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Maha·bhārata

Book Eight

Karna

Volume One



Translated by  
ADAM BOWLES

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BOOK EIGHT

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VOLUME ONE

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37–45

THE WRANGLING OF  
KARNA AND SHALYA

37.1

**D** RṢṬVĀ KARṆAṂ mah<sup>2</sup> | êṣv | āsam  
yuyutsum samavasthitam,  
cukruśuḥ Kuravaḥ sarve

hr̥ṣṭa | rūpāḥ samantataḥ.

tato dundubhi | nirghoṣair, bherīṇām ninadena ca,  
bāṇa | śabdaiś ca vividhair, garjitaś ca tarasvinām,  
niryayus tāvakā yuddhe, mṛtyum kṛtvā nivartanam.

prayāte tu tataḥ Karṇe, yodheṣu muditeṣu ca,  
cacāla pṛthivī, rājan, vavāśa ca su | vistaram.

niḥsaranto vyadr̥śyanta sūryāt sapta mahā | grahāḥ.

37.5

ulkā | pātās ca samjajñur, diśāṃ dāhās tath<sup>2</sup> | āiva ca.  
śuṣk | āśanyaś ca sam̐petur, vavur vātās ca bhairavāḥ.

mṛga | pakṣi | gaṇās c' | āiva pṛtanām bahuśas tava  
apasavyam tadā cakrur, vedayanto mahā | bhayam.

prathitasya ca Karṇasya nipetus turagā bhuvī,

asthi | varṣam ca patitam antarikṣād bhayānakam!

jajvaluś c' | āiva śastrāṇi, dhvajās c' | āiva cakampire,

aśrūṇi ca vyamuñcanta vāhanāni, viśāṃ pate.

ete c' | ānye ca bahava utpātās tatra, māriṣa,

samutpetur vināśāya Kauravāṇām su | dāruṇāḥ.

37.10

na ca tān gaṇayām āsuḥ, sarve daivena mohitāḥ,  
prasthitam sūta | putram ca, «jay<sup>1</sup> | êty» ūcur nar<sup>1</sup> | ādhipāḥ.  
nirjitān Pāṇḍavāṃś c' | āiva menire tatra Kauravāḥ!

SÁNJAYA said:

SEEING THE MIGHTY archer Karna standing on that chariot eager for battle, all the Kurus were ecstatic and shouted from everywhere. To the rattling of *dúndubhi* drums, the rumble of kettle-drums, the various sounds of arrows and the cries of bold heroes, your troops went forth into battle, determined to flee only in death. 37.1

And then as Karna advanced and the warriors rejoiced, king, the earth shook and rumbled at length. The seven great planets became visible surging forward from the sun. Meteors plunged down and regions burnt as well. Thunderbolts fell, despite it being dry, and terrible winds blew. Herds of animals and flocks of birds then continually circled your army from right to left, heralding great peril. And while Karna was being celebrated his horses stumbled to the ground, and a terrifying shower of bones fell from the sky! Weapons shone brightly, banners flapped and draught animals shed tears, lord of people. These and many other dreadful portents, dear friend, appeared there foretelling the destruction of the Káuravas. 37.5

But, deluded by divine fate, all those rulers of men paid no heed to them and shouted out “Victory!” to the charioteer’s son as he departed. The Káuravas then thought the Pándavas defeated already! 37.10

tato ratha|sthaḥ para|vīra|hantā

Bhīṣma|Droṇāv ativīryau samīkṣya,  
samujjvalan bhāskara|pāvak'ābho

Vaikartano 'sau ratha|kuñjaro, nṛpa,  
sa Śalyam ābhāṣya jagāda vākyam,

Pārthasya karm'|âtiśayaṃ vicintya,  
mānena, darpeṇa vidahyamānaḥ,  
krodhena dīpyann iva, niḥśvasamś ca:

«n' âhaṃ Mahendrād api vajra|pāṇeḥ  
kruddhād bibhemy āyudhavān, ratha|sthaḥ!

dr̥ṣṭvā hi Bhīṣma|pramukhān śayānān,  
atīva mām hy a|sthiratā jahāti.

Mahendra|Viṣṇu|pratimāv aninditau  
rath'|âśva|nāga|pravara|pramāthinau;

a|vadhya|kalpau nihatau yadā parais;  
tato na me 'py asti raṇe 'dya sādhdvasam.

37.15 samīkṣya samkhye 'tibalān nar'|âdhipān  
sa|sūta|mātaṅga|rathān parair hatān,

kathaṃ na sarvān a|hitān raṇe 'vadhīn  
mah" |âstra|vid brāhmaṇa|puṅgavo guruḥ.

sa saṃsmaran Droṇam ahaṃ mah" |āhave,  
bravīmi satyam; Kuravo nibodhata!

na vā mad|anyaḥ prasahed raṇe 'rjunaṃ  
samāgataṃ Mṛtyum iv' ôgra|rūpiṇam.

Standing in his chariot, Vaikártana, that killer of enemy-heroes, then reflected on Bhishma and Drona whose courage was tremendous. Blazing like the fire of the sun, king, that superb warrior reflected on the excellence of Pritha's son's deeds and, consumed by arrogance and pride and snorting as if burning with fury, shouted out to Shalya and spoke this speech:

“Standing in this chariot with my weapons I have no fear even of mighty Indra wielding his thunderbolt in rage! For seeing those who were led by Bhishma lying prone, doubt has completely left me. Like great Indra and Vishnu those two could not be faulted as they lay waste to the finest chariots, horses and elephants. They had seemed invincible when their enemies killed them. Yet still I have no fear of battle today.

After seeing those extremely powerful rulers of men with their charioteers, elephants and chariots struck down in battle by their enemies, how was it that the guru, the brahmin-hero,\* expert in the great weapons, didn't kill all those enemies in battle? I remember Drona in the great battle and I speak the truth! Listen Kurus! No one other than me can match Árjuna in battle once he's attacked like Death in wrathful form. 37.15

śikṣā, prasādaś ca, balaṃ, dhṛtiś ca  
 Droṇe, mah"āstrāṇi ca, saṃnatiś ca,  
 sa ced agān mṛtyu|vaśaṃ mah"ātmā,  
 sarvān anyān āturān adya manye!  
 n' ēha dhruvaṃ kiṃ cid api pracintayan  
 vidyāṃ loke karmaṇo daiva|yogāt.  
 sūry'ōdaye ko hi vimukta|saṃśayo  
 bhāvaṃ kurvīt' ādya gurau nipātite?  
 na nūnam astrāṇi, balaṃ, parākramaḥ,  
 kriyāḥ, su|nītaṃ, param'āyudhāni vā  
 alaṃ manuṣyasya sukhāya vartitum;  
 tathā hi yuddhe nihataḥ parair guruḥ.  
 37.20 hutāśan'āditya|samāna|tejasam,  
 parākrame Viṣṇu|Puraṇdar'ōpamam,  
 naye Bṛhaspaty|Uśanoḥ\* sadā samaṃ,  
 na c' āinam astram tad upāsta duḥ|saham.  
 saṃprākruṣṭe rudita|strī|kumāre  
 parābhūte pauraṣe Dhārtaraṣṭre,  
 mayā kṛtyam iti jānāmi, Śalya!  
 prayāhi tasmād dviṣatām anīkam!  
 yatra rājā Pāṇḍavaḥ satya|saṃdho  
 vyavasthito, Bhīmasen'|Ārjunau ca,  
 Vāsudevaḥ, Sātyakiḥ, Śṛṅjayās ca,  
 yamau ca, kas tān viṣahen mad|anyaḥ?  
 tasmāt kṣipraṃ, Madra|pate, prayāhi  
 raṇe Pañcālān, Pāṇḍavān, Śṛṅjayāṃś ca!  
 tān vā haniṣyāmi sametya saṃkhye,  
 yāsyāmi vā Droṇa|pathā Yamāya.  
 nanv ev' āhaṃ na gamiṣyāmi madhye  
 teṣāṃ sūrāṇām iti mā, Śalya, viddhi!

Learning, kindness, strength, tenacity, the great weapons and humility were found in Drona. If this great man could fall under the sway of death, then I reckon all others shall suffer today!

Thinking it over, I can't find a thing that is certain in this world because of the divine workings of past acts. With the guru felled, could anyone, free of doubt, now look forward to sunrise? Assuredly not missiles, strength, courage, ritual acts, prudent conduct nor the most excellent weapons are enough to ensure the happiness of a man, for still the guru was felled in battle by his enemies. In fiery energy he was the equal of the sun or fire, in courage he was the equal of Vishnu and the Sacker of cities, in prudent conduct he was always equal to Brihas-pati and Úshanas, but his irresistible missile did not serve him well. 37.20

With the courage of the Dhartaráshtras humbled and their women and children weeping and wailing, Shalya, I know what I must do! So attack our enemies' army! Other than me, who's a match for those among whom stands Bhima-sena, Árjuna, Vasudéva, Sátyaki, the Srínjayas, the twins and the Pándava king who is true to his promises? So quickly, lord of Madra, attack the Panchálas, Pándavas and Srínjayas in the battle! Once I've met with them in battle either I'll kill them or I'll go by Drona's path to Yama.

Shalya, certainly don't think that I will not go into the midst of those heroes! Such a betrayal of a friend I could

mitra|droho marṣaṇīyo na me 'yaṃ;  
 tyaktvā prāṇān anuyāsyāmi Droṇam.

37.25 prājñasya mūḍhasya ca jīvit'ānte  
 n' āsti pramokṣo 'ntaka|sat|kṛtasya.

ato, vidvann, abhiyāsyāmi Pārthaṃ;  
 diṣṭaṃ na śakyam vyativartitum vai!  
 kalyāṇa|vṛttaḥ satataṃ hi, rājan,  
 Vaicitravīryasya suto mam' āsīt.

tasy' ārtha|siddhy|artham ahaṃ tyajāmi  
 priyān bhogān duḥ|tyajaṃ jīvitaṃ ca.  
 vaiyāghra|carmāṇam, a|kūjan'|ākṣaṃ,

haimaṃ, tri|kośaṃ, rajata|tri|veṇum  
 ratha|prabarhaṃ turaga|prabarhair  
 yuktaṃ prādān mahyam idaṃ hi Rāmaḥ.  
 dhanūṃṣi citrāṇi nirīkṣya, Śalya,

dhvajān, gadāḥ, sāyakāṃś c' ôgra|rūpān,  
 asiṃ ca dīptaṃ param'āyudhaṃ ca,  
 śaṅkhaṃ ca śubhraṃ svanavantaṃ ugram,  
 patākiṇaṃ, vajra|nipāta|nisvanaṃ,

sit'|āśva|yuktaṃ, śubha|tūṇa|śobhitaṃ,  
 imaṃ samāsthāya rathaṃ, ratha'|rṣabhaṃ  
 raṇe haniṣyāmy aham Arjunaṃ balāt.

not pardon; giving up my life, I'll follow Drona. At the end 37.25  
of life, there's no escape for a man, wise or stupid, who's  
been honored by Death. Therefore, wise man, I will attack  
Pritha's sons. Destiny can't be avoided!

King, the son of Vichitra-virya's son\* has always acted  
well towards me. To fulfil his objectives I surrender my fa-  
vorite pleasures and my treasured life. Rama gave me the  
finest chariot yoked to the finest horses, its three-piece bam-  
boo struts silver and three scabbards gold, its axle silent  
and shield covered in tiger-skin. Looking over my beauti-  
ful bows, Shalya, my banners, clubs and formidable arrows,  
and my brilliant sword and superb weapon and my white  
conch reverberating threateningly, and mounting this flag-  
bearing chariot that is adorned with beautiful quivers, yoked  
to white horses and sounding like a falling thunderbolt, in  
battle I'll brutally kill Árjuna, a bull of a warrior.

37.30 taṃ cen Mṛtyuḥ sarva|haro 'bhirakṣet  
 sad" āpramattaḥ samare Pāṇḍu|putram,  
 taṃ vā haniṣyāmi sametya yuddhe,  
 yāsyāmi vā Bhīṣma|mukho Yamāya.  
 Yama|Varuṇa|Kubéra|Vāsavā vā  
 yadi yugapat sa|gaṇā mah" |āhave  
 juguṣiṣava ih' ādya Pāṇḍavaṃ,  
 kim u bahunā saha tair jayāmi tam!»

SAṂJAYA said:

iti raṇa|rabhasasya katthataḥ  
 tad uta niśamya vacaḥ sa Madra|rāt  
 avahasad avamanya vīryavān  
 pratiṣiṣidhe ca, jagāda c' ṅtaram.

ŚALYA uvāca:

«virama! virama, Karṇa, katthanād!  
 atirabhaso 'py ativācam uktavān.  
 kva ca hi nara|varo Dhanam|jayaḥ,  
 kva punar aho puruṣ'|ādhamo bhavān!  
 Yadu|sadanam Upendra|pālitaṃ  
 tri|daśam iv' āmara|rāja|rakṣitaṃ  
 prasabham ativiloḍya, ko haret  
 puruṣa|var'|āvara|jām ṛte 'rjunāt?  
 37.35 tri|bhuvana|vibhum īśvar'|ēśvaraṃ  
 ka iha pumān Bhavam āhvayed yudhi  
 mṛga|vadhā|kalahe ṛte 'rjunāt  
 sura|pati|vīrya|sama|prabhāvataḥ?

If all-destroying, ever-vigilant Death should protect Pa- 37.30  
 ndu's son in the war, after meeting him in battle either I'll  
 kill him or, preceded by Bhishma, I'll go to Yama. Or if  
 together with their attendants Yama, Váruna, Kubéra and  
 Vásava intend to protect the Pándava here today in this  
 great battle—what more need be said?—I'll kill him along  
 with them!"

SÁNJAYA said:

Hearing Karna's words as he boasted eager for war, laugh-  
 ing contemptuously the courageous king of Madra stopped  
 him and spoke this response.

SHALYA said:

"Stop it Karna! Stop this boasting! You're too impetuous  
 and the words you spoke were over the top. For on the one  
 hand we have Dhananjaya, a fine man, and on the other  
 we have you, a vile man!

Who other than Árjuna could have destroyed the city of  
 Yadus while it was protected by Indra's younger brother like  
 heaven guarded by the king of the immortals,\* and carried  
 off the younger sister of that excellent man?\*What man in 37.35  
 this world other than Árjuna, whose power is equal to the  
 strength of the lord of the gods, could challenge Bhava in  
 battle, the lord of lords, the lord of the triple-world, in that  
 quarrel over the killing of an animal?

asura|sura|mah”|ôragān, narān,  
 Garuḍa|piśāca|salyakṣa|rākṣasān  
 iṣubhir ajayad Agni|gauravāt  
 sv|abhilaṣitaṃ ca havir dadau Jayaḥ.  
 smarasi nanu yadā parair hr̥taḥ  
 sa ca Dhṛtarāṣṭra|suto ’pi mokṣitaḥ  
 dina|kara|sadṛśaiḥ śar’|ôttamair\*  
 Kuruṣu bahūn vinihatya tān arīn.  
 prathamam api palāyite tvayi,  
 priya|kalahā Dhṛtarāṣṭra|sūnavaḥ  
 smarasi nanu yadā pramocitāḥ  
 kha|cara|gaṇān avajitya Pāṇḍavaiḥ.  
 samudita|bala|vāhanāḥ punaḥ  
 puruṣa|vareṇa jītāḥ stha go|grahe  
 sa|guru|guru|sutāḥ sa|Bhīṣmakāḥ;  
 kim u na jitaḥ sa tadā tvay” Ârjunah?  
 37.40 idam aparam upasthitaṃ punas  
 tava nidhanāya su|yuddham adya vai;  
 yadi na ripu|bhayāt palāyase,  
 samaragato ’dya hato ’si, sūta|ja!»

SAMJAYA uvāca:

iti bahu paruṣaṃ prabhāṣati  
 pramanasi Madra|patau ripu|stavam,  
 bhṛśam abhiruṣitaḥ paraṃ|tapaḥ  
 Kuru|pṛtanā|patir āha Madra|pam.

Out of his respect for Agni, Jaya defeated demons, gods, great serpents, men, Gáruda, *pisháchas*, *yakshas* and *rákshasas* with his arrows and offered him his eagerly desired oblation.

No doubt you remember when, after he'd slaughtered many enemies for the Kurus with his superb arrows that resemble the sun, he freed Dhrita-rashtra's son who'd been captured by his enemies. No doubt you remember when, after you were the first to flee, Dhrita-rashtra's quarrelsome sons were released by the Pándavas after they'd conquered hordes of those that travel through the sky.\* During the cattle raid,\* the armies and their vehicles gathered with Bhishma—the guru and the guru's son among them—were again defeated by that excellent man. Why didn't you defeat Árjuna then? Now again another extraordinary battle is at hand for your destruction. If you do not flee out of fear of your enemy, son of a charioteer, you'll be killed once you engage in battle!" 37.40

SÁNJAYA said:

While the cheerful lord of the Madras uttered this devastating rebuke and praised their enemy, the general of the Kuru army, a scorcher of enemies, became tremendously angry and spoke to the lord of the Madras.

KARNA uvāca:

«bhavatu! bhavatu! kiṃ vikatthase?  
 nanu mama tasya ca yuddham udyatam;  
 yadi sa jayati mām ih' āhave,  
 tata idam astu su|katthitaṃ tava!»

SAṂJAYA uvāca:

«evam astv! iti» Madr'ēśa uktvā n' ōttaram uktavān.  
 «yāhi, Śaly'! ēti» c' āpy enam Karṇaḥ prāha yuyutsayā.  
 sa rathaḥ prayayau śatrūñ śvet'āśvaḥ Śalya|sārathiḥ,  
 niḡhnann amitrān samare, tamo ghnan savitā yathā.  
 37.45 tataḥ prāyāt prītimān vai rathena  
 vaiyāghreṇa śveta|yuḥ" ātha Karṇaḥ.  
 sa c' ālokya dhvajinīm Pāṇḍavānām,  
 Dhanaṃjayaṃ tvarayā paryapṛcchat.

SAṂJAYA uvāca:

38.1 PRAYĀṆE CA tataḥ Karṇo harṣayan vāhinīm tava,  
 ek'āikaṃ samare dṛṣtvā Pāṇḍavaṃ paryapṛcchata.  
 «yo mām adya mah"ātmānaṃ darśayec chveta|vāhanam,  
 tasmai dadyām abhipretaṃ dhanaṃ yan manas" ēcchati.  
 na cet tad abhimanyeta, tasmai dadyām ahaṃ punaḥ,  
 śakaṭaṃ ratna|saṃpūrṇaṃ, yo me brūyād Dhanaṃjayaṃ.  
 na cet tad abhimanyeta puruṣo 'rjuna|darśivān,  
 śataṃ dadyām gavām tasmai naityakaṃ kāṃsya|dohanam.  
 38.5 śataṃ grāma|varāṃś c' āiva dadyām Arjuna|darśine.  
 tathā tasmai punar dadyām śvetam aśvatarī|ratham,  
 yuktaṃ añjana|keśībhir, yo me brūyād Dhanaṃjayaṃ.

KARNA said:

“Enough! Enough! Why do you taunt me? Without any doubt the battle between him and me shall take place. If he defeats me in this battle, then shall this boast of yours be fair!”

SÁNJAYA said:

After saying, “Let it be so!” the lord of Madra said no more. And then, with eagerness to fight, Karna said to him, “Shalya, charge!”

With his white horses and Shalya as his chariot-driver, that warrior attacked his enemies, destroying his adversaries in battle just as the sun destroys the darkness.

Karna was then pleased and advanced with his chariot 37.45  
covered in tiger-skin and drawn by white horses. When he caught sight of the army of the Pándavas, he quickly asked after Dhanan·jaya.

SÁNJAYA said:

THEN KARNA roused your army as he advanced and asked 38.1  
each combatant who he saw in the battle about the Pándava.

“Whoever can point out to me today the great man with the white horses, I shall give any precious reward that he desires. If he doesn’t agree to that, I shall still give whoever can tell me about Dhanan·jaya a wagon filled with jewels. If he doesn’t want that, I shall give the man who’s seen Áryjuna a hundred cows along with the obligatory copper milk-pails.

To whoever’s seen Áryjuna I shall give a hundred of the 38.5  
best villages. And further, to whoever can tell me about Dhanan·jaya I shall give a white cart pulled by black-maned she-mules. If he doesn’t want that, I shall further give the

na cet tad abhimanyeta puruṣo 'rjuna|darśivān,  
 anyam v" āsmai punar dadyāṃ sauvarṇam hasti|śaḍ|gavam.  
 tath" āpy asmai punar dadyāṃ strīṇām śatam alam|kṛtam,  
 śyāmānām, niṣka|kaṅṭhīnām, gīta|vādya|vipaścitām.  
 na cet tad abhimanyeta puruṣo 'rjuna|darśivān,  
 tasmai dadyāṃ śatam nāgāñ, śatam grāmāñ, śatam rathān,  
 su|varṇasya ca mukhyasya hay'āgryāṇām śatam śatān,  
 38.10 ṛddhyā guṇaiḥ su|dāntāmś ca, dhurya|vāhān, su|śikṣitān.  
 tathā su|varṇa|śṛṅgīṇām go|dhenūnām catuḥ|śatam  
 dadyāṃ tasmai sa|vatsānām, yo me brūyād Dhanamjayam.  
 na cet tad abhimanyeta puruṣo 'rjuna|darśivān,  
 anyad asmai varaṃ dadyāṃ śvetān pañca|śatān hayān.  
 hema|bhāṇḍa|paricchannān, su|mṛṣṭa|maṇi|bhūṣaṇān,  
 su|dāntān api c' āiv' āham  
 dadyāṃ aṣṭā|daś'āparān.  
 ratham ca śubhraṃ sauvarṇam  
 dadyāṃ tasmai sv|alam|kṛtam,  
 yuktaṃ parama|Kāambojair, yo me brūyād Dhanamjayam.  
 na cet tad abhimanyeta puruṣo 'rjuna|darśivān,  
 38.15 anyad asmai varaṃ dadyāṃ kuñjarāṇām śatāni ṣaṭ,  
 kāñcanair vividhair bhāṇḍair ācchannān, hema|mālīnaḥ,  
 utpannān apar'ānteṣu, vinītān hasti|śikṣakaiḥ.  
 na cet tad abhimanyeta puruṣo 'rjuna|darśivān,  
 anyad asmai varaṃ dadyāṃ vaiśya|grāmāmś catur|daśa,  
 su|sphītān, dhana|saṃyuktān, pratyāsanna|van'ōdakān;  
 a|kuto|bhayān su|saṃpannān rāja|bhojyāmś catur|daśa!

man who's seen *Árjuna* another chariot made of gold and pulled by six oxen the size of elephants. And I'll give him still more! A hundred women of dark complexion, covered in ornaments, wearing gold collars and skilled in songs and musical instruments. If he doesn't want that, I shall give the man who's seen *Árjuna* a hundred elephants, a hundred villages, a hundred chariots and ten thousand superb horses of the finest gold color that are in good health, have good 38.10 qualities, are well tamed and trained and can be used as draught horses. To whoever can tell me about *Dhanan·jaya* I shall give four hundred golden-horned milk-cows along with their calves. If he doesn't want that, I shall give the man who's seen *Árjuna* another reward, five hundred white horses.

And I shall also give him eighteen other very placid horses with golden harnesses and blankets and decorated with highly polished jewels. And to whoever can tell me about *Dhanan·jaya* I shall give a beautiful chariot, brilliantly decorated and yoked to the finest *Kambójan* horses. If he doesn't 38.15 want that, I shall give the man who's seen *Árjuna* another reward, six hundred elephants bred in the west, clothed with various gold trappings, wearing golden garlands and led by elephant trainers. If he doesn't want that, I shall give the man who's seen *Árjuna* another reward, fourteen flourishing villages of *vaishyas* that are filled with wealth and have forests and water nearby—fourteen danger free and well supplied villages fit to be enjoyed by kings!

dāsīnām niṣka|kaṅṭhīnām Māgadhīnām śataṃ tathā  
 praty|agra|vayasām dadyām, yo me brūyād Dhanamjayam.  
 na cet tad abhimanyeta puruṣo 'rjuna|darśivān,  
 anyam tasmai varam dadyām, yam asau kāmayet svayam!  
 38.20 putra|dārān, vihārāmś ca yad anyad vittam asti me,  
 tac ca tasmai punar dadyām, yad yac ca manas' ēcchati.  
 hatvā ca sahitau Kṛṣṇau, tayor vittāni sarvaśaḥ  
 tasmai dadyām aham yo me prabrūyāt Keśav'|Ārjunau!»  
 etā vācaḥ su|bahuśaḥ Karṇa uccārayan yudhi  
 dadhmau sāgara|saṃbhūtaṃ su|svanaṃ śaṅkham uttamam.  
 tā vācaḥ sūta|putrasya tathā yuktā niśamya tu,  
 Duryodhano, mahā|rāja, prahr̥ṣṭaḥ s'ānugo 'bhavat.  
 tato dundubhi|nirghoṣo, mṛdaṅgānām ca sarvaśaḥ  
 38.25 siṃha|nādaḥ sa|vāditraḥ, kuñjarānām ca nisvanaḥ  
 prādur āsīt tadā, rājan, sainyeṣu, puruṣa'|r̥ṣabha,  
 yodhānām saṃprahr̥ṣṭānām tathā samabhavat svanaḥ.  
 tathā prahr̥ṣṭe sainye tu plavamānaṃ mahā|ratham,  
 vikatthamānaṃ ca tadā Rādheyam ari|karṣaṇam,  
 Madra|rājaḥ prahas' ēdaṃ vacanaṃ pratyabhāṣata.

ŚALYA uvāca:

39.1 «MĀ, SŪTA|PUTRA, dānena sauvarṇam hasti|śaḍ|gavam  
 prayaccha puruṣāy'; ādya drakṣyasi tvam Dhanamjayam!  
 bālyād iha tvam tyajasi vasu Vaiśravaṇo yathā;  
 alyatnen' āiva, Rādheya, draṣṭ' āsy adya Dhanamjayam.  
 parān sṛjasi yad vittam kiṃ cit tvam bahu mūḍhavat;  
 a|pātra|dāne ye doṣās tān mohān n' āvabudhyase.

And whoever can tell me about Dhanan·jaya I shall give a hundred young Mágadhi slave girls wearing golden collars. And if he doesn't want that, I shall give the man who's seen Árjuna another reward, whatever he would desire for himself! Sons, wives or pleasures, or whatever other possessions I have, and whatever he desires in his heart, I will give to him. Once I've killed the two Krishnas together, I will give everything they owned to whoever tells me about Késhava and Árjuna!" 38.20

Whilst uttering these many words in the battle, Kar-na blew his superb conch that came from the ocean and had a beautiful tone. And when they heard these fitting words of the charioteer's son, great king, Duryódhana and his attendants were thrilled.

Then, king, the sound of *dúndubhi* and *mridánga* drums, lion roars, musical instruments and elephants trumpeting became audible everywhere among the troops, bull of a man, as did the clamor of soldiers celebrating. 38.25

But as that mighty warrior Radha's son, a tormenter of enemies, bragged as he sailed into that excited army, the king of the Madras responded with this speech.

SHALYA said:

"SON OF A charioteer, don't reward a man by offering a golden cart pulled by six elephant-like oxen. You will see Dhanan·jaya today! Foolishly you give away riches here as if you were Váishravana. With no effort, son of Radha, you will see Dhanan·jaya today. Like a sucker you give away much wealth to others. In giving to the unworthy, stupidly you don't recognise those who are wicked. With these vast 39.1

yat tvaṃ prerayase vittam, bahu tena khalu tvayā  
śakyam bahu|vidhair yajñair yaṣṭum. sūta, yajasva taiḥ!

- 39.5 yac ca prārthayase hantum Kṛṣṇau mohād, vṛth” āiva tat!  
na hi śuśruma saṃmarde kroṣṭrā siṃhau nipātītau!  
a|prārthitam prārthayase; suhṛdo na hi santi te  
ye tvāṃ nivārayanty āsu prapatantam hut’|āśane.  
kāry’|ā|kāryam na jānīṣe; kāla|pakvo ’sy a|saṃśayam!  
bahv a|baddham a|karṇīyam ko hi brūyāj jijīviṣuḥ?  
samudra|taraṇam dorbhyām kaṅṭhe baddhvā yathā śīlām,  
giry|agrād vā nipatanam, tādrk tava cikīrṣitam.  
sahitaḥ sarva|yodhais tvaṃ vyūdh’|ānikaiḥ su|rakṣitaḥ  
Dhanamjayena yudhyasva, śreyaś cet prāptum icchasi.  
39.10 hit’|ārtham Dhārtarāṣṭrasya bravīmi tvāṃ, na hiṃsayā.  
śraddhasv’ āivam mayā proktaṃ yadi te ’sti jijīviṣā!»

KARNA uvāca:

«sva|bāhu|vīryam āśritya, prārthayāmy Arjunam raṇe.  
tvaṃ tu mitra|mukhaḥ śatrur mām bhīṣayitum icchasi!  
na mām asmād abhiprāyāt kaś cid adya nivartayet,  
ap’ Īndro vajram udyamya! kiṃ nu martyaḥ katham cana?»

SAMJAYA uvāca:

iti Karṇasya vāky’|ānte Śalyaḥ prāh’ ṅttaram vacaḥ  
cukopayiṣur atyartham Karṇam Madr’|ēśvaraḥ punaḥ.

riches that you send away, truly you could offer many different sacrifices. And you must offer those sacrifices, *suta!*\*

Stupidly, you long to kill the two Krishnas; this is pointless! For we've never heard of a pair of lions destroyed by a jackal! You long for what should not be longed for; there are no friends who can stop you tumbling directly into fire. You don't understand what should and shouldn't be done. Without doubt you've been cooked by time!\* Who that wants to live would say so much that's meaningless and not worth listening to? Your plan is like crossing the ocean by the arms after tying a rock around one's neck. Or like leaping from the summit of a mountain. If you want to find success, you must fight with Dhanan-jaya together with all your warriors and well protected by your arrayed forces. Without malice I speak to you for the good of Dhrita-rashtra's son. You must trust what I say if you want to live!" 39.5 39.10

KARNA said:

"Relying upon the strength of my own arms, I long for Árjuna in battle. But you, an enemy with the face of a friend, want to intimidate me! No one could stop me from my objective today, not even Indra with his thunderbolt raised! How much less then could some mere mortal?"

SÁNJAYA said:

At the end of Karna's speech, Shalya, the lord of the Madras, hoping to utterly infuriate Karna, again spoke these words in reply.



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“Karna,” Book Eight of the MAHA-BHÁRATA, begins with news of the death of Karna, perhaps the epic’s most tragic character. The full circumstances of the defeat he chose not to deflect are in volume two. This first volume is distinguished by his long and bitter verbal dispute with King Shalya, as Karna stays true to the hero’s course.

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