ratha, the noble adviser and charioteer, who has lived with us so long. Present a thousand draft animals, two hundred oxen and a thousand cows, Saumitri, to provide for dairy needs.”

Then Lákshmana himself, tiger among men, gave the riches as ordered to the lordly brahmans, just as Kubéra, giver of riches, might have done. Now, after Rama had bestowed great wealth on each and every one of his dependents, he spoke to them as they stood before him choked with tears. “Both Lákshmana’s dwelling and the house belonging to me may be occupied until I return.” After speaking with all his sorrowful dependents, he turned to the keeper of the treasury and said, “Have the treasure brought.” His dependents then fetched all his treasure. And the tiger among men, with Lákshmana’s help, had the treasure distributed to the needy brahmans, young and old alike.

There came a sallow brahman then, by the name of Trijata Gargya, all the way up to the fifth courtyard without anyone stopping him. Reaching the prince, Trijata said, “Glorious prince, I am penniless and have many children. I must live by constant gleaning in the forest. Have regard for me.” Rama replied to him jokingly, “There are one thousand cows I have not yet allocated. You shall have as many as you can cover by hurling your staff.” In a frantic rush he girded up the rag around his loins and, brandishing his staff impetuously, hurled it with every ounce of his strength. Rama then said to Gargya, seeking to placate him, “You

29.19

Tataḥ sa puruṣāvyāghras tad dhanāṃ Lakṣmanāḥ svayam yath’ “ōktam brāhmaṇeṇdrāṇāṃ adadād dhanado yathā. Atri’ābravid bāspaṃkālaṃs tiṣṭhataś c’ōpaṃjivaṁ saṃpradāya baḥudravyaṃ ek’jikasy’ōpaṃjivaṁ, “Lakṣmanasya ca yad veṣma gṛham ca yad idaṃ mama aśūnyāṃ kāryam ek’jikam yāvad āgamaṇaṃ mama.”

29.20


29.21

Sa śaṃc tvaritaḥ kasyāṃ saṃbhṛntaḥ pariveṣṭya tāṃ
RAMAYANA II — ĀYODHYA

avidhya daṇḍam cīkṣeṇa sarvaipraṇena vegaṁ.
Uvāca ca tato Rāmas taṁ Gārgyaṁ abhisāntvayan:
manur na khala kartavyah parihaso hy ayaṁ mama.
Tataḥ saṁbhāryas Tīrṣṭaḥ mahāmūnir
gavāṁ anīkam pratigṛhya moditaṁ
yaśotālaśrīgzukīṁ pāpaṁmhiṁīṁ
 tad aśiṣāṁ pratyayāvadan mahīṁ jātmanāṁ.

RAMA RENOUNCES

must not be angry, truly. This was only a joke on my part.”
Then the great sage Tri-jata along with his wife accepted the
herd of cows and pronounced blessings on the great prince
conducive to fame, strength, joy and happiness.

Now, after the two Rāghavas and Vaidēhi had be-
stowed vast wealth upon the brāhmaṇas, they went to see
their father. How brilliant they looked when they took up
their formidable weapons, which Sita had ornamented and
hung with flower garlands. The wealthy townspeople went
up to the roofs of their palaces and mansions and to the tops
of many-storied buildings and watched despondently. The
streets were so thronged with people as to be impassable,
and so they went up to the roofs of the towers in desolation
gazed down at Rāghava. When the people saw
Rama going on foot and without the royal parasol, their
hearts were crushed with grief, and they said many differ-
ent things:

“The prince, whom a vast army of four divisions used to
follow as he went forth, is all alone now, with only Lākṣ-
mana and Sita to follow behind.” “Though he has known
the taste of kingly power and has always met the needs of
the needy, in his veneration for righteousness he refuses to
let his father break his word.” “People on the royal highway
can now look at Sita, a woman whom even creatures of the
sky have never had a glimpse of before.” “Sita is used to
cosmetics and partial to red sandalwood cream, but the rain
and the heat and the cold will soon ruin her complexion.”

“Surely it is some spirit that has possessed Dasha-ratha and
RAMÁYANA II — AYÓDHYA

«Nirgunaśy’ api putrasya katham syād vipraśvānam kiṁ punar yasya loka ‘yaṁ jito vr̥ttena kevalam?»
«Aṁṣaśyaṃ anukrośaḥ śrutam śilaṃ damaḥ śamaḥ Rāghavaṃ səbhayaṇty etc śadgunaḥ purus’ottamam.»

«Tasmāt tasy’opaghātena prajāḥ paramaśiḍitatāḥ audakāṇiva sattvāni griśme šaliśaṃkṣayāt.»
«Piṭayā piḍitam sarvam jagad asya jagatipateḥ múlays’ ēv’ ōpaghātena vṛkaḥ puspapal’opagaḥ.»

30.15 «Te Laksmaṇa īva kṣipram sapattyāḥ sahaśaṁdhavāḥ gacchantam anugacchāmo yena gacchati Rāghavah.»
«Udyānāni parityajya kṣetraṇī ca gṛhāni ca ekajñākhaṣukhā Rāmam anugacchāma dhārmikam.»

«Samuddhaṁidhanāni paridhvaś’ajirāṇī ca upātraḥdhanādhanāni hṛtāṁśa na sarvaḥ.»
«Rajas’ abhyavakirṇiṇi parityaktāṁ daivtaḥ asmatyaṅktāṁ veśāṁ Naikē prātippayatām.»

«Vanaṁ nagaram ēv’ āstū yena gacchati Rāghavah āśmābhiṣ ca pariyaktāṁ puraṁ sampayatāṁ vanaṁ.»

30.20 «Bilāni daṁśtriṇāḥ sarve sāṅūni mṛgapaśīṇaḥ asmatyaṅktāṁ prapatyaṁtāṁ sevyāṁstāṁ tyajantu ca.»

Ity evaṁ vividha vāco nānājanaśamīrītāḥ śuṣrāva Rāmaḥ śrutvā ca na vicakre ‘syā mānasam.
Pratikṣamṣaṇo ‘pijanam ṛdārtaṁ anjārtaṁ purhaśaṁ ēv ātāh

RAMA RENOUNCES

spoken today, for the king could never bring himself to ex­
ile his beloved son.” “How could a man force his own son
into exile, even an unvirtuous son, let alone one who has
vanquished the world simply by his good conduct?” “Benev­
olence, compassion, learning, good character, restraint and
equanimity—these are the six virtues that adorn Rāghava,
the best of men.”

“And so the people are sorely hurt by any injury to him,
like water creatures when the water dries up in the sum­
mertime.” “When the lord of the world is hurt so is all
the world, as the fruit and flowers of a tree are hurt by
an injury to its root.” “Let us at once take our wives and
kinsmen, and like Lākshmana follow Rāghava as he goes
forth, wherever he may go.” “Let us abandon our gardens,
our fields and homes, and follow righteous Rama, to share
his sorrow and joy.” “Let us unearth our buried treasure,
remove our stores of grain and our wealth, and take all our
valuables. And when the household gods have abandoned
them, and their courtyards are falling into disrepair and the
dust settling thick upon them, let Kaikēy take possession of
the dwellings we have left.” “Let us abandon our gardens,
our fields and homes, and follow righteous Rama, to share
his sorrow and joy.” “Let us abandon our gardens,
our fields and homes, and follow righteous Rama, to share
his sorrow and joy.” “Let us unearth our buried treasure,
remove our stores of grain and our wealth, and take all our
valuables. And when the household gods have abandoned
them, and their courtyards are falling into disrepair and the
dust settling thick upon them, let Kaikēy take possession of
the dwellings we have left.” “Let us abandon our gardens,
our fields and homes, and follow righteous Rama, to share
his sorrow and joy.” “Let us abandon our gardens,
our fields and homes, and follow righteous Rama, to share
his sorrow and joy.” “Let us abandon our gardens,
our fields and homes, and follow righteous Rama, to share
his sorrow and joy.”

Such were the kinds of remarks people were making one
after the other, and Rama heard them, but for all that he
heard his mind remained unmoved. And even when Rama
looked at the people in their anguish, not the least anguish
3r.1

when Rama dispatched him, the charioteer, his senses numb with misery, entered at once. He saw the lord of men heaving sighs. The wise charioteer gazed at him grieving over Rama in deep mental turmoil. He then approached with hands cupped in reverence. “Tiger among men, your son is here waiting at the door. He has given away all his wealth to brahmans and his dependents. Let Rama, who always strives for truth, come and see you, please. He has taken leave of all his friends and now wishes to see you. He is about to depart for the great forest. Lord of the world, grant him audience, a man whom all kingly virtues encircle as beams encircle the sun.”

The truthful and righteous lord of men, like the ocean in profundity and as free from taint as the sky, replied: “Sumantra, bring all my wives to me. I wish to see Raghava in the company of all my wives.” He went straight into the inner chamber and said to the women, “The king your husband summons you. Go to him at once.” So Sumantra spoke by order of the king, and all the women proceeded to their husband’s chamber in compliance with his command.

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RAMÁYANA II — AYÓDHYA

Evam uktāḥ striyāḥ sarvāḥ Sumantreṇa nrp’ājñāya pracakraṣmās tad bhavanaṁ bhur tur ājñāya śāsanam.

3.10 Ardhaśaptaśatās tās tū pramādās tāmra-locaṇāḥ Kausalyāṁ parivāryā’ ātha śaṅār jagmur dhṛṣṭāvrataḥ. Āgareṣu ca dāreṣu samaveṣya mahāpatiḥ uvāca rājā taṁ sūtaṁ: «Sumantra’ ānaya me sutam.» Sa sūta Rāmam adāya Lakṣmāṇaḥ Maithiliṁ tādā jagāṁ’ abhimukhas tuṁṣaṇaṃ sakaṣaṇa jagatīpateḥ.

Sa rājā putram āyāntaṁ dṛṣṭvā dūrāt kṛt’ānjalim utpāpaṁ’ āsanāt tuṁs tāntiḥ strījanaṁ vṛttaḥ. So ‘bhidudrāva vegena Rāmaṁ dṛṣṭvā viśaṇa paṭiḥ tam asaṃprāpya duḥkh’ārtah pāpāta bhuvī mūrcitaḥ.


Atha Rāmo muhūrtena labdhaśamjñāṁ mahāpatim uvāca prāṇjalir bhūtvā śok’ārṇava-paripravalītum: «Āryche tvāṁ mahāṛīja sarveśāṁ śiṣvār’ śi naḥ prasṛtiṁ Daṇḍak’āranyāṃ paśyā tvam kuśalena maṁ.»

Lakṣmāṇaḥ c’ anuvāniḥ Sita c’ āṃveti māṁ vanam kāraṇair bahuḥhis tathayir vāryamāṇau na c’ ecchataḥ. Anuvāniḥ sarvāḥ naḥ śokam uṣṭyā mānada Lakṣmāṇaḥ māṁ ca Sitaṁ ca Prajāpatir iva praṅāḥ.»

RAMA RENOUNCES

Half seven hundred ladies with coppery eyes, who held firm to their vows, gathered around Kausalya and slowly made their way. When the king and lord of the land observed that his wives had come, he said to the charioteer, “Sumantra, now bring my son.” Then, with Rama, Lakshmana, and Māthili, the charioteer at once came forward into the presence of the lord of the world.

Seeing his son at a distance approaching with hands cupped in reverence, the tormented king in the midst of his womenfolk started up suddenly from his throne. At the sight of Rama the lord of the peoples ran impetuously forward but, broken by sorrow, he fell to the ground in a faint before he reached him. Rama flew to him at once and so did Lakshmana, the great chariot-fighter, as the lord of men lay insensible with sorrow and lost in grief. And suddenly a shrill screaming broke out in the king’s chamber, as countless women cried, “Alas, alas for Rama!” the cry made all the louder by the noise of their jewelry. Rama and Lakshmana both took him in their arms and with Sita’s help they laid him on a couch, all three of them in tears.

After a moment the lord of the land, overwhelmed by a sea of grief, regained consciousness. Then Rama cupped his hands in reverence and said to him: “I ask leave of you, your majesty, for you are lord of us all. I am about to set out for Dāndaka wilderness. Look kindly on me. Give leave to Likšmana. Sita, too, shall follow me to the forest. Neither of them would be dissuaded despite the many sound arguments I offered. Have done with grieving, bestower of honor, and give leave to us all, to Likšmana, Sita, and me, as Praja-pati once gave his children leave.” Rághava waited...
intently for the lord of the world to grant him permission to live in the forest. The king looked at him and said, "Rāghava, I was deceived by Kaikēyi into granting a boon. Depose me now and become king of Ayōdhya yourself."

So the lord of men, his father, spoke, and Rama, champion of righteousness, cupped his hands in reverence and in full command of his words replied to him: "You shall be lord of earth, your majesty, for countless years to come, and I will live in the wilderness. You must not on my account act untruthfully. After I have passed the nine years and five of life in the forest, I shall once again clasp your feet, lord of men, when the promise is fulfilled." The king wept in anguish at the snare of truth in which he was caught. But under silent pressure from Kaikēyi, he said at last to his beloved son: "Go in safety, my dear son, and may no harm befall you. May your way be safe and free from all dangers, and lead you to good fortune, prosperity and home once more. But by no means must you go now, this evening, my son. Spend the night in the company of your mother and me. Tomorrow morning, with all your desires satisfied, you may set out."

When Rama heard the words of his anguished father, he was desolate, and so was his brother Lākṣman. He said: "Who will confer on me tomorrow the benefits I should have tonight? I prefer, to any objects of desire, merely to depart. I abdicate all claim to this treasure-laden earth, its kingdom and people, its stores of grain and wealth. Let it be made over to Bhrāta. Put an end to your sorrow, do not let tears overwhelm you. The indomitable lord of rivers, the ocean, remains forever unperturbed. It is not kingship
RAMÁYANA II – AYÓDHYA

na hi kṣubhyati durdharṣaḥ samudraḥ saritāṁ patiḥ.
N’ āiv’ āhaṁ rājaṁ ičchāmi na sukham na ca Maithilim
tvāṁ āhaṁ satyam ičchāmi n’ āntaṁ purusaśrābha.
Puraṁ ca rāṣṭraṁ ca maḥi ca kevala
mayā nisṛṭā Bharatāya diyatām
āhaṁ nideśam bhavato ‘nupālayan
vanaṁ ganiśyāmi cirāya sevitum.
Mayā nisṛṭāṁ Bharato mahim imāṁ
saśailaḥkhandam saipurāṁ saḵānānāṁ
śvāṁ susiṁāṁ anuśāstū kevalāṁ
tvāya yad uktam niṟgate yath’” āstu tat.

Na me tathā pārthiva diyāte mano
mahatu kāmeṣu na c’ ātmanāḥ priye
yathā nideśe tava śiṣṭaṁśamate
vyapaitu duḥkhaṁ tava maṭikṛte ‘nagha.
Tad adya n’ āiv’ āntaṁ rājaṁ avyayaṁ
na sarvaṁkāṁāṁ na sukham na Maithilim
na jīvaṁ tvāṁ anṛtena yojayaṁ
vṛṇyā satyam vrataṁ āstu te tathā.
Phalāni mūlāni ca bhāksayan vane
giriṁ ca paśyaṁ saritāḥ sarāṃsi ca
vanaṁ praviṣyā’ āva vicitrapādaṁ
sukhi bhaviśyāmi tav’ āstu nirvṛtīṁ.”

TATAH SUMANTRAM AIKŚVĀKHAŚ piḍito ‘tra pratijñāyā
saṁśāpam atinihśasya jagād’ ēdaṁ punaḥ punaḥ.
«Sūta ratnāsasaṁpūrṇā caturśaṁśitiḥpala ca maṁ
Rāggavasy’ anuyāt’ārthaṁ kṣipraṁ prativedhayātām.
Rūpājīva ca śālīnyo vaṣeṣa ca maḥādhanāṁ
śobhayantu kumārasya vāhiniṁ suprasāritāṁ.

OR COMFORT OR EVEN MĀTHILA THAT I DESIRE, BUT THAT YOU BE
TRUTHFUL, BULL AMONG MEN, NOT FALSE. THE CITY, THE KINGDOM,
AND THE ENTIRE LAND I ABDICATE. LET IT ALL BE GIVEN TO BHAṑTRA.
I WILL FOLLOW YOUR COMMAND AND LEAVE FOR MY LONG STAY IN
THE FOREST.

LET BHAṑTRA HOLD ABSOLUTE RULE OVER THE LAND I ABDICATE—
THIS KINDLY LAND WITH ITS FIRM BOUNDARIES, ITS MOUNTAIN
RANGES, TOWNS AND WOODLANDS. LET IT BE AS YOU HAVE SAID,
MY KING. NEVER TO THE SAME DEGREE HAVE I SET MY HEART ON
GREAT OBJECTS OF DESIRE OR MY OWN PLEASURE, YOUR MAJESTY, AS
ON YOUR COMMAND, WHICH MEN OF LEARNING ALWAYS ENDORSE.
PUT AN END TO YOUR SORROW ON MY ACCOUNT, MY BLAMELESS FA-
TER. IF IT MEANT ENTANGLING YOU IN FALSEHOOD, MY BLAMELESS
FATHER, I WOULD REJECT SOVEREIGN KINGSHIP, REJECT ALL OBJECTS
OF DESIRE, ALL COMFORTS, MĀTHILA, LIFE ITSELF. THE TRUTH OF YOUR
VOW MUST BE PRESERVED. THERE WILL BE FRUIT AND ROOTS IN THE
FOREST FOR ME TO EAT, MOUNTAINS, RIVERS AND LAKES TO SEE, AND
THE MOMENT I FIND MYSELF AMONG THE MANY-COLORED TREES I
SHALL BE HAPPY. YOU SHOULD FEEL JOY AS WELL.”

TORMENTED BY HIS PROMISE, AIKŚVĀKA HEAVED A DEEP
AND TEARFUL SIGH, AND THEN IN AN URGENT VOICE HE SAID TO
SUMANTRA: “CHARIOTEEER, I WANT AN ARMY, A FORCE OF FOUR
DIVISIONS, TO BE PROVISIONED WITH EVERY LUXURY AND MARSHALLED
AT ONCE AS ESCORT FOR RĀGHAVA. LET THERE BE EMINENT COURTE-
SANS TO ADORN THE PRINCE’S RETINUE AND PROSPEROUS MERCHANTS
Ramayana II - Ayodhya

Ye c' āinaṃ upaṇijantu ramate yaiś ca vīryataḥ
teṣaṃ bahulaṃḥ dātva tān āpy ātra niyojaya.

32.5 Nighnan mrgān kuñjaraṇiś ca pībaṇiś c' āraṇyaṃ ca mādhur nadiś ca vividhāḥ paśyan na rājyaṃ saṃṣmariṣyati.
Dhānya koṣaṇi ca yaiḥ kaś ca dhanākoṣaṇi ca māmakāḥ
tau Rāmaṃ anugacchetaṃ vasantaṃ nirjane vane.
Yajan punyeṣu deseṣu visrjantī c' āpta-jākṣaṇāḥ
ṛṣibhiś ca samāgamya pravatsyati suhaṃ vane.
Bharataś ca mahābāhūr Ayodhyāṃ pālayasyati
sarvajāmaṁ puṇaḥ ādīṃ Rāmaḥ saṃsādhyatāṃ iti.

Evam bruvaṇi Kākutshe Kākeyya bhayam āgatam
mukhaṃ c' āpy agaman cheṣaṃ svarṣa c' āpi nyarudaḥyata.

32.10 Sā vināraṇi ca saṃtrastā Kākeyi śākyaṃ abravīt:
«rājyaṃ gataidhanaṃ sādho pitaṃjanadhāṃ surāṃ
nirāsvyatamaṃ śūnaṃ Bharato n’ābhīpatsyate!»
Kaikeyyaṃ muktalajjāyaṃ vadantaṃ atidāruṇaṃ
rājā Daśarathō vākyaṃ uvāc’ āyatalocanāṃ:
«vahantaṃ kīṃ tudasi māṃ niyūja dhuri māhite?»
Kaikeyi śvāguṇaṃ kruddhā rājānam idam abravīt:
«tav’ āiva varṣe Sagaro jyeṣṭhaṃ putram upārudhat
Asamaṇja iti khyātaṃ tath’ āyaṃ gantum arhati.»
Evam ukto «dhiṅ ity eva rājā Daśarathō ’bravīt:
viditaś ca janaḥ sarvaḥ sā ca tan n’āvabudhyata.

Rama Renounces

with choice wares to display. Handsomely pay all his dependents and all whose acts of strength have pleased him and assign them to his suite as well. Killing deer and elephants, drinking forest liquor and viewing the different rivers he will not think with longing of the kingdom. The entire contents of my granary and treasury are to go with Rama while he lives in the desolate forest. His life in the forest will be pleasant, what with holding sacrifices at holy places, conferring fitting priestly stipends and consorting with seers. Great-armed Bhārata shall protect Ayodhya. Let majestic Rama be sent off with every object of desire."

While Kakūṭśha was speaking, Kaikēyi was gripped by fear. Her mouth went dry and her voice was choked. Pale and frightened, Kaikēyi spoke out: “My good man, Bhārata is not to take charge of a kingdom stripped of its wealth, like a cup of wine drained to the dregs, an empty kingdom without a single thing to whet his appetite!” So Kaikēyi viciously spoke, abandoning all shame, and King Daśa-ratha answered his large-eyed wife: “Will you yoke me to a burden, malicious woman, and beat me even as I bear it?” Kaikēyi’s fury was redoubled. “It was in your House,” she said to the king, “that Sāgara dispossessed his eldest son—Asamāṇja was his name. This one must leave in the same way.” “Curse you!” was all King Daśa-ratha could say in reply. And though the people were all ashamed for her, she paid them no mind.
32.15

Then an aged minister named Siddhártha, an honest man esteemed by the king, addressed Kaikéyi: “But Asamáñja was wicked. He took pleasure in seizing children playing on the road and then hurling them into the waters of the Sárayu. When the townspeople saw what he was doing they were all enraged and told the king, ‘Increaser of the realm, you must choose one: either Asamáñja or us.’ The king asked, ‘What has happened to cause this fear of yours?’ and the citizens responded to the king’s inquiry: ‘When our little children are out playing, this madman hurls them into the Sárayu and enjoys it to no end in his insanity.’ When he heard what the people said, the lord of men renounced his malevolent son in his desire to please them. It was thus righteous King Ságara renounced him. But what evil has Rama done that he should be dispossessed like that?”

After listening to Siddhártha’s speech, the king, in a failing voice and words fraught with grief, said to Kaikeyi: “I will accompany Rama today, renouncing altogether the kingdom, pleasure and wealth. And with King Bharata may you long enjoy the kingdom to your heart’s content.”

32.20

After listening to the minister’s speech, Rama addressed Dāşarathā with the deference in which he was practiced. “I have given up pleasures, your majesty, and shall live in the wilderness on things of the wild. I have given up all attachments; what use then have I of an escort? Would a man who gives away a prize elephant cling to the cinch-belt? Why cherish the rope once the animal is gone? So it is for me, too, best of men and lord of the world. What use have I for a banneered army? I must refuse it all.
Let them bring me only bark-cloth garments. Bring me a small basket, too, and a spade before I go to the forest to make my dwelling for fourteen years.”

Kaikēyi herself then brought the bark-cloth garments. “Put them on!” she said to Rāghava, unembarrassed before the crowd of people. The tiger among men took a pair of them from Kaikēyi, and, laying his delicate clothes aside, he dressed himself in the clothes of a sage. Lākshmīna too, then and there, removed his lovely clothing and put on the garb of an ascetic, in the presence of his father.

Then Sita, who was dressed in silks, glanced at the bark-cloth garment meant for her to wear, and she was frightened, like a spotted doe at the sight of a trap. Disconcerted and embarrassed, she took it up. Then she said to her husband, the very image of the king of Gandhāravas, “How do the sages who live in the forest put on bark cloth?” She picked one up in her hand and held it to her neck and stood there, the daughter of Jānaka, awkward and ashamed. At once Rama, champion of righteousness, came up to her and with his own hands fastened it over Sita’s silks. Dressed in bark cloth she stood there as if defenseless, though her defender was at her side, while the people all cried out, “A curse upon you, Dasha-ratha!” Aikshvāka heaved a burning sigh as he said to his wife, “Kaikēyi, Sita must not go in garments of bark and kusha grass. Surely it suffices you, evil creature, that Rama is being exiled. Must you heap these vile crimes on top of that?”
Rama renounces

With this, the king hung his head and sat still, and Rama addressed him once more before leaving for the forest: “Righteous father, Kausalya here, is an aged woman of noble character, and she does not reproach you, my lord. She has never known adversity before, and bereft of me she will be plunged into a sea of grief. Show her higher regard, please, granter of boons. Equal of great Indra, this mother of mine dotes on her child. Please, take care that she not be tortured with grief when I am in the forest, that she does not lay down her life and go her way to the house of Yama, god of death.”

Hearing Rama’s words and seeing him dressed in the clothes of a sage, the king, along with all his wives, was stricken senseless. He was so broken by sorrow he could not look at Raghava, so sick at heart he could not address him to his face. The great-armed lord of the land fell unconscious for a moment and then in sorrow he began to lament, thinking only of Rama: “It must be, I guess, that in the past I injured many living things or made many childless; that must be why such a thing has happened to me. Before one’s fated hour has come life cannot slip from the body, for Kaikeyi has tortured me and still I am not dead—I who see before me my own son, brilliant as fire, taking off his delicate garments and dressing in the clothes of an ascetic. The people, too, are tortured, and all because one woman, Kaikeyi, resorted to this deception in the pursuit of her own ends.” So he spoke, his eyes dimmed by tears. Then he cried out “Rama!” only once, and could speak no further.
When after a moment he regained his senses, the lord of the land, his eyes filled with tears, said to Sumántra:  
“Harness the finest horses to a draft-chariot and return; you must convey my illustrious son out of this country. Such, I guess, must be the reward the virtuous earn by their virtues, if this good and heroic prince is exiled to the forest by his mother and his father.”

Acknowledging the king's command, Sumántra left at a quick pace. He harnessed the horses to the decorated chariot and then returned to the chamber. Cupping his hands in reverence, the charioteer informed the prince that the chariot was standing ready, ornamented with gold and harnessed with excellent horses. The king hurriedly summoned the officer in charge of the treasury. He was a meticulous and altogether honest man, with an accurate knowledge of times and places. “Go at once,” he told him, “and fetch precious garments and choice ornaments for Vaidehi, calculating against the number of years.” Thus addressed by the lord of men, he went at once to the treasure-room and brought everything and presented it to Sita.

Noble Vaidehi, on the point of leaving for the forest, adorned her noble limbs with the sparkling jewelry. And in her rich adornment, Vaidehi shed a deep luster over the chamber—it was like daybreak when the radiant sun comes up and sheds its splendor over the sky. Her mother-in-law took Maithili in her arms and kissed her on the forehead, and then said to the virtuous princess: “If a woman who has been constantly gratified with things to please her does not hold her husband in respect when he has fallen low, she is regarded as a bad woman in the eyes of all the world. You...
Ramayana II - Ayodhya

Sa tvayā n' ávamantavyaḥ putraḥ pravrājito mama tavā daivatam asv eva nirdhānaḥ sajñhano 'pi vā.

Vijñāya vacanaṃ Sitā tasyā dharm'ārthaśaṃhitam kṛt'āŋjalir uvāc' edaṃ śvaśrūm abhimukhe sthitā:

«Kariṣye sarvaṃ ev' āham āryā yad anuśāsti mām abhijñāsī yathā bhartur vartitavyaṃ śrutaṃ ca me.
Na mām asajjanen' āryā samānayitum arhati dharmād vicalitum n' āham alaṃ candrād iva prabhā.

N' ātantrī vādyate viṃa n' ācakro vartate rathaḥ n' āpaṭīḥ sukham edhate yā syād api śat'ātmajā.
Mitaṃ dadāti hi pitā mitaṃ mātā mitaṃ sutaṃ amitasya hi dātāraṃ bhartāraṃ kā na pūjayet?
S" āham evamīgata śreṣṭhā śrutaḥdharmaṃpar" āvarā ārye kim avamaneyamaṃ? strii:ı: arhati dharmad vilāṭitur m' āham alaṃ candrād iva prabhā.

34.25 Sītā vacanaṃ śrutvā Kausalyā hyādayaṃgamam suddhaḥsattvā ātmāc cāṣṭrā sahasā duḥkhaharṣajam.
Tām prāṣṭṭhalir abhikramya mātrīmadhye 'tisaktātām Rāmaḥ paramādharmaajī mātraraṃ vākyaṃ abravit:

34.26 «Amba mā duḥkhīta bhūs tvan paśa tvan pitāraṃ mama kṣayō hi vanayāsasya kṣipram eva bhaviṣyati.
Suptāyās te gamisyaṃte navajvarṣāṇi pañca ca

Sita knew her words were in harmony with what was right and good and, with hands cupped in reverence, she faced her mother-in-law and replied: "I will act exactly as my noble lady instructs me. I fully understand how to behave toward my husband; I have learned well. My lady ought not to liken me to bad people. I could no more leave the path of righteousness than radiance can leave the moon.

34.30 Without strings a lute cannot be played, without wheels a chariot cannot move, and without her husband a woman finds no happiness, though she have a hundred sons. There is a limit to what a father can give, a limit to what a mother or son can give, but a husband gives without any limit. What wife would not revere him? I for my part understand this; I am a high-born woman who has learned right from wrong. My lady, how could I be disdainful? A husband is a woman's deity."

As Kausalyā listened to Sita, the words touched the good woman's heart, and she suddenly burst out in tears of joy and sorrow. Then Rama, who understood best of all the meaning of righteousness, cupped his hands in reverence and approached his mother where she stood in the place of honor among the others. And he said to her:

"Do not be sorrowful, mother. Have regard for my father. My stay in the forest will soon be over. The nine years and five will pass for you like a night's sleep, and you will see me come home safe and sound, in the company of my loved ones." These few sensible words were all he said to the woman who bore him. Then he turned his gaze and
looked at his other three hundred and fifty mothers. They were just as deeply anguished, and, with hands cupped in reverence, the son of Dasharatha addressed them with these righteous words: “If in our living together I ever showed you any rudeness, however unwittingly, please forgive me for it. I bid you all farewell.”

As Raghava spoke these words, a scream broke out like the crying of curlews, from the wives of the lord of men. The palace of Dasharatha, where once tambourines and bass drums rumbled like storm clouds, was now filled with lamentation and wailing, so bitter was the sorrow of this calamity.

IN DESOLATION RAMA, Sita and Lakshmana clasped the feet of the king. Then, cupping their hands, they reverently circled him. After taking leave of him, Sita and righteous Raghava, distraught with grief, did obeisance to his mother. Directly after his brother, Lakshmana did obeisance to Kausalya and then clasped the feet of his own mother, Sumitra. As great-armed Lakshmana Saumitra paid reverence to his mother, she wept and kissed him on the forehead, and with his welfare at heart she said to him: “You are determined to live in the forest out of deep loyalty to your loved ones. Do not be inattentive, my son, when your brother Rama is on his way. He is your one refuge in times of both adversity and prosperity, my blameless son. The way of righteousness good people follow in the world is just this: submission to the will of one’s elders. Remember, too, the conduct that has been the age-old custom of this House: liberality, consecration for sacrifice, and readiness to give up one’s life
RAMAYANA II — AYODHYA

Rāmaṇ Daśarathaṁ viddhi māṁ viddhi Janakātmajāṁ Ayodhyām ataviṁ viddhi gaccha tāta yathāsukham.

Tataḥ Sumantraḥ Kākutsthaṁ prāṇjalir vākyam abravit vinīto vinayajñāṣaṁ Mātālir vāsavaṁ yathā:

“Ratam abhodhī drāṣṭaṁ te rājauputra mahāyasaḥ kṣipraṁ tvāṁ prāpyaṁśaṁ yatra māṁ Rāma vakyasi. Caturjaśaṁ hi vārṣaṁ vastavyāṁ vane tvayā tāṁ upakramitavyāṁ yāṁ deva!” asi coditaḥ.

“Taṁ ratam sūryaśaṁkāṣaṁ Śīta hṛṣṭena cetasa āturoha varārōhā kṛtvā ālaṁkāram átmaṁ.

Tathā “āīvāyudhajātāṁ bhrāṭṛbhyaṁ kavacāṁ ca rathāṁ āvasthe pratīnyasaṁ saicarmakāthaṁ ca tāṁ.

Sitātṛtiyāṁ āruṭhāṁ dīṣṭāṁ dhṛṣṭām acodayat Sumantraṁ saṁmatāṁ aśvaṁ vāyuvegaśamāṁ jāve.

Prayāte tu maṁ āraṇyam ciraṇātḥāya Rāghave babhūva nagare mūrcchā balaṁ mūrcchā janasya ca.

Tat saṁkulaśaṁbhṛāntaṁ mattaśaṁkupitaṁ dvipam hayaśiśitaṁ nirghoṣanāṁ puram āśin mahāśvanam.

Tataḥ saṁbalaśraddhāṁ sā purī paramapādātā Rāmam evābhidudrāva ghamārtāḥ salilāṁ yathā.

Pārvatāḥ prṣṭhataṁ c’āpi lāmbamānaṁ tadunāmākāḥ bāspaṁpurnaṁākāḥ sarve tam śucor bhrāṣaṁdhukhitāṁ:

“Saṁyaccha vājināṁ rāmaṁ sūta yāṁ śanāṁ śanāṁ! mukhaṁ drāṣṭyāmī Rāmasya dūrdarāṇo no bhaviṣyaṁ.

RAMA RENOUNCES

in battle. Look upon Rama as Dasha-ratha, look upon Jána ka’s daughter as me, look upon the woods as Ayodhya. Go in happiness, my dear son.”

Then Sumāntra, hands cupped in reverence and with the deference in which he was practiced, addressed Kakūṣṭha as Mātāli might address Vāsava: “Be pleased to mount the chariot, glorious prince. I will at once convey you wherever you tell me, Rama. For you must now commence the fourteen years of life in the forest, which the queen has forced upon you.”

When fair-hipped Sīta had finished ornamenting herself, with a cheerful heart she boarded the chariot that stood gleaming like the sun. Sumāntra placed inside the chariot-box the brothers’ collection of weapons, their armor and the leather basket, and when he saw they both had boarded with Sīta, he briskly urged on the superb horses, in speed like the rushing wind.

As Rāghava set out for his long stay in the great wilderness, a wave of stupor passed through the city, overwhelming the army and the people. There was turmoil and confusion in the town, the elephants became wild and unruly, and the horses clanged noisily. The town was in utter agony. The people—young and old alike—began to run straight toward Rama, as men tormented by summer’s heat run toward water. Clinging to the sides and the back, they raised their tearful faces and in their bitter sorrow they all cried out: “Charioteer, draw in the horses’ reins, go slowly, slowly! Let us look upon Rama’s face, for soon it will be lost to our sight. Surely the heart of Rama’s mother must be made of iron if it does not break though her godlike
Ayasarµ hrdayarµ niinarµ Rama!matur asarµfayam
yad devalgarbhalpratime
vanarµ yati
na bhidyate.
Kftallqtya
hi Vaidehi chay''
ev' anugata
patim
na jahati ratä
dharme merum arkaiprabhā
yathā.
Aho Lakṣmana sideh'ārthah
sataṭam priyavaḍīnām
bhūtaraṃ
devaṃkāśaṃ
yas tavaṃ paricariṣyasi.
Mahaty eṣa hi
te siddhir eṣa
c' ōbhūdayo mahān
eṣa svargasya mārgaṣ ca
yad enam anugacchasi
evaṃ vadantas
te sōdhunā
na ōsekur bāśpam āgatam.
Atha rāja
vṛttaḥ
stribhir
dīnābhir
dīnacetanaḥ
nirjagāna:
»priyaṃ
putraṃ
drakṣīyaṃ
d'iti
bruvaṇ
gṛhāt
Śūruve
c' āgrataḥ
striṇāṃ
rudantīnāṃ
mahāsvaṇāḥ
yathā
nādaḥ
kareṇunāṃ
baddhe
mahati
kuṇājare.
Pitā
cā
rāja
Kākūsthaḥ
śrīmān
sannas
tadā
babhau
paripūrṇāḥ
śaśi
kāle
graheṇa'
opatlo
yathā.
Tato
halahalā
sabda
jaññe
Rāmasya
prṣṭhataḥ
nāraṇām
prekṣyā
rājaṇām
sīdantaṃ
bhūṣaṇaḍuḥkhitam.
»Hā Rām' "eti
janāḥ
ke cid
»Rāmaṁāt' "eti
c' āpāre
antaḥprapunāṃ
sāṃrddhaṃ
cā
kroṇaṃ
cā
kṛṣyantaraṃ
paryadevayam.
Anvikṣamāṇo
Rāmas
tu
viṣaṇṇaṃ
bhṛantačetasaṃ
rājaṇām
mātaraṃ
c' āiva
dadas' anugata
pathi
dharmavasaṇa
saṃkṣiptaḥ
prakāśaṃ
c' ōbhūyudaiṣṭaṃ.
Paṭātinau
cā
yān'ārhaṃ
aduḥkhaḥ
'ārhaṃ
sukh'a
'ōcītau
ṛṣṭvā
saṃ𝑐aṇḍayāṃ
āsa
»śighram
yāḥ
d'iti
saṇṭhim.
Na hi
tat
pruṣaṣṭiyāgraḥ
duḥkhadaṃ
darśanaṃ
dītaṃ
c' sahitum
śaktas
rotṛ'ārdita
iva
dvipal.

RAMÁYANA II – AYÓDHYA

35.20
Āyasaṃ
hṛdayaṃ
nūnaṃ
Rāmaṇāt
asaṃśayaṃ
yad
devaṃ
bhāpratime
vamaṇaṃ
yati
na
bhidyate.
Krtaṅkṛtya
hi
Vaidehi
chāy" ev' ānugata
patim
na
jahati
rata
dharme
merum
arkaiprabhā
yathā.
Aho
Lakṣmana
siddhi'ārthah
sataṭam
priyavaḍīnām
bhūtaraṃ
devaṃkāśaṃ
yas
tvaṃ
caricariṣyasi.
Mahaty
eṣa
hi

tesi
dhāri
eṣa
c' abhyūdayo
mahān
eṣa
svargasya
mārgaṣ
cə
yad
eram
anugacchasi
evaṃ
vadantas
tesōdhunā
na
sekur
bāśpam
āgatam.
Atha
rāja
vṛttaḥ
stribhir
dīnābhir
dīnacetanaḥ
nirjagāna:
»priyaṃ
putraṃ
drakṣīyaṃ
d'iti
bruvaṇ
gṛhāt
Śūruve
c' āgrataḥ
striṇāṃ
rudantīnāṃ
mahāsvaṇāḥ
yathā
nādaḥ
kareṇunāṃ
baddhe
mahati
kuṇājare.
Pitā
cā
rāja
Kākūsthaḥ
śrīmān
sannas
tadā
babhau
paripūrṇaḥ
śāsi
kāle
graheṇa'
opatlo
yathā.
Tato
halahalā
sabda
jaññe
Rāmasya
prṣṭhataḥ
naraṇaṃ
prekṣyā
rājaṇaṃ
sīdantaṃ
bhūṣaṇa
duḥkhitam.
»Hā Rām' "eti
janāḥ
ke
»Rāmaṁāt' "eti
c' āpāre
antaḥprapunāṃ
sāṃrddhaṃ
cā
kroṇaṃ
cā
kraṇaṇaṃ
paryadevayan.
Anvikṣamāṇo
Rāmas

tu
viṣaṇṇaṃ
bhṛantačetasaṃ
rājaṇām
mātaraṃ
c' āiva
dadas' anugata
pathi
dharmavasaṇa
saṃkṣiptaḥ
prakāśaṃ

c' abhyūyudaiṣṭaṃ.
Paṭātinau
cā
yān'ārhaṃ
aduḥkhaḥ
'ārhaṃ
sukh'a
'ōcītau
ṛṣṭvā
saṃcbdwayāṃ
āsa
»śighram
yāḥ
'iti
saṇṭhim.
Na hi
tat
pruṣaṣṭiyāgraḥ
duḥkhadaṃ
darśanaṃ
piṭuḥ
māruś

c' sahitum
śaktas
rotṛ'ārdita
iva
dvipal.

RAMA RENOUNCES

child is going off to the forest. Vaidehi has accomplished
her purpose—she follows her lord like a shadow, earnest
in doing what is right, and can no more leave him than
sunlight can leave Mount Meru. Ah, Lākṣmana, you have
achieved your goal; you will have the chance to serve your
kind-spoken, godlike brother all the while. This is a great
achievement for you, a great blessing, the way to heaven,
that you are following after him." As they said these
things their tears welled up and they could not hold them back.

Then in his desolation the king, accompanied by his desolate
wives, emerged from the palace exclaiming, "Let me
see my beloved son!" Before him could be heard a mighty
din of women crying, like the wailing of cow elephants
when their great bull is captured. And his father, majestic King
Kakūstha, looked as feeble as the full, hare-marked moon
dimmmed at the hour of eclipse. Then, behind Rama, a
tumultuous clamor broke out among the men as they saw
the king collapsing under his heavy sorrow. "Oh Rama!" some
of the people wailed, and others, "Oh mother of Rama!" while
all the women of the inner chamber lamented over the
crying king.

Rama glanced back and saw his mother trailing behind
and the king, too, dazed and wretched. But he was caught
up in the bonds of righteousness and dared not gaze at them
openly. They were on foot who should have ridden, who
had known only comfort and did not deserve such suffering.
And when he saw them he exhorted the charioteer, crying
out, "Go faster!" For the tiger among men could not
bear the heart-rending sight of his father and mother; it was
like a goad tormenting an elephant. Kausālya ran weeping after

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the chariot, crying "Rama, Rama! Oh Sita, Laksmana!"

He glanced back often at his mother, who seemed almost to be dancing. With the king crying, "Stop!" and Raghava, "Go on! Keep going!", Sumantra's very soul seemed caught between two wheels. "You can tell the king you did not hear, if he should rebuke you," Rama said to him. "To prolong sorrow is the worst thing of all." He did as Rama told him, and taking leave of the people, the charioteer urged on the already racing horses.

After they had reverently circled Rama, the king's people did turn back, but their hearts did not, nor the rush of their tears. To the great king Dasha-ratha his ministers then said, "A person one hopes to see returning should not be followed out too far." The king listened to what they said and, despondent and wretched, his body bathed in sweat, he halted with his wives and gazed out after his perfect son.

When, with hands cupped in reverence, the tiger among men was departing, a loud cry of anguish broke out from the women of the inner chamber.

"Where can our defender be going, he who was the recourse and refuge of this weak, defenseless and miserable people? He never grows angry, whatever the insult, he avoids giving cause for anger, he calms the angry and shares every sorrow—where is he going? The mighty prince who treats us as he treats his own mother Kausalya—where can the great man be going?" Kaikeyi hounded the king until he drove him into the forest.

Where can the guardian of this people, of the entire world, be going? The king must be mad to exile Rama to a life in the forest, a righteous prince, devoted to truth and who is
loved by every living soul on earth." So all the queens, like cows who have lost their calves, wept in the torment of their sorrow, and shrilly wailed.

Already inflamed with grief for his son, the lord of the land grew more sorrowful, still hearing the dreadful cry of anguish from the women of the inner chamber. No fire offerings were offered, and the sun vanished. Elephants let their fodder drop, cows would not suckle their calves. The constellation Tri·shanku, the planets Lohitanga, Brihas·pati and Budha, too, all took ominous positions over the moon. The stars lost their radiance, the planets lost their glow, and the constellation Vishakha shone, clouded by smoke, in the sky. A wave of despair swept suddenly over all the people of the city, and no one gave any thought to nourishment or amusements. The faces of the people on the royal highway were awash with tears. No one showed any sign of delight; all were lost in grief. The cool breeze stopped blowing, the hare-marked moon no longer looked serene, the sun did not warm the world, the universe was in chaos. Husbands became indifferent to their wives, children became indifferent, and brothers, too. All turned their back on everyone else and gave their thoughts to Rama alone.

As for Rama’s friends, they were all bewildered; crushed by the weight of their grief, they could not rise from where they lay fallen. Abandoned by the great prince, Ayödhy·a, with all its hosts of soldiers and herds of horses and elephants, was tormented by a heavy weight of fear and began to quake dreadfully and resound, just as the earth would, mountains and all, if abandoned by Indra, breaker of fortresses.
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AYÓDHYA GRIEVES
NOW, as Rama was departing he raised a cloud of dust, and as long as it was visible the best of the Ikshvākus would not turn his eyes away. As long as the king could see his beloved, righteous son, he seemed to stand firm on the ground just to have him in sight. But once the lord of the land could no longer see even Rama's dust, in anguish and despair he fell to the ground. His wife Kausālyā came up and stood by his right arm, and to his left side came Kaikeyi, whose only love was for Bhārata.

The king, a man of prudence, righteousness and courtesy, stared at Kaikeyi, his senses reeling, and said: "Kaikeyi, do not touch me, evil woman. I do not want to see you. You are not my wife, you have no relationship to me. And your dependents have nothing to do with me, nor I with them.

In pure selfishness you repudiated righteousness, and I repudiate you. Once I took your hand and led you round the marriage fire, but now I renounce it all, both in this world and the next. And if Bhirata should be pleased at securing sovereign kingship, may any funeral offering he makes never reach me."

As the lord of men lay coated with dust, Queen Kausālyā helped him up and, racked with grief, began to lead him home. As if he had intentionally slain a brahman, or held his hand in a fire, the righteous king burned with remorse to think of his son living a life of asceticism. Again and again he turned back, he collapsed in the ruts of the chariot, and his figure, like the sun's at the hour of eclipse, lost all its splendor. Tortured with sorrow, he began to lament as he thought with longing of his beloved son. He imagined his son to be returning to the city, and said: "I see the tracks
in the road made by the splendid horses carrying my great son, but I do not see him. No, he is probably now resting somewhere, at the foot of a tree, where he will see the ground, like the bull of an elephant herd from out of a mountain stream. Men who live in the forest will probably be watching as long-armed Rama, the defender of the world, gets up and pushes on defenselessly. I hope you are satisfied, Kākēyi. Now inhabit the kingdom a widow. For without the tiger among men I cannot bear to live."

So the king lamented, and, surrounded by a flood of people, he reentered the best of cities, the way a mourner enters a cemetery. The squares and courtyards were empty, the shops and temples closed, the thoroughfares nearly deserted, the people haggard, feeble and racked with sorrow—such was the sight that met the king's eyes. But his thoughts were for Rama alone and, lost in lamentation, he entered his dwelling, like the sun passing behind a cloud. Without Rama, Vaidēhi and Lākshmana his chamber seemed like a great, placid pool from which Supārṇa has snatched the serpents.

"Quickly take me to the dwelling of Kausālya, Rama's mother," the king demanded, and the watchmen took him. He entered Kausālya's chamber and lay upon the couch, and his mind began to reel. Looking around, the great and mighty king reached out his arms and cried at the top of his voice, "Oh Rāghava, you have abandoned me! How lucky those good men who will be alive at the hour when Rama comes back, who will see him and embrace him. I cannot
see you, Kausalya! Oh please touch me with your hand. My sight has followed after Rama and has not yet returned.”

Seeing the lord of men on the couch lost in thoughts of Rama, the queen sat down close beside him, in the greatest anguish. She heaved a deep sigh and then began to lament bitterly.

KAUSALYA GAZED at the lord of the land as he lay on the couch prostrate with grief. Racked with grief for her son, she spoke:

“Now that Kaikesi like a fork-tongued viper has spit her venom on Raghava, the tiger among men, she will behave like a snake that has shed its skin. Now that she has had her way and exiled Rama, the charming creature will apply herself to further terrorizing me, like a vicious serpent in the house. If only Rama could have lived at home though it meant his begging in the city streets! You had the freedom to grant such a boon, which at the worst had made my son a slave. But you let Kaikesi at her own sweet pleasure throw Rama from his place and assign him as a portion for radhasesas, the way a sacrificer at the half-month rites throws a portion away for them.

My mighty son, the great-armed Bowman with a step like a king of elephants, is probably now entering the forest with his wife and Lakshmana. They have never known the sorrows of the forest, but you yielded to Kaikesi and abandoned them to a life in the forest. What can be their lot? Stripped of everything of value and exiled at the very hour of their triumph, how are these three wretched young people to live with nothing but fruit and roots to eat? If
only it were now the hour that mercifully will end my grief, when I set eyes on Rághava again with his wife and brother. When will Ayódhya hear that the two mighty brothers have come back and once again be a glorious city, crowded with delighted people, garlanded with banners? When will the city see those tigers among men returned from the forest and exult in delight like the ocean on a full-moon night?

When will the great-armed mighty prince enter the city of Ayódhya with Sita on the chariot ahead of him, like a cow before her bull? When will people by the thousand go out onto the royal highway to scatter parched grain upon my two foe-taming sons as they make their entrance? When will maidens proffer flowers and fruit to the brahmans and reverently circle the city in delight? When will he come back to me—my righteous son, young as a deathless god yet with an old man’s wisdom and boyishness that warms my heart?

I guess, my mighty husband, yes, it must no doubt be that once upon a time, when calves were thirsting to drink, I ruthlessly hacked off the udders of the cows, their mothers. And so now, tiger among men, I who love my child so have been made childless by Kaikeyi, as brutally as a lion might do to a cow with a young calf. For I have but one son—he is gifted with every virtue, a master of all learning—and without my son I cannot bear to live. I have not the least bit of strength to live in this world if I cannot see my beloved and mighty great-armed son. Here, see, a fire kindled by grief for my son has burst forth and is ravaging me, as the earth is ravaged in summertime by the rays of the blazing, holy sun that brings the day.”
WHILE KAUSALYA, best of women, was lamenting in this fashion, Sumitra, standing firm by what was right, addressed her with these righteous words:

"My noble lady, your son is the very best of men and truly virtuous. What need have you to lament like this and wretchedly weep? You should never grieve over Rama, my lady, so excellent a son. He left surrendering the kingship, powerful as he is, to ensure that his great father might be true to his word. He took his stand by righteousness as the learned scrupulously practice it, and which has its rewards everlastingly, at death. Blameless Lákshmana will be a blessing to the great prince. He has always behaved with perfect propriety toward him, and he shows compassion to all creatures. Though Vaidéhi is fully aware how painful life in the wilderness is, though she has known only comfort, she is following your righteous son.

What gain has your mighty son failed to reap, who is waving the banner of his fame throughout the world by his self-restraint and devotion to truth? Clearly the sun will recognize Rama's purity and incomparable grandeur, and will not dare to burn his body with its rays. A pleasant breeze will attend on Rághava, blowing through the woodlands, gracious at all seasons, with temperate warmth or coolness. As the blameless prince sleeps at night, the moon like a father will clasp him in its embrace, caress him with cool beams and refresh him. Then, too, the mighty prince was given divine weapons by Brahma, when he saw him slay in battle the lord of dánavas, Timi-dhvaja's son."
With the land, with Vaidéhi and majesty, with all these three in his possession will Rama, bull among men, soon be consecrated. Your eyes will soon drop joyful tears for the one you watched depart with tears of sorrow falling. Soon you will see your child and his loved ones greeting you, and you will shed tears of gladness like a string of clouds in the rains. Your son will soon return to Ayodhyaa to grant you every boon, will soon bow down and clasp your feet with his firm and gentle hands."

After the mother of Rama, the wife of the god of men, had listened to the words of Lakshmana’s mother, the grief in her suddenly dissipated, like a cloud in the autumn when it holds but little water.

Now, as the great prince Rama, who always strove for truth, was setting out to make his life in the forest, men loyal to him continued to follow. Though the multitude of his loved ones and the king had been forced to turn back, these would not stop following Rama’s chariot. For to the men who lived in Ayodhyaa the glorious and virtuous prince was as well loved as the full moon. His subjects kept pleading with him but Kakustha, to ensure his father’s truthfulness, would only press on to the forest.

Rama gazed at his people with affection, as if to drink them in with his eyes. And he spoke to them affectionately as though they were his children: “Let the love and respect the residents of Ayodhyaa feel for me be transferred in full to Bharata, as a kindness to me. Bharata, the delight of Kaikeyi, is of exemplary conduct, and he will do all that is required to ensure your welfare and happiness. Though only a boy,
he has an old man's wisdom, though gentle he is endowed with all the virtues of a hero. He will be a fit master for you and will shield you from all danger. He possesses all the virtues a king requires, and he has been recognized as prince regent. Then, too, as I myself have shown you, you must obey your master's order. And, finally, if you would do me a kindness, please take care that the great king does not suffer when I have gone to live in the forest."

But the more committed to righteousness Dasha-rathi showed himself to be, the more the subjects desired to have him as their lord. By their virtues Rama and Saurinri seemed to bind and draw to them the desolate, tearful people of the city. Now, certain brahmans who were elders on three counts—by their years, wisdom and authority—began to cry out from afar, their heads shaking with age: "Ho there, you purebred horses speeding away with Rama. Stop, turn back! Be good to your master. You should be carrying your master back, not away from the city to the forest."

When Rama perceived the anguished outcry raised by the aged brahmans, he alighted at once from the chariot. Rama then, with Sita and Lakshmana, proceeded on foot, with measured tread, directing his attention wholly to the forest. For the brahmans were on foot, and Rama looked with pity on them. He so cherished propriety that he could not ride off and leave them.

Seeing that Rama only continued on, the brahmans were disconcerted and in deep agony they said to him: "The entire brahman order will follow you, best friend of brahmans, and these sacred fires will accompany you, borne on
the shoulders of the twice-born. Just see the umbrellas given to us at the Vaja-para rite, which are following along behind you like geese when the rains have ended. You never got your royal parasol, and, when the sun's rays are burning you, we will shade you with these, our own Vaja-para umbrellas. We have always turned our minds to the study of the Vedic hymns, but now our minds are made up on your account, dear child, to turn to a life in the forest. Our greatest treasure, the Vedas, lies stored in our hearts; our wives shall stay at home protected by their chastity. Our decision will not be reconsidered; we have made up our minds to go with you. But, as you have always shown regard for righteousness, will any regard now be paid to what is right?

We have bowed our heads, white-haired as the wild goose and covered now with dust from falling prone upon the ground; we have pleaded with you to return, you who have always done what is proper. Many of the brahmans who have come here have already commenced sacrifices. Their consummation depends on your returning, dear child. All living things, moving and unmoving, are filled with devotion for you. Show your devotion to these devotees, who are pleading with you. The trees, unable to follow you because their roots prevent their movement, seem to be mourning as the gusting wind uplifts them. Even the birds have stopped flitting about and foraging for food. They sit in one place in the trees, pleading with you, who have always taken pity on all creatures." And, as the brahmans sent up this mournful wail in order to turn Rāghava back, the Tāmasa River came into view to aid, so it seemed, in stopping him.
When Rāghava had reached the lovely bank of the Tāmasa, with a glance at Sita he addressed Saumitri:

“Night has come to the forest now, the very first of our life in the forest. But please, Saumitri, do not be sad. Look, the woods are empty but all around they seem to weep: birds and beasts are hidden within them, each gone to its own lair. Surely the city of Ayōdhya, my father’s capital, will grieve tonight, every man and woman, for us who have gone away. But I know that righteous Bharata will comfort my father and mother, speaking words in harmony with what is right, beneficial and desirable. I have been reflecting all the while on Bharata’s good-heartedness, and I no longer feel grief for my father, Lākṣmana or even for my mother. You have done your duty in accompanying me, tiger among men. But let me seek your help, too, in looking after Vaidehi. I myself, however, will have nothing but water tonight. This is what I prefer, though all kinds of forest fare are at hand.”

So Rāghava spoke to Saumitri, and, turning to Sumantra he said, “Do not neglect the horses, dear friend.” Sumantra tethered the horses as the sun was setting, gave them abundant fodder and then waited in attendance. When Rama had worshipped the gracious twilight and saw night closing in, the charioteer, with Saumitri’s help, made a bed for him. Escort by Saumitri, Rama found the bed of leaves made ready near the bank of the Tāmasa, and he and his wife then retired. When Lākṣmana saw that his brother had fallen asleep with his wife, he engaged the charioteer in conversation, talking about Rama’s many virtues. Saumitri stayed awake all night long, and even as the sun rose he was still speaking of Rama’s virtues with the charioteer on the bank.
RAMÁYANA II – ÁYÓDHYA

Ramasya vividhān guṇān.
Jāgrato hy eva tām rātrīṁ Saumitrer udito raviṁ
sūtasya Tamasātīre Ramasya bruvato guṇān.

41.15 Gokul’ākulaṭṭhānas Tamasāyā vidūtrataḥ
avasat tatra tām rātrīṁ Rāmāḥ prakṛtibhiḥ saha.

Uthyāya tu māhātejāḥ prakṛtis tā niśāmya ca
abravīd bhṛtaraṁ Rāmo Lakṣmanāṁ punyaḷaikaṣanam:
«Asmadvyapekṣāṁ Saumitre nirapekṣāṁ grheṣv api
vrkṣāṁmūleṣu sāṁsuptāṁ paṣya Lakṣmanā sāṁpratam.
Yath’ āte niyamaṁ paurāḥ kurvanty asmaṇṇiśvatane
api prāṇāṁ āsīyanti na tu tyakṣyanti niścayam.
Vāyad eva tu sāṁsuptās tāvad eva vayaṁ laghu
ratham āruhya gacchāmaḥ panthānam ajñutodbhayam.

41.20 Ato bhūyo ’pi n’ ēdānīṁ Ikṣvākuṇāvāsinaḥ
svapeyur anuraktaṁ māṁ vrkṣāṁmūleṁ saṁsraṭihaṁ.
Paurāḥ hy ātmākṛtād duḥkhād vipramocyā nṛp’ātmajaiḥ
na tu khalv ātmanā yojaṁ duḥkhena puraṇvāsinaḥ.»
Abravīd Lakṣmano Rāmaṁ sākṣād dharman iva sthitam:
«rocate me mahāprajña kṣipram āruhyaṁ iti.»
Sūtas tathā saṁtvatraṁ syandanaṁ tair hayṁōttamaṁ
yojayivī añha Rāmāya prāṇijalī pratyavedayat.
Mohan’ārthaṁ tu paurāṇāṁ sūtaṁ Rāmo ’bravīd vacaṁ:
«udaṁukhaṁ prayāhi tvaṁ ratham āsthaṁyā sārathē.»

41.25 Muhūrttaṁ tvaritaṁ gatvā nirātaya ratham punaḥ
yathā na vidyūḥ paurā māṁ tathā kuru samāhitaḥ.»
Rāmasya vacanaṁ śrutiṁ tathā cakre sa sārathiṁ
pratyāgamyā ca Rāmasya syandanaṁ pratyavedayat.
Tāṁ syandanaṁ adhiśṭhāya Rāghavaḥ saparicchhadāḥ
śīhṛgāṁ ākul’āvartāṁ Tamasāṁ ataraṁ nadim.

Rāmasya vividhān guṇān.
Jāgrato hy eva tām rātrīṁ Saumitrer udito raviṁ
sūtasya Tamasātīre Ramasya bruvato guṇān.

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AYÓDHYA GRIEVES

of the Tāmasa. There, at a little distance from the Tāmasa
where herds of cattle crowded the bank, Rama spent the
night with his people.

And when, on rising, mighty Rama observed them, he
said to his good brother Lākṣmanā: “Look at them now,
Lākṣmanā, asleep under the trees. They care for us alone,
Saumitrē, caring nothing even for their own homes. So
solemn is their commitment to turn us back that the towns-
men would sooner throw their lives away than abandon
their resolve. While they are still sleeping, we must board
the chariot and quickly go, taking a path free from danger.
No resident of the city of the Ikṣvākus should now, or ever
again, have to sleep at the foot of a tree out of loyalty to me.
A prince should spare his townsman any troubles that are
his affair alone. Surely he must not involve the residents of
the city in his own trouble.” Lākṣmanā replied to Rama as
though it were Righteousness that stood embodied before
his eyes: “I agree, my wise brother. Let us board at once.”

In haste then the charioteer harnessed the splendid horses
to the coach and, with hands cupped in reverence, directed
Rama to it. But in order to confuse the townsman Rama in-
structed the charioteer, “Board the chariot, Sumāntra,
and head northward. Hurry onward for a while, then circle back
on the chariot. You must take care to ensure that the towns-
men do not know where I have gone.” The charioteer did
just as Rama told him, and on returning he directed Rama
to the coach. Rāghava boarded with all his equipment and
crossed the swift-flowing, eddying Tāmasa. Once across,
the great-armed, majestic prince entered upon a broad pathway,
RAMÁYANA II – ÁYÓDHYA

Sa saṁțūrya mahābāhuḥ śrīṁāṁ śivam aṁtaṅkam
prāpadyata mahāmargaṁ abhayāṁ bhayādarśināṁ.

Prabhātāyaṁ tu śarvavyāṁ paurāṁ te Rāghavo vinā
śok'opahataṁśeṣaṁ babhūvura ṣataṅcetasāṁ.

Śokaj'āśtri paridyūṁa viśaṁmaṁs tatas tataḥ
ālokaṁ api Rāmasya na paśyantī sma duḥkhitāḥ.
Tato mārg'ānusāreṇa gatvā kiṁ cit kṣaṇam punaḥ
mārgajñaśid viṣādena mahāta samabhiplutaṁ.

Rathasya mārgajñaśena nyavartanta manasvināḥ
«kiṁ idaṁ? kiṁ kariṣyāmo? daiveṇ' ṭopahata iti.»
Tato yathāṭaṅgatē' āiva mārgena klantaiṁcaetasaṁ
Ayodhyām agaman sarve purīṁ vyathitaṁ sajjīnaṁ.

ANUGAMYA NIVṛTTĀNĀṁ Rāmāṁ nagaralvasināṁ
udgatāṁ svāṁ vṛttāṁ sarve bāṣpeṇa pihitājanaṁ.
Na c' āḥṣyant na c' āmodan vaṁjo na prasārayān
na c' āsobhanta paṁyanī n' āpacan gṛhaṁmedhināḥ.
Naṭaṁ dṛṣṭvā n' ābhyanandān vipulaṁ va dhan'āgamam
putraṁ prathamajāṁ labdhva janani n' ābhyanandata.

Grhe grhe rudantyās ca bhartarāṁ gṛham āgataṁ
vyagharhanto duḥkhārāṁ vāgbhis totraṁ iva dvipāṁ
«Kiṁ nu teṣaṁ gṛhāṁ kāryaṁ kiṁ dāraṁ kiṁ dhanena va
putraṁ va kiṁ sukhair v” āpi ye na paśyantī Rāghavam:

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a gracious one free from obstacles and the dangers of
dangerous beasts.

When night brightened into dawn and the townsmen
found themselves without Rāghava, their minds were
stunned, and they were paralyzed by a crushing grief. Drenched
in tears of grief, they searched high and low, but to their
bitter sorrow they caught not a glimpse of Rama. For a short
while they followed the track, and when it gave out a wild
despair swept over them. When the track of the chariot gave
out, the sensible among them turned back, thinking, “What
can this mean? What are we to do? Fate has crushed us.”
Then all of them, with weary hearts, returned the way they
had come to the city of Ayódhya, where all good people
were still in a state of shock.

SO THE RESIDENTS of the city returned from following
Rama, but all their strength seemed to have gone, and they
were left insensible. They went each to his own dwelling
and there, surrounded by their wives and children, they all
broke out in weeping, and their faces were bathed in tears.
No one felt any delight or gladness, merchants would not
display their wares, no goods were set out to catch the eye.
Householders would have no meals prepared. People felt
no joy at finding something long thought lost, or obtaining
vast wealth. Mothers felt no joy at delivering a firstborn son.

In one house after another the women cried when their
husbands came home, and in the anguish of their sorrow
they berated them with words as piercing as elephant goads:
“What good are homes or wives or wealth, what good are
Ekal'i satipuru~o loke Lakşmanaḥ saha Sita'yā
yo 'nugacchati Kākutstham Rāmaṁ paricarana vane?
Āpagaḥ kṛtaipunyaś tāḥ padminiyaś ca sārāṃsi ca
yeśu snāṣyatī Kākutsthoh vigāhyo sālitaṃ śuci.
Śobhayiśyantī Kākutsthah atavya ramaśākānanāḥ
āpagaś ca mah'\text{\textasciitilde}ānūpāh s'\text{\textasciitilde}ānumantaś ca parvatāh.

Kānanaṁ v'\text{\textasciitilde} api śailaṃ vā yaṁ Rāmo 'bhigamisyati
priy'\text{\textasciitilde}ārithim īva prāptaṁ ni' ānaṁ śāksyaṁ anjaṁcitum.
Vicīraṅkusum'\text{\textasciitilde}apiḍā bahuśaṁjaṁjiśधārīnāh
akāle c'\text{\textasciitilde} api mukhyāni puspāni ca phalāni ca
darṣaṁisyanty anukrośād giraya Rāmaṁ āgatām.
Vidarṣaṁyanto vividhān bhūyaś cītaṁś ca nirjharān
pādaḥ parvat' āgreśu ramayiṣyantī Rāghavaṁ.

Yatra Rāmo bhayaṁ n' ātra n' āsti tatra parābhavaḥ
sa hi śuto mahābāhuḥ putro Daśarathasya ca.
Pūra bhavati no dūrād anugacchāma Rāghavaṁ
pāda[cchāya] sukhā bhurtas tādāsya mah'\text{\textasciitilde}āmanāḥ
sa hi nācho janasyā' āśya sa gatiḥ sa parāyaṇaṃ.

Vayaṁ paricaryāmaḥ Sitāṁ yūyaṁ tu Rāghavam
iti' pauroṣṭriyo bharto [duḥkh] 'ārās tat tad abruvan:
\text{\textasciitilde}\text{\textasciitilde}Yuṣṭmākpaṁ Rāghavo rānye yogākṣemaṁ vidhāsyati
Sitā nārājanasyā' āśya yogākṣemaṁ kariṣyati.
Ko nv aneṁ 'apratītena s'ōtkarṣhitajanaṇa ca
sampriyeyt' āmānojiśena vāsena hṛtajētaśa?
Kaikēyā yadi ced rāygaṁ syād adhārayam aṁāthavaṭ

s42.10

RAMĀYANA II - AYÓDHYA

AYÓDHYA GRIEVES

sons or pleasures to those who have lost the sight of Rāghava? The one decent man in the world is Lākṣmanā, who with Sita is following Rama Kakūṣṭha to serve him in the forest. Fortunate the streams, the lotus ponds and lakes where Kakūṣṭha will bathe, plunging into the pure water. The woodlands and the lovely groves will adorn Kakūṣṭha, and so will the streams with their broad shores, and the steep-sloping mountains. Every hill or grove Rama visits will treat him like a welcome guest and not fail to accord him hospitality. The mountains will be crowned with many-colored blossoms and bear clusters of bouquets when Rama comes, and in sympathy they will display for him choice fruits and flowers even out of season. They will afford him views of waterfalls as well, one after the other, and the trees on the summits will gladden Rāghava.

Where Rama goes there is nothing to fear, and no one ever comes to grief. He is a great-armed hero and the son of Daśa-ratha. So let us follow Rāghava before he is too far away from us. How pleasant the shadow of the feet of such a great master as he; for he is the one defender of this people, he their one recourse and refuge. We shall attend on Sita, and you on Rāghava.” Such were the things the townsman’s wives told their husbands. And in the anguish of their sorrow they continued:

“Rāghava will see to it that you are safe and sound in the wilderness, and Sita the same for us, the womenfolk. Who could find any joy in living here, where people are filled with longing, a place so cheerless, so unpleasant and dispiriting? If, with our one defender gone and against all that is right, the kingship should come into
RAMÁYANA II — AYÓDHYA

na hi no jiviten' árthaḥ kutaḥ putraḥ kuto dhanaḥ?
Yayā putraś ca bhartā ca tāktāv aśvaryaścāraṇāt
kaṃ sā parihaled anyaṃ Kaikeyī kulāpāṃsani?

42.20 Kaikeyyā na vayaṃ rājye bhṛṭaka nivasemahī
ejivantā jātu jivantyaḥ putrair āpi śāpāmahe.
Yā putram pārthiv'endrasya pravāsayati nirgṛṇā
kas tām prāpya sukhāṃ jīved adharmyāṃ duṣṭaścārinīṁ?
Na hi pravrajite Rāme jīvyayati mahēpatiḥ
mṛte Daśarathc vyaktaṃ vilopas tādānantaram.

Te viṣṇaṃ pibat' āloḍya kṣīṇapunyāḥ sudurgataḥ
Rāghavam v" anugacchadhvam aṣṭrutim v" āpi gacchata.
Mithyā pravrajito Rāmaḥ saṁbharyah saha/Lakṣmaṇaḥ
Bharate saṁnirṣṭāḥ smaḥ saunike paśavo yathā.

42.25 Tās tathā vilapantyas tu nagare nāgarāśtriyaḥ
cukruṣūr bhṛṣaṃśaptā mṛtyor iva bhay'āgam.
Tathā striyo Rāmaṁimittam ātārā
yathā sute bhṛtāri vā vivāṣite
vilapyā dinā rurudur vicetasaḥ
sutaīh hi tāsām adhiko hi so 'bhavat.

AYÓDHYA GRIEVES

Kaikēyi's hands, we would have no further use for living,
much less for children or riches. Kaikēyi, that disgrace to
her family, renounced her son and husband both for the
sake of kingly power. Why then should she be expected to
spare anyone else?

We will never remain in the kingdom as servants to Kai­
keyi, so long as she lives, or we do. Upon our sons we swear
it. Who could live at ease under that unrighteous, wicked
woman, so heartless that she forced into exile the son of
the lord of kings? For with Rama banished, the lord of
the land will not long survive, and in the wake of Dasha­
ratha's death will clearly follow total devastation.
Utterly impoverished, luckless men! Better to mix poison and take
it now. For either you follow Rāghava or you shall never
be heard from again. Rama, his wife and Lākṣmaṇa have
been treacherously banished, and all of us delivered up to
Bhārata like livestock to the butcher."

Such was the lamentation raised throughout the town by
the townsmen's wives, and they wailed in agony, as if they
feared for their very lives. The women were as anguished
on Rama's account as if a son of theirs or a brother had
been exiled. Desolate, they lamented and madly wept, for
he meant more to them, in fact, than their own sons.