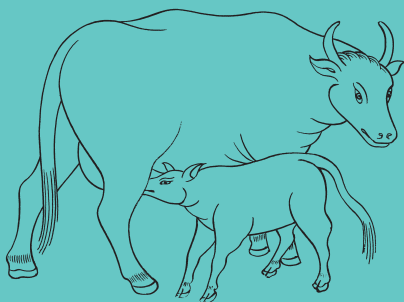


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Maha·bhárata

Book Four

Viráta



Translated by

KATHLEEN GARBUTT

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS & JJC FOUNDATION

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First Edition 2006.

The Clay Sanskrit Library is co-published by
New York University Press
and the JJC Foundation.

Further information about this volume
and the rest of the Clay Sanskrit Library
is available on the following websites:

www.claysanskritlibrary.com
www.nyupress.org.

ISBN-13: 978-0-8147-3183-3 (cloth : alk. paper)
ISBN-10: 0-8147-3183-x (cloth : alk. paper)

Artwork by Robert Beer.

Typeset in Adobe Garamond at 10.25 : 12.3+pt.

XML-development by Stuart Brown.

*Editorial input from Dániel Balogh, Tomoyuki Kono,
Eszter Somogyi & Péter Szántó.*

*Printed in Great Britain by St Edmundsbury Press Ltd,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on acid-free paper.
Bound by Hunter & Foulis, Edinburgh, Scotland.*

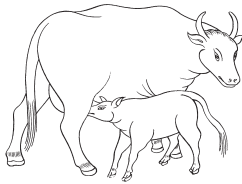
MAHĀBHĀRATA

BOOK FOUR

VIRĀṬA

TRANSLATED BY

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1-13
DISGUISES FOR VIRÁTA'S COURT

HAVING PAID homage to Naráyana, to Nara, the best 1.1
of men, and to the goddess Sarásvati, let the word
“Victory” be uttered.

JANAM-ÉJAYA said:

How did my ancestors, afflicted by fear of Duryódhana,
pass their time undiscovered in Viráta’s city? And how did
the illustrious Dráupadi, who always refers to the Veda, de-
voted to her husbands, though grief-stricken, remain undis-
covered, o brahmin?

VAISHAMPÁYANA said:

Hear, lord of men, how your ancestors passed their time 1.5
unrecognized in Viráta’s city. When the greatest of virtuous
men had taken gifts from Dharma, he went to the hermitage
and told the brahmins everything that had happened. When
he had told the entire story to the brahmins, Yudhi-shthira
presented the gathered drilling sticks to the brahmin.

Then high-minded King Yudhi-shthira, the son of Dhar-
ma, was sent back to his younger brothers, and said this,
Bhárata:

“For twelve years we have been banished from our king-
dom. The thirteenth miserable year, which will be the hard-
est to get through, has now arrived. So then, excellent Ár-
juna, son of Kuntí, choose a home for this year, where we
may live undiscovered by our enemies.”

ÁRJUNA said:

Due to Dharma’s gift, king of men, there is no doubt 1.10
that we will wander among men without being recognized.
So I will run through some kingdoms that are pleasant and
secluded, as options for us to live in. Choose one.

santi ramyā jana|padā bahv|annāḥ paritaḥ Kurūn:
Pāñcālās, Cedi|Matsyās ca, Śūrasenāḥ, Paṭaccarāḥ,
Daśārṇā, nava|rāṣṭrās ca Mallāḥ, Śālvā, Yugandharāḥ,
Kunti|rāṣṭraṃ ca vipulaṃ, Surāṣṭr|Āvantayas tathā.
eteṣāṃ katamo, rājan, nivāsas tava rocate
yatra vatsyāmahe, rājan, saṃvatsaram imaṃ vayam?

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

- 1.15 śrutam etan, mahā|bāho, yathā sa bhagavān prabhuḥ
abravīt sarva|bhūt|ēśas, tat tathā, na tad anyathā.
avaśyaṃ tv eva vās|ārthaṃ ramaṇīyaṃ, śivaṃ, sukham
sammantrya sahitaiḥ sarvair vastavyam a|kuto|bhayaiḥ.

Matsyo Virāto balavān, abhirakto 'tha Pāñḍavān,
dharma|śīlo, vadānyaś ca, vṛddhaś ca satataṃ priyaḥ.
Virāṭa|nagare, tāta, saṃvatsaram imaṃ vayam
kurvantas tasya karmāṇi vihariṣyāma, Bhārata.
yāni yāni ca karmāṇi tasya śakṣyāmahe vayam
kartuṃ yo yat, sa tat karma bravītu, Kuru|nandanāḥ.

ARJUNA uvāca:

- 1.20 nara|deva, kathaṃ tasya rāṣṭre karma kariṣyasi?
Virāṭa|nagare, sādho, raṃsyase kena karmaṇā?
mṛdur, vadānyo, hrīmāṃś ca, dhārmikaḥ, satya|vikramaḥ,
rājams, tvam āpadā kaṣṭaḥ! kiṃ kariṣyasi, Pāñḍava?
na duḥkham ucitaṃ kiñ cid rājā veda yathā janaḥ
sa imām āpadaṃ prāpya kathaṃ ghorāṃ tariṣyasi?

DISGUISES FOR VIRÁTA'S COURT

There are agreeable and pleasant nations, rich in food all around the land of the Kurus: the Panchálas, the Chedi, the Matsyas, the people of Shura-sena, the Patáccharas, the people of Dashárna, the new Malla kingdom, the Shalvans, the Yugan-dharas, the extensive realm of Kunti, the Suráshtrans, or the Avántayas. So which of these places pleases you, my king, for us to spend this year, lord?

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

Long-armed man, what we heard is true. It will be just 1.15
as the powerful, blessed lord of all creatures said, and not
otherwise.* By all means let us all decide together on a pleas-
ant, happy and auspicious place in which to live without
fear from any quarter.

The old king of the Matsyas, Viráta, is mighty, munificent
and virtuous in his conduct. Furthermore, he is devoted to
the Pándavas and dear to all. So we will pass our time this
year in Viráta's city, working in his service, Bhárata. So tell
me, descendants of the Kurus, in what capacities will we
each be able to serve the King of Matsya?

ÁRJUNA said:

Godlike man, what service will you perform for him in 1.20
the kingdom? In what capacity will you dwell in Viráta's city,
excellent man? You are tender, charitable, modest, virtuous
and truly valiant, but alas for your misfortune, king! What
will you do, Pándava? A king is unfamiliar with the misery
normal to his people. How will you survive the terrible
misfortune that has befallen you?

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

- ṣṛṇudhvaṃ yat kariṣyāmi karma vai, Kuru|nandanāḥ,
 Virātam anusamprāpya rājānaṃ, puruṣa|rṣabhāḥ.
 sabhā|stāro bhaviṣyāmi tasya rājño mah”|ātmanah
 Kaṅko nāma dvi|jo bhūtvā mat’|ākṣaḥ, priya|devanaḥ.
 1.25 vaidūryān, kāñcanān, dāntān phalair jyotī|rasaiḥ saha
 kṛṣṇ’|ākṣāṃl, lohit’|ākṣās ca nirvatsyāmi mano|ramān.
 Virāta|rājaṃ ramayan s’|āmātyaṃ saha|bāndhavam,
 na ca mām vetsyate kaś cit, toṣayiṣye ca taṃ nṛpam.
 «āsaṃ Yudhiṣṭhirasy’ āhaṃ purā prāṇa|samaḥ sakhā.»
 iti vakṣyāmi rājānaṃ yadi mām so ’nuyokṣyate.
 ity etad vo may” ākhyātaṃ vihariṣyāmy ahaṃ yathā.
 Vṛkodara, Virāte tvaṃ raṃsyase kena hetunā?

BHĪMASENA uvāca:

- 2.1 PAURO|GAVO BRUVĀṆO ’haṃ Ballavo nāma, Bhārata,
 upasthāsyāmi rājānaṃ Virātam, iti me matiḥ.
 sūpān asya kariṣyāmi, kuśalo ’smi mahānase,
 kṛta|pūrvāṇi yāny asya vyañjanāni su|śikṣitaiḥ,
 tāny apy abhibhaviṣyāmi prītiṃ sañjanayann aham.
 āhariṣyāmi dārūṇāṃ nicayān mahato ’pi ca.
 tat prekṣya vipulaṃ karma rājā saṃyokṣyate sa mām.
 a|mānuṣāṇi kurvānas tāni karmāṇi, Bhārata,
 2.5 rājñas tasya pare preṣyā maṃsyante mām yathā nṛpam.
 bhakṣy’|ānna|rasa|pānānāṃ bhaviṣyāmi tath” ēśvaraḥ.
 dvipā vā balino, rājan, vṛṣabhā vā mahā|balāḥ
 vinigrāhyā yadi mayā, nigrāhiṣyāmi tān api.
 ye ca ke cin niyotsyanti samājeṣu niyodhakāḥ,
 tān ahaṃ hi niyotsyāmi ratiṃ tasya vivardhayan.

DISGUISES FOR VIRÁTA'S COURT

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

Listen to what I will do, bull-like descendants of the Kurus, once I have reached King Viráta. I will become "Kanka,"* a brahmin fond of gambling and reveling in dice, and I will be the high-hearted king's games-playing courtier. I will set down cat's-eye gem, gold and ivory game pieces on a gemstone gaming board, and cast beautiful black and red dice. I will entertain King Viráta along with ministers and relatives, and no one will recognize me as I amuse the king. If the king should question me, I shall say to him: "I was Yudhi-shtthira's friend, as dear to him as life itself." So I will pass the time as I've told you, but by what means will you reside in Viráta's realm, Vrikódara? 1.25

BHIMA-SENA said:

MY INTENTION, BHÁRATA, is to announce myself to King Viráta as a head chef, calling myself Bállava. I shall make curries and whatever dishes his highly trained cooks made in the past, since I am skilled in the kitchen. Moreover, I shall surpass them, for I am intent on favor. 2.1

I will carry heaped loads of harsh wood, even if they're huge. When he sees that monumental task, the king will be pleased with me, and when they see me perform supernatural feats, Bhárata, the other servants of his palace will think of me as a king. I will be in charge of what food is to be eaten and what drink is to be drunk. 2.5

Or if powerful elephants and mighty bulls need restraining I will restrain even them, my king. I will fight whichever wrestlers will take me on in conflicts, putting an end to their fun, but I will not kill anyone who fights me. I will merely

na tv etān yudhyamānān vai haniṣyāmi kathañ cana;
tath” āitān pātayiṣyāmi, yathā yāsyanti na kṣayam.

«ārāliko, go|vikartā, sūpa|kartā, niyodhakaḥ
āsaṃ Yudhiṣṭhirasy’ āham, iti» vakṣyāmi pṛcchataḥ.

2.10 ātmānam ātmanā rakṣaṃś carīṣyāmi, viśāṃ pate.
ity etat pratijānāmi, vihariṣyāmy ahaṃ yathā.

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

yam Agnir brāhmaṇo bhūtvā samāgacchan nṛṇāṃ varam,
didhakṣuḥ Khāṇḍavaṃ dāvaṃ Dāsārha|sahitaṃ purā,
mahā|balaṃ mahā|bāhum aljitaṃ Kuru|nandanam,
so ’yaṃ kiṃ karma Kaunteyaḥ kariṣyati Dhanañjayaḥ?
yo ’yam āsādy taṃ dāvaṃ tarpayām āsa Pāvakam,
vijity’ āika|rathen’ Êndraṃ, hatvā pannaga|rākṣasān,
Vāsukeḥ sarpa|rājasya svasāraṃ hṛtavāṃś ca yaḥ,
śreṣṭho yaḥ pratiyodhānāṃ so ’rjunaḥ kiṃ kariṣyati?

2.15 sūryaḥ pratapatāṃ śreṣṭho, dvi|padāṃ brāhmaṇo varaḥ,
āśviṣaś ca sarpāṇāṃ, agnis tejasvināṃ varaḥ,
āyudhānāṃ varam vajraṃ, kakudmī ca gavāṃ varaḥ,
hradānāṃ udadhīḥ śreṣṭhaḥ, parjanya varṣatāṃ varaḥ,
Dhṛtarāṣṭraś ca nāgānāṃ, hastiṣv Airāvaṇo varaḥ,
putraḥ priyāṇāṃ adhiko, bhāryā ca suhrdāṃ varā.
yath” āitāni viśiṣṭāni jātyāṃ jātyāṃ, Vṛkodara,
evaṃ yuvā Guḍākeśaḥ śreṣṭhaḥ sarva|dhanuṣmatām.

throw them down in such a way that they do not meet their end.

And when asked I will say, "I was Yudhi-shthira's cook, cow-slaughterer, sauce-maker and wrestler." This is the disguise I will adopt to protect my identity, lord of the earth. So I am reborn, and will pass my time in this manner. 2.10

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

And what of that hero who was with Krishna when Agni, in brahmin form, eager to burn the Khándava forest, met him long ago? What of Dhanan-jaya, the son of Kuntí, the mighty descendant of the Kurus, that long-armed and invincible man—what will he do? What of the man who reached the forest and satisfied Agni, who vanquished Indra with a single chariot, who killed serpents and demons, and who seized the sister of Vásuki, the king of the *nagas*, taking her as his wife? That Árjuna who is the greatest of warriors, what will he do?

Just as the sun is the greatest of all blazing, celestial bodies, the brahmin is the best of all bipeds, the cobra the greatest of all serpents, fire the most excellent of all things possessing brilliance, the thunderbolt the best of all weapons, the humped bull the best of all bovine creatures, the ocean the greatest of all masses of water, the rain cloud the best of the monsoon, Dhrita-rashtra the best of the *nagas*, Airávata the greatest of elephants; just as the son is superior to all beloved things and the wife the best of friends, so, just as it is with these distinct examples, each of their own type, so too the young Guda-kesha is the greatest of all bowmen, Vrikódara. 2.15

so 'yam Indrād an|avaro, Vāsudevān mahā|dyutiḥ
 Gāṇḍīva|dhanvā Bībhatsuḥ śvet'|āśvaḥ kiṃ kariṣyati?
 2.20 uṣitvā pañca varṣāṇi sahasr'|ākṣasya veśmani,
 astra|yogaṃ samāsādyā sva|vīryān mānuṣ'|ādbhutam,
 divyāny astrāṇi c' āptāni deva|rūpeṇa bhāsvatā.
 yaṃ manye dvā|daśaṃ Rudram, Ādityānām trayo|daśam,
 Vasūnām navamaṃ manye, grahāṇām daśamaṃ tathā,
 yasya bāhū samau, dīrghau, jy"lāghāta|kaṭhina|tvacau,
 dakṣiṇe c' āiva, savye ca gavām iva vahaḥ kṛtaḥ,
 Himavān iva śailānām, samudraḥ saritām iva,
 tri|daśānām yathā Śakro, Vasūnām iva havyvavāt,
 mrgāṇām iva śārdūlo, Garudaḥ patatām iva
 varah sannahyamānānām, so 'rjunaḥ kiṃ kariṣyati?

ARJUNA uvāca:

2.25 pratijñām «ṣaṇḍhako 'sm'. îti» kariṣyāmi, mahī|pate.
 jy"lāghātau hi mahāntau me, saṃvartuṃ, nṛpa, duṣ|karau.
 valayaís chādayiṣyāmi bāhū kiṇa|kṛtāv imau,
 karṇayoḥ pratimucy' āhaṃ kuṇḍale jvalana|prabhe.
 pinaddha|kambuḥ pāṇibhyām, tṛtīyām prakṛtiṃ gataḥ,
 veṇī|kṛta|śirā, rājan, nāmnā c' āiva Bṛhannalā.

paṭhann ākhyāyikās c' āiva strī|bhāvena punaḥ punaḥ
 ramayiṣye mahī|pālam, anyāṃś c' āntaḥ|pure janān.
 gītaṃ, nṛtyaṃ vicitraṃ ca, vāditraṃ vividhaṃ tathā
 śikṣayiṣyāmy ahaṃ, rājan, Virāṭasya pura|striyaḥ.

What will glorious Bibhátsu do, he who is not inferior to Indra or Vasudéva himself, who carries the bow Gandíva, and has white horses? He dwelled for five years in the home of Indra of a thousand eyes, attained the discipline of inhuman, supernatural weapons by his own strength and obtained divine arms by means of his luminous celestial form. I think of him as the twelfth Rudra, the thirteenth Adítya, and I regard him as the ninth Vasu and the tenth *graha*. His arms are long and equal, hardened by the strokes of the bowstring, and lumpy calluses have formed like the humps of bulls on both the left and right arm. He is like the Himálaya among mountains, the ocean among lakes, Shakra among heaven-dwellers, the fire among Vasus, a tiger among deer and Gáruda among creatures of flight. What will Árjuna, the best of warriors, do? 2.20

ÁRJUNA said:

I will claim that I am a eunuch, earth-king. My arms, king, are scarred by the bowstring, large and difficult to conceal. I will cover my long, calloused arms with bracelets and fasten beautiful radiant earrings to my ears. So, with conch bracelets decked on my wrists, I will become a member of the third sex, and with a braid of hair falling down from my head, my king, I will call myself Brihan-nala—the large-reeded lady. 2.25

By living as a woman, I shall regularly entertain the king and others inside the palace's inner complex by giving short narrative recitals. I shall teach the women of Viráta's palace singing, my king, diverse dances and various musical instruments. I will hide myself, Kauntéya, through illusion, 2.30

2.30 prajānām samudācāraṃ bahu|karma kṛtaṃ vadan,
chādayiṣyāmi, Kaunteya, māyay” ātmānam ātmanā.

«Yudhiṣṭhirasya gehe vai Draupadyāḥ paricārikā
uṣit” āsm’, îti» vaksyāmi pṛṣṭo rājñā ca, Pāṇḍava.
etena vidhinā channaḥ kṛtakena, yathā Nalaḥ,
vihariṣyāmi, rāj’|êndra, Virāṭa|bhavane sukham.

VAISAMPĀYANA uvāca:

3.1 ITY EVAM UKTVĀ puruṣa|pravīras
tath” Ārjuno dharmā|bhṛtām variṣṭhaḥ
vākyam, tath” āsau virarāma bhūyo.
nṛpo ’paraṃ bhrātaram ābabhāṣe.

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

kiṃ tvaṃ, Nakula, kurvāṇas tatra, tāta, cariṣyasi
karma tat tvaṃ samācakṣva, rājye tasya mahī|pateḥ,
su|kumāraś ca, śūraś ca, darśanīyaḥ, sukh’|ôcitaḥ?

NAKULA uvāca:

aśva|bandho bhaviṣyāmi Virāṭa|nṛpater aham,
sarvathā jñāna|sampannaḥ, kuśalaḥ parirakṣaṇe.
Granthiko nāma nāṃn” āhaṃ. karm’ āitat su|priyam mama.
kuśalo ’smy aśva|śikṣāyām, tath” āiv’ āśva|cikitsane,
priyās ca satataṃ me ’śvāḥ, Kuru|rāja, yathā tava!

3.5 ye mām āmantrayiṣyanti Virāṭa|nagare janāḥ,
tebhya evaṃ pravakṣyāmi, vihariṣyāmy ahaṃ yathā:
«Pāṇḍavena purā, tāta, aśveṣv adhikṛtaḥ purā.»
Virāṭa|nagare channaś cariṣyāmi, mahī|pate.

entertaining them by telling tales of the heroic deeds of men.

Pándava, when the king asks me I will say, "I lived in Yudhi-shthira's palace as a servant girl to Dráupadi." Concealing myself by this method, just as Nala did,* I will spend my time happily in Viráta's palace, lord of kings.

VAISHAMPÁYANA said:

UPON SAYING THIS, Árjuna, the most excellent and fore- 3.1
most of virtuous men, came to the end of his speech, and the king again addressed another of his brothers.

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

What will you do? You are very tender, brave, handsome and used to luxury, Nákula, so tell me what service you will perform in the king's realm.

NÁKULA said:

I will be King Viráta's horse-keeper. I am wholly conversant with this field of knowledge, and skillful in caring for horses. I will go by the name of Gránthika. I really enjoy this task and I am skilled in training horses and equally so in curing them. I have always liked horses as much as you do, Kuru king!

This is how I will pass my time, and to whomever should 3.5
talk to me in Viráta's city I will say: "Previously, Pándava made me master of his horses." That is how I will act, hidden in Viráta's city, great king.

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

Sahadeva, katham̐ tasya samīpe vihariṣyasi?
kiṃ vā tvaṃ karma kurvānaḥ pracchanno vihariṣyasi?

SAHADEVA uvāca:

go|saṅkhyātā bhaviṣyāmi Virāṭasya mahī|pateḥ,
pratiṣeddhā ca, dogdhā ca, saṅkhyāne kuśalo gavām.
Tantipāla iti khyāto nāṃn” āhaṃ viditas tv atha,
nipuṇaṃ ca cariṣyāmi. vyetu te mānaso jvaraḥ.

3.10 ahaṃ hi satataṃ goṣu bhavatā prahitaḥ purā.
tatra me kauśalaṃ sarvaṃ avabuddhaṃ, viśām pate,
lakṣaṇaṃ, caritaṃ c’ āpi gavām, yac c’ āpi maṅgalam.
tat sarvaṃ me su|viditam, anyac c’ āpi, mahī|pate.
vṛṣabhān api jānāmi, rājan, pūjita|lakṣaṇān,
yeṣāṃ mūtram upāghrāya api vandhyā prasūyate.
so ’ham evaṃ cariṣyāmi, prītir atra hi me sadā.
na ca māṃ vetsyate kaś cit, toṣayiṣye ca pārthivam.

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

iyam̐ hi naḥ priyā bhāryā prāṇebhyo ’pi garīyasī,
māt” ēva paripālyā ca, pūjyā jyeṣṭh” ēva ca svasā.

3.15 kena sma Draupadī Kṛṣṇā karmaṇā vicariṣyati?
na hi kiñ cid vijānāti karma kartuṃ yathā striyaḥ.
su|kumārī ca, bālā ca, rāja|putrī yaśasvinī,
pati|vratā, mahā|bhāgā, katham̐ nu vicariṣyati?
mālya|gandhān, alaṅ|kārān, vastrāṇi vividhāni ca—
etāny ev’ ābhijānāti yato jātā hi bhāminī.

DISGUISES FOR VIRÁTA'S COURT

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

Saha-deva, how will you spend your time in his proximity? What service will you perform to pass the time in disguise?

SAHA-DEVA said:

I will be King Viráta's cowherd, for I am skilled in milking and skilled in herding cattle. I will be called Tanti-pala by name, and since I am properly trained, I will conduct myself capably. Abandon the fever in your mind.

In the past, you yourself always put me in charge of your cattle. I've learned thoroughly all about their health, lord of earth, their markings and even their behavior, as well as what makes them happy. Consider that I know all this very well, earth-lord. I also recognize bulls with the recommended markings, my king, the scent of whose urine can even cause a barren cow to produce young. I will always work happily. No one will recognize me, and furthermore I will please the king. 3.10

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

This is our dear wife, more precious to us than our lives, who should be cared for as a mother and honored as an eldest sister. What task will Dráupadi Krishná undertake, since she doesn't know how to perform any women's work? She is a very tender and powerful princess of wide fame, loyal to her husbands and illustrious, but how will she live? Garlands, perfumes, ornaments and various clothes—these are the only things that the passionate lady has known since she was born. 3.15

DRAUPADĪ uvāca:

sairandhryo rakṣitā loke bhujisyāḥ santi, Bhārata.
n' āivam anyāḥ striyo yānti, iti lokasya niścayaḥ.
s" āhaṃ bruvāṇā sairandhrī kuśalā keśa|karmaṇi.
«Yudhiṣṭhirasya gehe vai Draupadyāḥ paricārikā
uṣit" āsm', îti» vaksyāmi pṛṣṭā rājñā ca, Bhārata.

- 3.20 ātma|guptā carisyāmi, yan māṃ tvaṃ paripṛcchasi,
Sudeṣṇāṃ pratyupasthāsyē rāja|bhāryāṃ yaśasvinīm.
sā rakṣisyati māṃ prāptāṃ. mā bhūt te duḥkham īdṛśam.

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

kalyāṇaṃ bhāṣase, Kṛṣṇe, kule jāt" āsi, bhāminī,
na pāpam abhijānāsi sādhvī, sādhu|vrate sthitā.
yathā na durhṛdaḥ pāpā bhavanti sukhinaḥ punaḥ,
kuryās tat tvaṃ hi, kalyāṇi, lakṣayeyur na te tathā.

YUDHIṢṬHIRA uvāca:

- 4.1 KARMĀṆY UKTĀNI yuṣmābhir yāni, tāni kariṣyatha,
mama c' āpi yathā|buddhi rucitāni viniścayāt.
puro|hito 'yam asmākam agni|hotrāṇi rakṣatu
sūda|paurogavaiḥ sārdhaṃ Drupadasya niveśane.
Indrasena|mukhās c' ême rathān ādāya kevalān
yāntu Dvāravatīṃ śighram, iti me vartate matiḥ.
imās ca nāryo Draupadyāḥ sarvās ca paricārikāḥ
Pāñcālān' ēva gacchantu sūda|paurogavaiḥ saha.
4.5 sarvair āpi ca vaktavyaṃ, «na prājñāyanta Pāñḍavāḥ.
gatā hy asmān apāhāya sarve Dvaitavanād iti.»

DRÁUPADI said:

Bhárata, there are women in this world who are protected as menial servants and called *sairándhri*s—independent maids*—but there is no such certainty concerning other women of the world. I will say I am a *sairándhri*, skilled in hairdressing. When asked by the king, I will say, “I lived in Yudhi-shthira’s palace as Dráupadi’s servant girl,” Bhárata. I will protect myself and do what you ask of me, and I will serve Sudéshna, the king’s illustrious wife. She will protect me once I have reached her, so do not be so miserable. 3.20

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

O Krishná, you speak excellently, but you were born into a good family, passionate lady, so you have no comprehension of sin. You are virtuous and engaged in observing strict vows. So don’t allow wicked, sinful men to become happy again as they stare at you, because of the way you behave, lovely girl.

YUDHI-SHTHIRA said:

WELL, YOU SHALL undertake the jobs that you have described. I, too, definitely find them attractive as far as I can judge. Let our family priest guard the Agni-hotra fires and enter Drúpada’s dwelling with the cooks. Let Indra-sena and the men he leads go quickly to Dváravati, taking the empty chariots with them. This is my decision. Let all Dráupadi’s servant girls go to the Panchálas, along with the cooks. Everyone must say, “We do not know where the Pándavas have gone. They all left us at Dvaita-vana.” 4.1 4.5

VAISAMPĀYANA uvāca:

evaṃ te 'nyonyam āmantrya,
karmāṇy uktvā pṛthak pṛthak,
Dhaumyam āmantrayām āsuḥ,
sa ca tān mantram abravīt.

DHAUMYA uvāca:

vihitaṃ, Pāṇḍavāḥ, sarvaṃ brāhmaṇeṣu, suhr̥tsu ca.
yāne, praharaṇe c' āiva tath' āiv' āgniṣu, Bhārata,
tvayā rakṣā vidhātavyā Kṛṣṇāyāḥ Phālgunena ca.
viditaṃ vo yathā sarvaṃ loka|vṛttim idaṃ tava,
vidite c' āpi vaktavyaṃ suhr̥dbhir anurāgataḥ.

eṣa dharmāś ca, kāmaś ca, arthaś c' āiva sanātanaḥ
4.10 ato 'ham api vakṣyāmi, hetum atra nibodhata.
hant' êmāṃ rāja|vasatiṃ, rāja|putrā. bravīmy aham
yathā rāja|kulaṃ prāpya sarvān doṣāṃs tariṣyatha,
dur|vasaṃ c' āiva, Kauravya, jānatā rāja|veśmani
a|mānitair mānitair vā aljñātaiḥ parivatsaram.
tataś catur|daśe varṣe cariṣyatha yathā sukham.

dr̥ṣṭa|dvāro labhed draṣṭuṃ rājasv eṣu na viśvaset.
tad ev' āsanam anvicched, yatra n' ābhipatet paraḥ.
yo na yānaṃ, na paryaṅkaṃ, na pīṭhaṃ, na gajaṃ, ratham
ārohet, «sammato 'sm' îti,» sa rāja|vasatiṃ vaset.

4.15 yatra yatr' āinam āsīnaṃ śaṅkeran duṣṭa|cāriṇaḥ,
na tatr' ôpaviśed yo vai, sa rāja|vasatiṃ vaset.

DISGUISES FOR VIRÁTA'S COURT

VAISHAMPÁYANA said:

Having consulted with each other in this manner, and told each other their jobs, each one in his turn, they consulted Dhaumya, and he gave them this advice:

DHAUMYA said:

Pándavas, everything that has been arranged for the brahmins, your friends, the chariots, weapons and fires is fine, Bhárata, but you and Phálguna must arrange Krishná's protection.

You two both know how this whole world works. Yet, even though you know, friends should repeat it out of affection.

It is known that law, desire and profit are eternal. For that reason I will say this, so listen. Alas for living with a king, my princes! I will tell you how you will avoid all mistakes once you've reached the king's palace. O Káuravas, you must spend a full year in the king's palace, unrecognized by those who know you, who will either treat you honorably or not. Then, in the fourteenth year, you will live happily. 4.10

One should take the opportunity to see the king, once one has appeared at the gate, but one should not be confident in royal matters. Nor should one rush for a seat that another desires. He who would not climb onto the king's palanquin, couch, seat, elephant or chariot, while thinking to himself "I am highly honored," should live in a royal palace.

The man who would not sit down in a position that causes evildoers to be alarmed should live in a royal palace. 4.15

na c' ânusiṣyād rājānam a|pṛcchantam kadā cana.
 tūṣṇīm tv enam upāsīta, kāle samabhipūjayet.
 asūyanti hi rājāno janān an|ṛta|vādinah
 tath" āiva c' āvamanyante mantriṇam vādinam mṛṣā.

n' āiṣām dāreṣu kurvīta maitrīm prājñah kadā cana,
 antaḥpura|carā ye ca, dveṣṭi yān, a|hitās ca ye.

vidite c' āsya kurvīta kāryāṇi su|laghūny api.
 evam vicarato rājñi na kṣatir jāyate kva cit.

4.20 gacchann api parām bhūmim a|pṛṣṭo hy, a|niyojitaḥ,
 jāty|andha iva manyeta maryādām anucintayan.
 na hi putram, na naptāram, na bhrātaram, arin|damāḥ,
 samatikrānta|maryādam pūjayanti nar'ā|dhipāḥ.

yatnāc c' ōpacared enam Agnivād, devavat tv iha.
 an|ṛten' ōpacīrṇo hi hanyād eva na saṃśayaḥ.
 yac ca bhart" ānuyuñjīta, tat tad ev' ānuvartayet;
 pramādam, avalepaṃ ca, kopaṃ ca parivarjayet.
 samarthanāsu sarvāsu hitam ca, priyam eva ca
 saṃvarṇayet tad ev' āsya priyād api hitam bhavet.

4.25 anukūlo bhavec c' āsya sarv' ārtheṣu, kathāsu ca;
 a|priyam c' ā|hitam yat syāt, tad asmai n' ānuvarṇayet.
 «n' āham asya priyo 'sm', īti» matvā seveta paṇḍitaḥ,
 a|pramattaś ca satataṃ hitam kuryāt, priyam ca yat.

One should never lecture the king when unasked. Sitting beside him in silence, one should pay homage to the king at the appropriate time only. For kings are displeased with people who speak falsely, and equally they treat an eloquent minister who speaks uselessly with contempt.

The wise man should never conduct a close friendship with his wives, nor with the guardian of the women's apartments, nor with those who are hated and out of favor.

He should carry out even insignificant tasks with the full knowledge of the king. If he conducts himself in this manner while in the presence of the king, no harm will befall him. Even upon reaching the highest position, when unasked and uncommanded, he should think of himself as one who was born blind, recalling the clear boundaries. Tamers of your foes, kings do not even honor their son, nor their grandson nor brother, if their boundaries are transgressed. 4.20

One should serve a king with effort, just as one serves Agni and the gods in this world. He who is attended by a deceitful man without a doubt puts him to death. One should obey whatever one's master commands, and avoid carelessness, pride and anger. In all deliberations one should recommend what is beneficial and pleasant, and should do this even if it should be beneficial rather than pleasant. One should be well disposed to all the king's affairs and tales, and not recommend to him something that is unpleasant and disadvantageous. A wise man should serve him, thinking "I am not favored," and be careful to do whatever is advantageous and pleasing. 4.25



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“Viráta,” Book Four of the MAHA-BHÁRATA, is one of the lighter parts of the epic, with little emphasis on the horrors of war or religious doctrine. The initial crisis and fun of how the Pándavas suffer and survive in disguise, end with their discovery, when their power, heroism, and majesty are revealed in battle.

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NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS
Washington Square
New York, NY 10003
www.nyupress.org

ISBN 978-0-8147-3183-3



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